

*Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps, set thine heart  
Toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest (Jer 31:21)*

# THE CHRISTADELPHIAN WAYMARK

**Volume 7**

**Issue 6**

**Devoted to the Defence and Proclamation of the Way of Life  
in Opposition to the Dogmas of Papal and Protestant Christendom**

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*“I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that  
sat upon him had a bow; and a crown was  
given unto him: and he went forth conquering,  
and to conquer” (Rev 6:2)*

*“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable ...” (Jas 3:17)  
“Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3)*

## **“THAT GOD SHALL BE SANCTIFIED”**

Amongst the various advantages connected with this breaking of bread, is that it gives us an opportunity of seeing things in their true light. Some times they appear in a very unnatural and false light indeed. As an extreme example, take the aspect in which they appear when we awake most mornings—to those of us at all events that are in middle age. Our view for the moment amounts to aberration—everything in a fog, and everything distorted; life a failure; no use going on. If we were to act on the depression of the moment, we should give in and do no more. But reason comes to our aid. We know it is but a cloud-bank we are in. With an effort of the will, we advance to the attack. We get up, we get our morning bath, the fog disappears. We find that all is comparatively well after all.

This is a case of physical disturbance. There are mental disturbances in which people are quite as much the subject of aberration, though quite sane in the ordinary sense. They see things in the wrong light. The present life seems so real; the prosperity of the ungodly seems so desirable: the promises of God seem so intangible; that if nothing happens to break in upon the fog, they will be liable to give in, and live a false life which will mock them at the last. One of those things is the breaking of bread. It is the centre and meeting point of many facts which enlighten the heart. We require to know facts, and many facts, in order to have correct views of life. Directly and indirectly, they are brought before us at this moment of leisure; and the calm and searching consideration of them will help us to get rid of the aberrations arising from merely natural life.

Naturally, we look to pleasure as the aim of our efforts; but here on this Table is pain. Here is the cross of Christ: his body broken, his blood poured out. We cling to life, and lo, here is death—death too, in a special and extraordinary connection: the crucifixion of one who did no evil, who only went about doing good. Here is something pressed upon our attention, to call for explanation—for deep consideration at the very least. And as we ponder it, and our view extends, we see that this case of pain and death is not alone. We discover that evil is not the exception but the rule in the lot of man. Our reading from Isaiah this morning (Ch. 15), gives us a picture of something that in one form or other is universal. It is a scene of pillage and bloodshed and ruin and tears—a whole district desolated in a single night, and the whole population out next day in bitter lamentation in the open fields.

“In the night Ar of Moab is laid waste and brought to silence.” Moab, “gone up to the high places to weep:”—everyone weeping and howling, their voice heard even unto Jazer. Distress and care are not always to be seen in this acute form, but in some shape or other, in all countries, in every age, in our own age, every day, evil reigns. It reigns intensely. We learn how bitter and incurable it is when capacities to rightly read the situation, open with growth and experience. At times, the fact is overwhelming. It comes upon us with a force that crushes to the earth. It wrings from the heart the bitter wail of David.

“O Lord, wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain? Where are Thy mercies and Thy loving-kindness?”

The struggling mind asks the reason. Here is a fair and beautiful earth—the fit platform for a happy and glorious life. Here is man a noble creature—or a creature fundamentally intended for nobleness—with great capacities for intelligence and joy: with great aspirations for high things. Here he is, painfully struggling with abortion in every shape and form. It is no cant or hypochondriacal phrase that describes his lot as one of “vanity and vexation of spirit.” That is the verdict of wisdom: it is the lesson of experience. Only fools challenge it, only men of a limited mind think it an exaggeration. What is the explanation, then, of this distressing situation of things—that a creature formed for goodness—desiring goodness—striving for goodness in some shape and way everywhere, should be weltering in a bottomless bog of failure and evil?

There is a reason both simple and profound, at once satisfactory to wisdom and contemptible to the carnal mind. It is a reason arising out of a fact which we see most conspicuously of all when we look at Christ, especially when we look at him on the cross. The one fact visible above all others as we look at him, is that God exists as well as man. If God exists, God must have rights as well as man. What are those rights? Here is where the natural man stumbles. The universal idea is that the universe exists for man, and that if there is a God, it is only as man’s servant that He has any function. If this is the truth, the state of man as he now is upon the earth is a problem that defies solution.

But it is not the truth. It seems as if the shallowest intellect ought to see that it cannot be the truth, but that only can be the truth which the Bible teaches, that all things exist for God, that His aims, His rights, His principles, and action must prevail. This indeed is forced upon reflection as the unquestionable truth, and as the only explanation of the evil state of things that now distresses us, for when we enquire, we find there is a history to this matter that is open to no other understanding.

### *THE BIBLE TRUE*

The Bible is proved true in so many powerful ways that we only yield to a reasonable guidance in going back with it to Eden to find the root of the matter. God made man for His own purpose, and that purpose required first of all implicit subordination of man’s will to God where God’s will was expressed. This, in the final event was refused, and that crime was so insufferable on every ground that God banished man from his open society, and gave him over for a time to evil and death. When Adam walked out of the garden of Eden to take care of himself, evil began. The evil that has prevailed since is not to be looked upon as the consequence of the sin of Adam in the penal sense. That is, Adam’s posterity are not punished for what Adam did, but what occurred in Adam’s case places his posterity in such a position that the cause that brought death and evil on him continues an operative cause in all their generations. Sin brought exile and death, and sin continues among dying exiles, and the sin that they sin brings punishment of its own, as illustrated in the cases of the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the afflictions of Israel, the destruction of Jeru-

salem, and the overthrow of their land, and as illustrated everywhere, in the distressful experience of man.

The real and simple explanation, then, of the reign of evil, is that God and man are separated. This is a fact not seen in natural life—a fact not discerned, though felt palpably enough in its consequences. Consequently, most men live in indifference to the fact. We once did so—all of us. We are liable to slip into old indifference and to adopt the foolish policy it inspires. It is here where the breaking of bread helps us. It presents matters in their true light. It recalls the mind to things that are not a human invention. Peter has well said,

*“We have not followed cunningly devised fables.”*

### **THE BREAKING OF BREAD**

The breaking of bread itself is not an invention of man. It is an appointment of the Lord. Trace its history, and we find ourselves at last in the presence of him who said—

*“Do this in remembrance of me.”*

Attending to it intelligently, we discern its origin in the unquestionable historic work of Christ and the Apostles, and that work connects us with God, for the work was God’s work:

*“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.”*

Hence, at this Table, we are face to face with the most wonderful work that is going on among men, however feeble may be its aspect for the time being—the most wonderful fact among all the myriads of facts that affect our being, however dim in the glare of

Gentile day—the fact that Christ gave himself for us, that “he might purify unto himself a peculiar people.” If men could estimate this fact at its intrinsic consequence, they would observe a very different attitude to it from what is common. That they cannot do so is due to the mental conditions figuratively expressed thus: “in whom the god of this world hath blinded their eyes.” The present world and all that goes to make it up so fills the orb of their vision that they cannot see beyond it, or through it.

They are unable to realise that the “world passeth away,” and that in the midst of its shifting scenes, a will of God has been announced, the doing of which will secure for the doer this wonderful effect that he will “abide for ever.” Their vision is too contracted. They cannot see things in their true light. We were once in the same position. It is for us, while having compassion for them and trying to turn them from darkness to light, to take care that they do not draw us back into the old position. As Paul expresses it—

*“We are not of the night nor of the darkness, let us watch and be sober.”*

Our watchfulness was to be directed to this very point.

*“Beware lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”*

The world even in its most cultivated and enticing aspects, is alienated from God. The gospel has caused us to be friends of God. It has therefore called us to a position in which there is considerable present inconvenience; for a man cannot be the friend of the world and the friend of God at the same time. Christ has said it, and the nature of

things preclude it. A man who truly knows God requires no arguing on this point. A man who truly knows God yields Him a constant loving reverence; and how can this mix with the mind that prevails in the world, the most predominant feature of which is the absence of reverence?

### **TEACHING OF THE LAW**

Nothing teaches wisdom in this matter more powerfully or more directly than the Law of Moses, and the history of its communication to Israel. For this very purpose they were written, that those who came after might receive the instruction which they naturally imparted to those who received them in the first instance. We deprive ourselves of great good if we neglect their study. What is the foremost lesson of it all, but this that God Himself announces:

*“I will be sanctified in them that approach unto Me.”*

*“I will be exalted”—exalted on every day and always.*

He took hold of a nation for Himself. See what He did with them? First of all, having delivered them with His own naked hand, manifest in direct works of power, in the destruction of Egypt, and their own miraculous rescue from mortal peril, He “humbled them and proved them.” He led them in a great and terrible wilderness and taught them. What did He teach them? Science? No. Of what good to show them how He has made things? Political economy? No. The art of legislation, which being interpreted means self-government by count of human wills, whether wise or foolish? No, no, man is not capable of self-government. See what a miserable pass it has brought

him to after 6,000 years fair experiment. He requires the government of God. He requires God to tell him what to do, and to compel him to do it by power governmentally applied. What God taught Israel was the art of worshipping God and serving man. This was the essence of the Law of Moses. It was taught in many rites and ceremonies, but this was the thing taught. God was in all things and in every way to be exalted as an object of reverence and fear, and love on the basis of fear. Holiness was the perpetual exhibition.

*“I, the Lord thy God am holy.”*

*“Thou shalt fear before Me.”*

It is the lesson of circumcision: of presentation to the Lord; of the purifications presented in the various recurring uncleanness of life; of the sacrifices and offerings in the various relations of experience; of the incessant ablutions connected with approaches to the sanctuary.

The pith of all these things is brought to bear on us in Christ—the Holy One of God. The righteousness of the Law was fulfilled in him, and Paul declares it is fulfilled in us if we walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. Holiness or consecration to God, is the first principle of righteousness; just as God is the first principle or idea of the Spirit. Here is where the world is utterly destitute of godliness, and becoming more so under the leadership of elegant gabblers infected with Darwinism and the “higher criticism.” God is less and less in all their thoughts. With the children of God it is otherwise; they grow in the knowledge and love of God. What greater contrast could we conceive than that between the attitude of the world towards God

and the attitude of the symbolic seraphim:

“Each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face: with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly; and they cried one to another, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.”

This has a practical bearing on us: for though the vision was a symbolic one, it is impossible to mistake its import, the angelic veiling in the presence of the Deity, is not only modesty; it is awe, reverence, fear, and that, too, on the part of the highest beings. As David says,

“Thou art worthy to be had in reverence of all them that approach unto Thee.”

If we are among the chosen at the coming, we shall be incorporated in a community who are symbolised almost in the same way in the Apocalypse, viz, by four living creatures full of eyes, “who rest not day or night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty . . . Thou art worthy to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou hast created all things.”

These are among the things brought to mind by this Table of the Lord and

which help us to see our life in its true light. Life upon the earth at present is afflicted because God is not allowed His place in human life. He will yet acquire that place without setting aside the free agency of man. He is slowly creating for Himself a family in whose affections He lives and whose life He controls by His Law, and whom at the appointed time He will glorify with incorruptibility of nature. If the process is a painful one, it is because the result is an everlasting one. God’s claim on human love and obedience is so reasonable, and so beneficent in its operations; and its repudiation is so destructive of every good and noble feature in life that no enforcement of it can be too stringent. But there is a plan of beneficence in all the confusion. Out of the chaos will come shining order and joy. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the announcement of this. But triumph will not come except with the triumph of the principle, overthrown at the beginning—the principle of God’s supremacy. To this principle we have yielded ourselves willing captives. To this principle, let us continue in devoted and unwearying subjection; and ours will at last be the unspeakable joy of beholding its unchallenged and irresistible ascendancy in the great and long-promised day of its earth-filling glory.

*Robert Roberts, “Seasons of Comfort”*

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### OMISSION

By an oversight we omitted to credit our recent special issue on “*The Most Reliable English Bible*” as being for the most part the work of Brother Peter Moore. We are thankful for our brother’s labours, and will rectify the situation in future prints of the issue.

Readers are notified that extra copies of this special issue can be obtained from the Secretary as per back cover at cost price

CAM

# **The Very God of Peace**

## **Reading: 1st Thessalonians 5:23 - 24**

The first Epistle to the Thessalonians ends with this incredibly comforting prayer of the Apostle for these first century believers.

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it”.

This is actually the second of two “wish prayers” that the Eternal Spirit through the Apostle records within the letter. The first thing for us to note here brethren and sisters is that we are dealing with the same God. Our Heavenly Father does not change; He is that same yesterday, and today and forever, for with Him is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

Indeed the scriptures declare for it is our Father’s good pleasure to give us the kingdom. Let each of us note brethren that “it is his good pleasure”, so it’s not just any old whimsical desire, but something that would provide our Father with the greatest pleasure.

Here in this prayer brethren and sisters powerfully portrayed for us, is the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father towards those who are beloved in Christ. Notice carefully how our Heavenly Father is described for us here as the “very God of peace”. These 1st century brethren and sisters from Thessalonica had already endured and were continuing to endure much tribulation, so this title of our Heavenly Father here would have been of supreme comfort to them. Yet there is much, much more to this title of our Heavenly Father.

Here we have one of the key elements to these New Testament prayers in that within the prayer the character of our Heavenly Father is emphasised, usually with special attention to one of his attributes. In this case “peace”, which is one of his communicable attributes in that He desires to duplicate this peace both with us individually and collectively as an ecclesia. Indeed until the whole earth is at peace.

This is clear from the context in which this prayer is found in that this final section of the epistle is all about dwelling together to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The Master gave a similar exhortation in:

**In John Chapter 14 and at verse 27** we read

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”.

“Peace”, my beloved Brethren and Sisters is speaking here not only then of a divine attribute of Almighty God, but it is also a description of his work in us through Christ. For as we read elsewhere “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

The exhortation here is this present peace we have with our Heavenly Father in Christ is not just an end in its self, rather there is an eternal purpose to it, which can be clearly seen from the rest of this prayer.

This peace has to be achieved in three distinct relationships. Firstly and foundationally with our Heavenly Father in Christ and we have each come here today to remember that work of redemption.

Indeed **in Hebrews Chapter 13 and verses 20 – 21**

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”.

Secondly as a result of this we can have peace in ourselves, which will allow us to thirdly have peace with one another in our ecclesial relationships. The order for these three aspects of the outworking of this peace is important brethren and sisters. For any attempt to subvert this order will not result in peace.

Some five times the number of grace, do we find this New Testament title the “God of peace”. In three of the occasions it is speaking as it does here of our redemption in the Lord Jesus Christ in that final day, when Yahweh shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly.

Whereas in the other two references it is speaking of the peace, which must be manifested amongst our selves. For if one of our Heavenly Father’s attributes is peace, then we too, if we are to be called his children need to be peacemakers. Did not our Lord and Master say “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God”.

This peace is to be all encompassing in our own and ecclesial lives, regardless of the circumstantial turmoil of day to day life. It is through this understanding of peace that we can indeed have joy and be able to rejoice in all cases and events.

So then, this peace then is not just something granted to us individually, but it also to become an attribute of our characters manifested in our ecclesia’s. Please note that this peace is not the spirit of compromise, which seeks only freedom from any strife. Rather this is a peace, which comes from being united in purpose and action around a mutual understanding of the truth.

The prayer continues that the very God of peace “sanctify you wholly”. Now the word “sanctify” means to both set apart from something and to consecrate to something. So there are both positive and negative aspects to this work of God, through Christ. In the Greek this word “sanctify” and indeed also the word “preserved” later in the verse are in the *optative* mood. *Optative* just means that this request is the strong wish of the Apostle for these first century brethren and sisters.

This process of sanctification, which our Heavenly Father has begun in each of our lives brethren and sisters, will result if we allow the Father to complete his work in us through Christ. In each of us being made partakers of the divine nature and escaping the corruption that is in this world through lust. Thus as we become more like the Master, we will have greater peace in our relationships with our God, with ones self and with each other.

Now in Philippians chapter four we are given an example of ecclesial strife generated by two sisters. The Eternal Spirit through the Apostle exhorts the brethren and sisters present to resolve the issue. Rather they were to concentrate on those things in the truth, which generate this peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

### **Philippians Chapter 4 and verse 9**

“Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you”.

This exhortation is actually picking up how the Master himself learned from his Father and how the Apostle learned from our Lord. Thus the Apostle exhorts these Philippian brethren and sisters to imitate him, as he has imitated the Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact first Thessalonians chapter two, which is our reading for the day is a beautiful expansion of this verse in Philippians four. In this second chapter the Apostle is defending himself from his Jewish detractors who sought to argue that He worked in ecclesial life in the spirit of the flesh for gain, as is clear in the first six verses.

Rather in verses seven to twelve we have the Apostle and his ministry team spiritually parenting these young brethren and sisters in the truth.

### **Turn back to chapter 2 and verses 7 – 12**

“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of

you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory”.

This is how we each are to behave within ecclesial life brethren and sisters. Look carefully at the way the Spirit portrays the gentle character of the Apostle and the brethren with him. Living embodiments of the gospel of God. Paul not only loved these brethren whom he had known for only a short time, but he willingly gave himself to them, as a living sacrifice.

Is part of our problem brethren and sisters in not being able to manifest such love consistently, because we know about one another’s warts and all? We need to learn to take the long view of one another that we are all divine works in progress and see what we shall be in the mercy of our God. Rather than what we currently are.

Here then the Apostle models for us the very character of not only our Lord and Master, but also of our Heavenly Father in his care for these babes in the truth.

We likewise need to develop this same paternal spirit of endearing love and responsibility with regards to one another. Because in doing so, we shall be like our Heavenly Father in pursuing peace. If our Heavenly Father could unite Jew and Gentile in the first century, then surely brethren it is not without his ability and power to unite even us who have nowhere near as great cultural distance between us.

### **Ephesians Chapter 2 and verses 14 - 18**

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father”.

So the application of peace in our ecclesial lives is part of our participation in the atoning work of our Master. Please understand me here brethren, the sacrifice of the Master cannot be added too by us, it is completely efficacious. But we show it to be efficacious in our lives, when we individually and collectively seek and ensue peace.

**In Hebrews Chapter 12 and at verses 14 - 15** we have this salutary warning:

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled”.

Take note that the word “follow” in the Greek here is a present imperative command, meaning it is an ongoing necessity for us to pursue this peace. Through both allowing and actively working with our Heavenly Father in Christ. To bring about the complete sanctification of our whole Spirit, soul and body in our belief of the truth.

This work of sanctifying us through the word of life having its effect; through the providential care of the angels and our interactions one with another is a work then of our Heavenly Father as a peacemaker. Restoring the breach which sin made into the creation, due to Adam’s failure and our compounding of that failure through our own sin ever since.

Thus in the bread and wine brethren and sisters before us upon the table we see the great price which was paid to bring to pass this peace, even the precious blood of the Master. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, for to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

**In Colossians Chapter 3 and verses 10 – 15**

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful”.

We see then brethren and sisters the consistency of the message for us to be made wholly at peace with our God; we are to become renewed in our thinking and character. As peace we are informed elsewhere is a fruit of the spirit and they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Indeed Ephesians speaks of each one of us having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that our walk would indeed be worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

No wonder then this prayer speaks of us being sanctified “wholly”. This word in the Greek only occurs here and is a qualitative term. It speaks of completeness in every aspect hence the three-part rendering of “spirit and soul and body”. The word is speaking of a process or journey, which will take some time, but one which has a definite end. Therefore brethren and sisters let us be confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Now this three part rendering in verse twenty three in the AV of our “whole spirit and soul and body”, at first seems odd, but actually corresponds to those three relationships of peace we have already highlighted. Namely with our Heavenly Father and our Master, with our own selves and finally with one another in Christ and indeed all men. These three parts then spirit and soul and body speak of our complete being, nothing is left out and everything is to be brought into the obedience of Christ.

All is to be “preserved blameless”, now as we said earlier the word preserved here is also in the *optative* mood indicating the strong desire and wish of the Apostle for these brethren at Thessalonica.

Here was what Paul desired the Father to achieve in their lives; indeed the Apostle knew and recognised that only God could perform this. Brethren and sisters is this the kind of prayer, we pray one for another and desire in one another’s lives?

This word “preserved” carries the idea of keeping guard over and taking great care of. As the Thessalonian brethren and sisters were undergoing great tribulation it is entirely apt that the Apostle prays, such a prayer.

Yet note that he does not leave it, just in the here and now, as it were. Rather the Apostle extends the two wishes of his prayer until the coming of our Lord and Master. Thus he is not only praying that these brethren and sisters be preserved through their current trials. But rather he desires that our Heavenly Father would take care of them until the end. Thus there is a purpose for their preservation beyond the immediate.

We too brethren and sisters need to learn to root our prayers not just in the moment for one another’s immediate needs both physical and spiritual. But also importantly in the eternal realities of the coming kingdom and the return of our Lord.

The Apostle then prays not only that these brethren whom he loved were preserved until the coming day of the Lord, but also that their preservation might be “blameless” unto that day. The word “blameless” here carries the idea of these brethren and sisters being without anything against them, when they stand at the judgement seat of Christ. This equally should be our prayer one for another brethren and sisters.

When we examine prayers such as this one in 1st Thessalonians five, we find that our Heavenly Father is neither uncaring nor remote from us brethren and sisters. Despite what our current circumstances may indicate to the contrary at times. Rather we find our God, acting as a Father unto us exhorting, comforting and charging each one of us as his children. So that we might walk worthy of Yahweh, who hath called us unto his kingdom and glory?

### **In 2nd Thessalonians Chapter 3 and at verse 16**

“Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all”.

Now there are two other things in these verses to note concerning our Heavenly Father. Firstly the expression “very God”. In the Greek the word “very” here means Himself and it is both emphatic and intensive meaning that, “He and He alone will”, will ensure that this work He desires completed will be perfected in us.

Our belief then rests on the character of our Heavenly Father, based upon our understanding that “it is impossible for God to lie” and that “with Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” From this we can therefore have supreme confidence in His assertion that He is God, that He has the power to bring about the finality of this peace.

The second point of encouraging exhortation concerning the Father is this “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it”. Here the Eternal Spirit through the Apostle seeks to dispel any lingering doubts, our Heavenly Father is completely trustworthy. Literally, to show the emphasis, the text places emphasis on Yahweh’s faithfulness in that it reads, “Faithful is the One, Who calls you, Who also will do it.” The trustworthiness and fidelity of the Almighty then is reinforced towards these brethren and our selves, it forms the seal to the great purpose of this powerful prayer.

The Apostle having prayed this prayer outlining his spiritual desires for these brethren and sisters at Thessalonica and then Paul asserts that our Heavenly Father is more than capable of performing his prayer. We brethren and sisters need to have the faith of the great patriarch Job who said in the midst of his calamity: “though he slay me, yet will I trust in him”.

Like these Thessalonian brethren and sisters, when unpleasant problems and issues confront our lives. Let us rejoice and acknowledge that He is dealing with us as sons and so is sanctifying us to his glory and our eternal well being.

Brethren and sisters as is witnessed by the emblems upon the table our Heavenly Father is completely trustworthy in that He has already raised his son from the dead. This prayer of the Apostle exhorts us to be strong and of a good courage for I will never leave nor forsake thee. For in the prayer we see the desire of the Father towards those who shall make up the bride for his son.

## **Jude verse 24**

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”.

Let us remember the one who has overcome the world and upon whom we wait. As we come now to partake of these emblems, we see the one who gave himself for us in that body prepared as the perfect sacrifice, as is evident in the bread. Which is the word made flesh our example of a life of sanctification. For the word is our tool in working with the Father in our sanctification, after the Master’s example

Likewise in the wine we see the shed blood of our Lord and Master and we acknowledge the great price that was paid. A price, which our Heavenly Father was willingly pleased to pay, because of what it would accomplish through his son. Thus in the shed blood we see our necessary part in showing the efficacy of his sacrifice in the laying down of our lives for our brethren. Just as He laid down his life for his friends.

In 2nd Corinthians Chapter 13 and at verse 11 we read

*“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you”.*

*Wayne Marshall*

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## **The Number Five**

Bible Students have long recognised the importance of numbers in Scripture. Each number seems to carry a particular significance, and the importance of this is illustrated in the naming of a particular Angel “*Palmoni*” or “*wonderful Number*” (see Daniel 8:13, marginal rendering). It would appear that this Angel is in some way involved with this numbering aspect of Scripture. Sometimes however, the difficulty in defining which number speaks of which aspect is not easy, leading some to conclude that numerology is by no means certain, and the meanings are arbitrarily decided with little evidence. The number 5 is an example of this: traditionally the number 5 is said to represent *Grace*. We believe however, that there are 2 independent lines of reasoning that support that position.

### ***INCENSE AND SALT***

Exodus chapter 30 describes the various components of Incense:

“Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanium: these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each there shall be a like weight” (Exod. 30:34).

Notice in this description, there are four ingredients:

1. Stacte
2. Onycha
3. Galbanium
4. Pure frankincense

However, there was an additional fifth ingredient, alluded to in the marginal rendering of the AV:

“thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary *salted together*, pure and holy” (Exod. 30:25).

Salt then, was used in mixing the ingredients together, and was therefore a *fifth* ingredient. Under the symbolism of the Mosaic Law, Incense is representative of prayer—hence the Psalmist wrote: “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense” (Psa. 141:2). These things come together in Colossians chapter 4:

“let your speech be always *with Grace, seasoned with salt*, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col. 4:6).

Notice these things: to speak with grace is to be seasoned with salt. Salt therefore, as the 5th ingredient represents grace in speech. Just as under the Law of Moses Incense ascended before the Father as representing the prayers of the nation, so in the New Covenant, all of our speech, not only those directed to Yahweh, must be seasoned with the salt of Grace.

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### ***THE LAMPSTANDS OF THE TEMPLE***

Under the Temple arrangement of things, there were 10 lampstands that gave light for the ministering for the holy things. But the Spirit is careful to note a particular aspect of their arrangement:

“... he made ten lampstands of gold, according to their form, and set them in the temple, *five on the right hand and five on the left*” (2 Chron. 4:7).

Notice this, it is not simply the case that there were 10 lampstands, it is specifically stated that there were *5 on each side*. This meant that when the priest entered into the Holy of Holies (each year), he would pass through the lampstands on each side of him, looking forward to entering into the place of Glory, and Yahweh’s dwelling among men.

This arrangement seems to be alluded to in the Apostle’s Epistle to the Romans:

“... therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith *into this grace wherein we stand*, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2).

Notice this: whereas the High Priest stood with 5 lampstands on each side, even so we have access into the Holy of Holies by faith, “into *this grace* wherein we stand”. And whereas the High Priest looked forward to entering into the effulgence of Divine Glory, even so we rejoice in the hope of beholding the glory of God, as manifested in the age to come.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the parallelisms described above where Grace and the number 5 are linked together, we can see that assigning meanings to numbers in Scripture need not be an arbitrary affair. Rather, in this case at least, it would seem that there are good Scriptural reasons why certain meanings can be ascribed to certain numbers.

*Christopher Maddocks*

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## **Correspondence**

My Dear Brethren,

A quick look – why are we here?

The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof. Therefore He gives when he wants to give.

The purpose of this dispensation of time is not to amass wealth but to live a life that recognises the maker on HIS TERMS.

God blesses the bad and the good but now it is a ‘window period’ to find out what and how by consulting His inspired word.

All things in life are done well by those who spend time and energy on them. We have to commit ourselves to God by giving the best of our abilities towards developing obedience based on knowledge and wilful endeavours to please Him all the days of our lives.

For God is pleased by our synchronised efforts relative to what He makes available to us more than anything else. God looks at our hearts and considers our sincerity in line with our objectives, he knows how we are formed and therefore knows us. He considers our ability to do good and credits that to us as far as we can conform to the way of salvation he has given to all man.

Pro 8:17: I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Psa 34:18: The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

It is very easy to live a life of assumptions that we are His and turn that around and start taking Him as if He is ours for our manipulation. God does not change but we do.

This is why we are constantly reminded to remember the first love and go back to that former state. Which was founded on joyfulness of heart through something new we had just found.

Just as the parable teaches about finding that which we lost through Adam and found through Jesus and then rejoicing because it is worth more than anything we had before.

Amos 5:23: Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.

Luke 12:15: And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

An honest consideration of the above verses will show that there is more to life than we search for daily.

Ecc 7:29: Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Jer 10:23: O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Isa 8:19: And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

Many men tell us how to get rich and others will tell us God has purposed us to be rich but the word of God teaches contrary to this for it says many times in different ways Mar 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

If only we can remember that it is His will and pleasure to see us in the kingdom, but God will not tolerate evil, we therefore have to conform to His word because it brings the qualities acceptable to Him.

In that as we learn and apply, conform, that is if we maintain the position of searching out the scriptures and prayerfully adopt that which we learn for the sake of living by them.

Mal 3:7:Even from the days of your fathers Ye have turned aside from My statutes, And ye have not taken heed. Turn back unto Me, and I turn back to you, Said Jehovah of Hosts. And ye have said, `In what do we turn back?'

Mal 3:8:Doth man deceive God? but ye are deceiving Me, And ye have said: `In what have we deceived Thee?' The tithe and the heave-offering!

Jer 29:13: And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Zep 2:3:Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

Jas 4:8:Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Ecc 12:13Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

*Brother Tendai Gombera Nailuwa*

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## **Daniel 2 and the Hope of Israel**

In a previous study, we compared the prophecy of Daniel chapter 2, with the vision of the prophet described in Daniel chapter 7. We saw that chapter 7 describes the beast-nations as having their dominion extended for a “season” and a “time” amounting to a thousand years. Chapter 2 however, brings us to the end of the Millennium, when those kingdoms will also cease to exist, and the earth in all it’s entirety shall be filled with God’s kingdom. This is the language of chapter 2:

*“thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:34-35).*

The metal man, standing uprightly as a symbol of man's dominion is to be finally "broken to pieces", and the stone grows to become a replica of that from which it was derived.

This language echoes the words of other prophets concerning the perpetuation of Israel, and the eventual destruction of all other nations. Jeremiah 30 describes a prophecy towards Israel:

"... I am with you, saith Yahweh, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11)

Notice the theme: the destruction of nations, and the perpetuation of Israel. Sometimes this verse is misquoted, as being applicable to the Babylonians, the Medo-Persians and the like: great empires which today cease to exist. But the passage states that God will make a full end of "all" nations amongst which Israel were scattered. What about Germany—the scene of terrible persecutions against the Jews. What about Britain, to which many Jews were scattered in exile? The wording of Jeremiah 30 here indicates something on a much larger scale than what we might recognise: the "full end" of all nations upon the face of the earth—except Israel.

Isaiah chapter 45 is also helpful in its teaching on this point:

"Israel shall be saved in Yahweh with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed or confounded world without end" (verse 17).

Notice the language: Israel shall exist "world without end" having an "everlasting salvation". But notice the verse which follows:

"For thus saith Yahweh that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, **he formed it to be inhabited**: I am Yahweh; and there is none else" (Isa. 45:18).

These two verses together demonstrate how it is the purpose of God to establish a single nation in the earth: Israel, redeemed and glorified.

#### ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL

The disciples of Messiah, having received a 40 day period of instruction about the coming kingdom enquired: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel"? (Acts 1:6). Though they knew not the time, they understood that the kingdom to come is essentially an *Israelitish* kingdom restored. The Apostle Paul was held in chains for "the hope of *Israel*" (Acts 28:20). And Jesus himself taught "salvation is of the Jews" (Jno. 4:22).

The ecclesia of God, being founded upon the covenants of promise given to Abraham and David, are described in Galatians as the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). Being the seed of Abraham through faith, they are Jews indeed, circumcised in the foreskin of their heart: "for he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But *he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose*

*praise is not of men, but of God*" (Rom. 2:28-29).

The Gospel then, is the "good news" concerning the kingdom that will be restored to Israel, a kingdom which shall grow to be world-wide to the eventual exclusion of all other kingdoms.

The way in which this growth is described in Daniel 2 is most interesting. The Stone which strikes the image at his feet is described as being "cut out of the mountain without hands" (Dan. 2:45), but itself grows to become "a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35). That is to say, the Stone becomes a replica of that from whence it came. This, in essence, is the principle of what we call "God Manifestation".

### ***GOD MANIFESTATION***

Elsewhere in Scripture it is stated that:

"the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Again:

"blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen" (Psa. 72:19)

And again:

"... Holy, Holy, Holy is Yahweh of Armies: the *whole earth is full of his glory*"

The consistent testimony concerning Yahweh's Purpose with the earth is that the entire globe shall be "full of his

Glory". In the prophecy of Daniel 2, as we have shown, the Stone becomes an image, or replica of that from whence it was derived. Putting these things together then, we see that the Son of God shall establish a global kingdom which will ultimately see all of the earth being filled with those individuals who show forth his moral qualities: i.e. his "glory".

### ***PULLING THE THREADS TOGETHER***

In the above, we have considered many parallel principles, which it would be profitable to bring together before we proceed any further. All of these principles are to do with the earth being filled:

- Daniel 2 the earth is filled with a mountain from a stone that originated from a mountain itself
- The combined testimony of the prophets is that Israel only will remain after all other nations are broken in pieces
- Scripturally, the "Israel of God" is comprised of those individuals whose faith is based upon the promises made to Abraham and David
- The Testimony of Scripture is that ultimately all that will remain in the earth will be "his glory" i.e. the glory of Yahweh, elsewhere described: "that God may be all in all"

Pulling these points together, we see the Hope of Israel taught very plainly in the prophecy of Daniel 2, in its description of a single worldwide kingdom replacing the fractious kingdoms of men. That Kingdom is Israel restored and magnified, and as our hope

is vested in that coming kingdom, we, like Paul, share “the hope of Israel”.

### **THE REVEALED MYSTERY**

Having shown the connection between Daniel chapter 2 and the gospel of the coming Kingdom, it is highly interesting to note the similarity with which each of these messages were given.

The circumstances of Daniel 2 are all about the making known of a “secret”, or mystery. Nebuchadnezzar was shown certain particulars in a dream, and no-one in his kingdom knew either what those particulars were, or what they represented. The challenge by the king to the wisest and mightiest men of his dominion was to both reveal the dream, and explain what it meant:

“but if ye will not make known to me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me ... tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof” (Dan. 2:9).

The wisest men of Babylon could not reveal the dream, and were hence condemned to death. The captain of the guard went forth to slay all of the wise men of the kingdom “and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain” (Dan. 2:130). The situation looked bleak: Daniel, his friends, and the wise men of Babylon were under a sentence of death, from which they needed redeeming.

This latter aspect is important to note, for in this chapter we have the stated reason for the dream being made known through Daniel. Verse 18: “that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of

Babylon”. Again, verse 30: “this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living *but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king*, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart”.

We find then, that the purpose of the secret being revealed was to effect salvation for God’s people, who were under a sentence of death.

Compare these details with the description we have in 1 Corinthians regarding the making known of the Gospel message. Verse 22 of Daniel 2 speaks of Yahweh: “he *revealeth the deep* and secret things”. And 1 Corinthians 2 describes the principles of the Gospel: “God *hath revealed* them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the *deep things* of God” (1 Cor. 2:10). Moreover, the same chapter speaks of this mystery: “which *none of the princes of this world knew* ...” (1 Cor. 2:7). Just like the wise men of Babylon, the professors of this world do not know the deep things of the Spirit. Again, 1 Corinthians speaks of those through whom the message came: “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty” (1 Cor. 1:27): the application of these words to Daniel and his friends is striking.

So it is, that in the revealing of the Gospel through men of Yahweh’s providing, the wisdom of the wise was brought to nothing, being exposed as folly (1 Cor. 1:19-20), and the humble who embraced it in hope become exalted: elevated to ultimately be set on high in joyful unity with the glorified Son of God.

*Christopher Maddocks*

# **A LIVING FAITH**

## **Our Manner of Life**

When we consider the great price that has been paid for us and the great love extended towards us, really it is very reasonable matter that we are asked to respond to that love. If we truly do love the Lord our God, then we will strive to obey His Word and put the Commandments into practice day by day. In addition we will earnestly desire the return of the Lord Jesus and strive to diligently prepare for that great and glorious day. By way of exhortation Peter asks:

“What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God” (2 Peter 3:11-12)

That word ‘ought’ means: ‘it is necessary’, or ‘there is need of’, or ‘it is right and proper’. It is indeed only right and proper, that as children of the Almighty, we live our lives striving to be holy, separate and undefiled to the best of our abilities. There is a great need for personal conduct to be upright and to be ‘Christ like’ in our way of life and behaviour. Indeed Paul speaks of this as being our ‘reasonable service’. So we read:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1)

That word reasonable means, logical or rational. Reflecting upon the great price paid for our redemption, the great mercy extended towards us and the divine love shown towards us surely must inspire a willing, wholehearted response. The rational response is to demonstrate loving appreciation by obedience to His Word. Our manner of life must change as we grow in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith and love will be shown not merely by our words, but by our actions.

Yet as always being so prone to forgetfulness we need constantly reminding about the true values in life. We must maintain the right perspective, thus Jesus commands us to remain in his love lest we stray:

“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in my love. ”If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in His love”.(John 15:9-10)

Now the Commandments of Christ booklet is a loved and valued reminder of the principle teachings of Christ. Our manner of life must manifest obedience to those commandments, if faith is to be something that is living, vibrant and active in our daily lives. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What do those commandments mean to me personally?
- What effect do they have upon my daily life?

- How am I as an individual, personally putting them into practice?

These questions are very pertinent for Jesus must come first and above all else in our lives. Indeed he is our life! Did not Jesus say:

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26-27)

What does bearing a cross daily mean? Clearly, it means a sacrifice of self, a crucifying or putting to death the ‘old man’ and following Christ daily. In other words, not our will, but doing the will of Yahweh as expressed in the commandments so clearly laid out in scripture.

So then what do I mean by suggesting that the commandments of Christ are personalised? Well, firstly consider the greatest commandment of all, Jesus said:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment.” Mark 12:30

What does this mean in practical terms?

Personalising this commandment might go something like this:

- Service to God must be first in my life: (Matthew 6:33)
- I must work in the Lords service faithfully and diligently to the best of my abilities: (Isaiah 66:1-2; Matthew 24:45-47; 1Tim 2:15)

To give another example of personalising the commandments of Christ we can recall that Jesus provided the means by which in his absence his disciples would be reminded about his ministry and resurrection. We read:

“And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.” (Luke 22:19-20)

What does this mean in practical terms?

Well, if we honestly desire to remember Jesus and all that he represents, then again personalising this commandment might go something like this:

- Jesus must be my example in everything and I will try to be like him. (1Peter 2:21-23; John 13:15-16)
- Only through Jesus can my sin be covered, therefore I must remain in him.

(John 15:5-7; Heb 2:1-3)

- My aim must be to prepare diligently for when Jesus Christ returns. Because of this, I will not get too engrossed with the work and interests of this life. (Matt 24:44; Luke 12:35-38, 40; 2Peter 3:10-14)

For a third example of personalising the commandments of Christ consider these words of John:

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1John 1:6-7)

What does this mean in practical terms?

Well before answering that question let us first reflect upon some more scripture:

“The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.” (Psalm 119:130)

“Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

Without the Word of Yahweh there is only utter spiritual darkness. Therefore our manner of life must be subjected to the scrutiny of His Word which alone can illuminate and guide our feet in the way of life. There can only ever be one Truth, any other gospel is a lie and will not save. Therefore personalising this commandment to “walk in the light” might go something like this:

- I cannot have fellowship with those who live in darkness, but must set an example to others: (Eph 5:11)
- I cannot have fellowship with those who turn away from sound doctrine and/or practice: (Gal 1:6-9; 2 Thess 3:6,14; 2 John 8-10)

*Andy Peel*

*Let not our faith die. The grimy and oppressive surroundings of the present dispensation, though they seem so permanent, are as transient as the disturbed dreams of the night. The hour will come when they will have disappeared from our view, and when nothing will be visible on earth but the blessedness in Abraham and his seed - long promised and come at last*

*Brother Robert Roberts*

## **“Where There is no Vision ...”**

*“Where there is no vision, the people perish:  
but he that keepeth the Law, happy is he” (Prov. 29:18)*

The above citation contains what we might call an implied parallelism. That is, there are two parallel expressions bringing out differing aspects of the same thing. The first is “where there is no vision the people perish”, the second carries the implication that those who keep the Law shall see, shall not perish, but be happy: *“but he that keepeth the Law, happy is he”*. In this article, we wish to examine the theme of vision and spiritual sight, by way of exhortation for those who seek after heavenly things.

We have already stated the first conclusion above: that those who keep the Law are men and women of *vision*. These are they who look beyond the letter of the Mosaic ordinance to the spirit that it contained. Israel as a nation could not perceive the glory of the Law, how it foreshadowed how Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah and Redeemer, and are therefore described in Scripture as having no vision.

When Moses descended from the mount (having been in the Divine Presence) his face shone with glory. Indeed, it shone to such an extent that the people were afraid, and could not look upon it. To remedy the situation, Moses wore a veil across his face, until the glory faded, and he would appear as normal.

The point made in 2 Corinthians

chapter 3, is that this is like the way in which the people could not look upon the glory of the Law. The Law had a glory, but like Moses' face, it was a fading glory, to be replaced by another, greater glory still. And just as Israel could not look upon Moses' face, even so they could not perceive it's glory in relation it's teaching regarding Christ. So the Apostle writes:

*“ ... we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded: for until this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart”*

Israel therefore, suffered from blindness of heart: being without vision they perished in their sins.

But Gentiles also suffer from blindness and antipathy to Divine things. So the next chapter continues:

*“if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not. Lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them” (2 Cor. 4:3-4)*

So it is then, that both Jew and Gentile come together in their ignorance and disbelief concerning the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

However, the same chapter speaks of those who do have spiritual sight; who are able to look beyond the temporal affairs of the present to the day of coming glory when Messiah shall reward men according to their deeds:

“our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:17-18).

The Apostle Paul was truly a man of vision—though he experienced many trials and difficulties, yet he remained focussed on the things to do with the coming kingdom: eternal things, things of great weight than the difficulties of this life that shall become but a fading memory in the Age to Come.

*“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law”*

This passage (from Psa. 119:18) is often misquoted as ‘evidence’ for divine guidance coming upon us, leading us into a correct understanding of divine things. So it is reasoned that we should ask for the help of God’s spirit to guide our thoughts into an understanding of his ways.

We have refuted this argument in a previous issue, but would like to notice a number of features in this context.

Firstly, the word “open” as in “open thou mine eyes” carries the sense of “uncover” or unveil—and is so rendered 34 times in the AV. David is therefore desiring to see those things hidden from Jewry generally—he wishes to know those things veiled from them. The second point to note is that David was a prophet, and by definition therefore was also a “seer,” shown things by revelation, which things are laid upon for us to read in the Holy Scripture.

Speaking of David along these lines, Peter spoke at the day of Pentecost:

“... being a prophet, and knowing that God ha sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he *seeing this before* spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption ...” (Acts 2:30-31)

Here then is the fulfilment of David’s request to be unveiled, and see things pertaining to Messiah: as a prophet, “seeing this before”, he spake thus and thus.

In this same place, it is highly interesting to note that Peter cites Psalm 16 in application to Christ: “David speaketh concerning him, *I foresaw the Lord always before my face*, for he is on my right hand, that I should

not be moved ... thou hast made known to me the ways of life; ***thou shalt make me full of joy with thy face***" (Acts 2:25-28).

Our Master then, had a vision of Joy: he was made "full of joy" - but by what? "with thy countenance [i.e. face]". So the Psalm in question states: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. 16:11). Christ then looked to the Joy at his Father's Right Hand.

The principles of this Psalm are also cited in Hebrews chapter 12, where we are specifically invited to look to Jesus as one who overcame the world through the vision of Joy that he had ever before him:

"... let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who ***for the joy that was set before him*** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down ***at the right hand*** of the throne of God ..." (Heb. 12:2).

It wasn't simple determination that enabled our Master to overcome: it was a joyous vision that lay beyond the sufferings of this life. Like Paul, Messiah despised the shame of suffering in mortal weakness, but also like Paul, he was focussed on that weight of glory that is laid up for those who overcome.

### A VISION OF HOPE AND JOY

Speaking of the patriarchs of old Hebrews chapter 11 records: "these all

died in faith, not having received the promises, but ***having seen them afar off***, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13).

Notice this: they did not simply believe the promises, being persuaded, they "embraced" them in love—an not only so, for their sight led them to confess that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They belonged to a day yet future, a day that belongs to those who yearn for it during the darkness of a Gentile night. So Jesus specifically recorded of Abraham, that he "rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (Jno. 8:56). Like Messiah himself, Abraham rejoiced at the vision set before him, and manifested the faith that saves.

Another Old Testament Character who demonstrated a vision of heavenly things, is Job. Despite the weight of affliction that he endured, he maintained his confidence and hope throughout: "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job. 19:26). Job manifest the nature of Christ's own faith: a vision of joy and pleasures at the right hand of enthroned Omnipotence. This is what we look towards: to "see God" (Mat. 5:8):

"beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, ***we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is***. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1Jno. 3:2).

## THE SHAME OF NAKEDNESS

Our opening citation reads in the AV: “where there is no vision, the people perish”, however, the marginal rendering gives a different sense for the word “perish”. The word literally means *to unloose*, and hence the marginal rendering is “*made naked.*” There are many passages that exhort us to be found wearing proper spiritual clothing at the coming of Messiah, but I’d just like to consider one of these:

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame” (Rev. 16:15).

Notice the context here: again it is to do with having sight, but here it is

“watching” those things going on around us. We need to watch, and take care that we remain spiritually clothed with fine linen which is the righteousness of saints (Rev. 19:8).

Again, we see the importance of having spiritual sight: without it, we will be unable to behold affairs as they stand in the sight of God, and will not clothe ourselves accordingly. We find then, that there are 2 senses in which we must have “vision”, firstly an ability to perceive Divine things, and secondly, to be aware of our surroundings, and events of the world around us. With these two combined, we behold a vision of glory yet to come, and be watchful in a day of darkness and danger, to enable us to prepare for that day.

*Christopher Maddocks*

### **“The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”**

*If this was suitable language for saints of the first century, how is it unsuitable now? It cannot be so. It can only be a saintship having a name to live but is dead, that finds such language awkward.*

*Of course, there is such a thing as can't: no righteous man would advocate that; but there is such a thing as the other extreme. There is such a thing as being proud before God; not broken and contrite in heart; not humble under His mighty hand; ashamed to acknowledge our dependence on Him. This is the natural man, who is pretty strong with us all to start with.*

*But we have put on the new man, if we be Christ's; and the language of the new man is a different thing from that of the old. The language of the new man is to be learnt in the Word. The Spirit of the new man is to be drunk-in there. Let this Word dwell richly in us, and we shall soon be at home in those pure, lofty, dignified forms of speech in which it finds expression. If we fail to read the Word continually, we shall fail in this matter of salt-seasoned speech.*

*Brother Robert Roberts*

## **Overcoming The Carnal Mind**

There are those of our number who effectively deny that our Lord was “tempted in all points like as we are” (Heb 4:15) by claiming that he could never have experienced the “lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:16,17), or the internal thought to transgress. In this study, we shall search out Bible Teaching on the matter.

In Romans Chapter 8, the Apostle wrote under inspiration concerning two classes of humanity: “they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom 8:5-7). Notice here that it is those who walk “after the flesh” that constitute the “carnally minded”, demonstrating that the “carnal mind” is a natural, fleshly way of thinking, that leads men into a way of life which is “enmity against God”.

Bro Thomas commented on this passage thus:

“The Carnal Mind is an expression used by Paul; or rather, it is the translation of words used by him ... it is not so explicit as the original. The words he wrote are ... the thinking of the flesh” (Elpis Israel, p89).

The natural constitution of man being “sinful flesh”, the “thinking of the flesh” is his natural inclination of thought towards the fulfilment of his natural lusts. In our previous considerations, we saw that man can naturally produce no good thing, for no good thing dwells within him (Rom 7:18), only Sin (Rom 7:20), that is, “sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:3). Even from the womb (Ps 58:3), man is motivated entirely by his carnal desires, and in this respect is no better than the beasts that perish (Ps 40:20). Like the beasts, his grovelling instincts can rise no higher than the lusts of the flesh, for it was by the adoption of a beast's mind that the first act of sin took place.

The serpent, it is testified was “more subtle than any beast of the field which Yahweh Elohim had made” (Gen 3:1), and it was by hearkening to its subtle reasoning that Eve and her husband were induced to transgress the Divine Command. They received the Serpent’s carnal thoughts into their hearts; the result being that by transgression, “the eyes of them both were opened” to a new carnal awareness, and the carnal serpentine mind became infixed within them. By the very nature of things therefore, the unenlightened man “cannot please God”; he walks only “according to the course of this world”, fulfilling “the desires of the flesh and of the mind”, being worthy only of the wrath of God (Eph 2:2,3).

This bestial class of men, the Apostle describes as “they that are after the flesh”, or the “carnally minded”, being related only to “death”, in contradistinction to those who are “after the spirit”, or the “spiritually minded”, who are related to “life and peace”. Rather than to allow the lust of the flesh to lead them into re-

bellion, this latter class seek to overcome the Carnal Mind, “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2Cor 10:5). Having received with meekness the implanted Word (Jas 1:21), they wage war against the flesh, and seek to suppress their carnal desires. The Apostle speaks of this mental warfare, exhorting: “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other ... “ (Gal 5:16,17).

### *TWO CONFLICTING MODES OF THOUGHT*

There are then, two conflicting minds, or ways of thinking extant within the disciple of Christ. One is hereditary, being derived from the Serpent in the first instance and passed to all men through descent from Adam, whereas the other is derived from the Spirit word being implanted into the heart. And by the very nature of things, there is enmity between the two; they are “contrary the one to the other”. And this enmity subsists between those who are led by these contrary motives, the “carnally minded”, and the “spiritually minded”.

In Genesis 3:15, these mutually antagonistic classes are termed the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel”. The Serpent stands in Scripture, as the source of transgression, whether it be the creature in Eden, or the diabolos within us. Thus, Bro Thomas wrote:

“the carnal mind, or thinking of the flesh, unenlightened by the Truth is the serpent in the flesh ... by a figure, sin is put for the serpent, the effect for the cause; seeing that he was the suggestor of unbelief and disobedience to man, by whom it entered into the world. Hence, the idea of the serpent in the flesh is expressed by “sin in the flesh”, which was “condemned in the flesh” when Jesus was crucified for, or on account of, sin, “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Elpis Israel, Pages 91,92).

The seed of the serpent then, are the “carnally minded”, at enmity with the pre-eminent seed of the woman, who destroyed the serpent in his flesh.

But notice here, that speaking prophetically of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the serpent is bruised in the head. The head contains the brain, and therefore the mind; hence we are being taught that the victory against sin would be won by crushing the Serpent-Mind, or the Carnal Mind. In terms which take us right back to the Edenic promise, the Apostle describes that which the Lord crushed, or destroyed in death, as the devil, or diabolos: “forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb 2:14). Notice the echoes of Gen 3:15 - through death, (that is the smiting of his heel) he might destroy that which has the power of death, (that is the serpent, more particularly, the serpent's venomous head). The serpent's head then, is the diabolos, the great enemy within, which entices us to transgress - it is

that existing in our mind which renders it Carnal in its operations. (This is further proved in Rev 20:2, where we read of the laying hold of “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the diabolos”).

We see from this then, that the crushing of the Serpent's head, is a graphic depiction of the overcoming of the mind of sin, by one who had the power to suppress it, and finally take it victoriously to the grave. But for the mind of the flesh, or the Serpent-Mind to be crushed by the Lord, it must have existed within him! There are those who would recoil in horror at the suggestion of our Lord possessing the Carnal Mind, for how could our Lord Jesus have anything within him which was “enmity against God”? But put it another way, did the Lord Jesus have the diabolos, or “sin in the flesh” within him? Undoubtedly he did, as we proved earlier, for how else could he have destroyed it by dying? How could he have condemned it, if it were not there to condemn? And will any deny that the diabolos or the Devil, is the great enemy of God, bringing it's possessors to rebel against Him?

The simple truth of the matter, is that by descent from Adam through Mary, the Lord Jesus was “made sin” (2 Cor 5:21), by being made “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3), in order that His Father could “condemn” and “destroy” sin in the flesh, or the head of the serpent within him. Being “made of a woman” (Gal 4:4), he physically inherited the diabolos, and therefore experienced the “thinking of the flesh”. He was “tempted in all points like as we are” (Heb 4:15), something which just could not have been possible if he did not ever experience the “lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:16). There are those who claim that the Lord, by his Divine Parentage, was born with a mind which only inclined towards the things of God; that he would automatically seek to obey his Father, so that any temptation to sin could only come from outside. But let them hear the Apostolic testimony: “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb 4:8). Even though he were a Son, he was not innately “programmed” to obey - he “learned” obedience through a lifetime of suffering.

If it could be said of his brethren that within them “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (Gal 5:17), the same must be true of the Lord who partook of “the flesh”: “forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood he also himself likewise took part of the same” (Heb 2:14). Is the flesh of the Children “sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3)? Then he also himself likewise took part of the same. And on what “flesh” does the diabolos primarily operate, to induce transgression? The brain, that special organisation of “the flesh” into thinking substance - the mind consisting of those thoughts this “flesh” generates. The brain-flesh of all Adam's progeny, being by it's very nature “sinful”, so it was also in the case of our Lord.

But whereas “the children” are “yet without strength” (Rom 5:6) to overcome their natural minds, the Lord Jesus was made strong (Ps 80:17) by his Divine

Begettal for this purpose. It was there within him - he had the potential for it to develop into sinful actions, or “the works of the devil” (1Jno 3:8). He had the potential for it to develop into its most advanced stages of degeneracy, as witnessed in the basest of men around us, whose only desire is to satisfy their grovelling instincts before they perish. It is this advanced state that we referred to earlier as being developed through “constantly succumbing to sin in the flesh”; by this means, the thinking of the flesh will so develop that it will dominate our minds to the exclusion of things spiritual. But this never happened with our Lord - he possessed the mind of the flesh, but it never possessed him. He had by inheritance the carnal mind, but he was never “carnally minded”, for he was “made strong” by His Father to overcome it.

Whereas in the Garden of Eden, we witness the failure of man to resist the serpent, in the Garden of Gethsemane we witness the greatest struggle between the Flesh and the Spirit ever, as our Lord subjected his own natural will to that of His Father. Let those who deny that the Lord ever experienced the thinking of the flesh, hear the anguish of one who prayed “with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death” (Heb 5:7) “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt” (Mark 14:36).

Here, we see the Flesh and the Spirit, and the enmity between the two - the natural will of Christ that the cup of suffering be taken away, and the Will of His Father that he should drink therefrom. And here we see the thinking of the flesh, the Carnal Mind restrained and overcome by the loving obedience of our Lord to his Father. The Spirit prevailed, for in our Lord Jesus, the mind of the flesh was allowed to develop no further; it was led into captivity during his life, nailed to the Cross during his Crucifixion, and finally “condemned”, “destroyed” and “bruised” in his death.

Let us therefore not detract from the great victory of Christ, by diminishing the virulence of the enemy within him, but rather behold the reality of what he achieved. We have within us a great enemy, the serpent within, which is the root of all iniquity. And the Lord Jesus, as “the Captain of our Salvation” (Heb 2:10) also possessed this same enemy in order that he might destroy it utterly, and “crush” it in death. Although he were a Son, yet he subjected himself to a lifetime of suffering, that he might learn obedience, and become a faithful servant to his Father. Let us therefore take heed to his example: “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God thought not equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ...” (Phil 2:5-8).

*Christopher Maddocks*

## **“IN THIS PLACE WILL I GIVE PEACE”**

In Haggai 2:9, Yahweh promised Israel that “the Glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former ... and *in this place will I give peace*”. So then, although Yahweh was “yet once more” to “shake the heavens and the earth,” and so destroy the Temple which the Jews were rebuilding, there will come a time of peace. No longer will the people of God be faced with a great mountain of opposition (Zech 4:7), but a new house will be built – a house which will be greater than the former. And this promised peace is not something which will be established by man’s efforts, but Yahweh’s Spirit (Zech 2:6). It will be his Gift to Man: “will I give peace”.

The Lord Jesus Christ alluded to these words, when speaking to the disciples, who were to build the Spiritual house, the Ecclesia (1 Tim 3:15). “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you” (Jno 14:27).

And just as Yahweh exhorted Israel, “Fear ye not,” for “my spirit remaineth among you (Hag 2:5), so the Master exhorted his disciples, “let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (Jno 14:27). For after his departure, they would not be left alone. “The comforter which is the Holy Spirit” would be sent. This would be “another comforter, that he may abide with you for an aion (age)” (Jno 14:16). Moreover, the Master had just spoken of the Millennial House: “In my Father’s house are many abiding places (lit. Grk): if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (Jno 14:3).

Even though the Master was to depart and the temple was to be destroyed, as spoken of by Haggai, the disciples would be given peace, and the assurance of Yahweh’s presence with them. But in our day, we do not in any sense receive the Holy Spirit. Yet, we also are assured that He is with us through the ministrations of a host of Angels. They are all “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb 1:14).

We, then, are heirs of the promise of peace. But “not as the world giveth,” that is, simply a cessation of violence. Nay, we are the heirs of true peace – peace between God and Man. Yet in order to have a part in this peace, we must not be discouraged in the way. We must rather build up ourselves in our most holy faith (Jude 20), labouring to rebuild and strengthen the house of God where it is decaying. We must keep ourselves in the love of God, “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (Jude 21).

*Christopher Maddocks*