



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

JULY 2024

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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Our great High Priest

Christ, our *faithful High Priest*, is priesting, or ministering, to us a participation in our inheritance as a son of God. **Heb 2:17**. He is also our *suffering High Priest*, ministering to us a participation in our regeneration; that is, in our regenerating, new creation birth from the death of sin. Through His atoning work, we are being born again as man, and recreated in the image and likeness of God. Our sonship in heaven, and the regeneration of our identity as a son of man, are connected through Christ's priestly ministry toward us.

Christ ministers to us a participation in the regeneration that He accomplished for us through His offering and suffering journey. In the fellowship of His sufferings, we are being progressively delivered from our sinful carnality so that we become *spiritual*. This is what it means to be made *a new creation*. Paul emphasised this implication of the work of regeneration in Christ, writing, 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things [in heaven and on Earth] have become new.' **2Co 5:17**.

As we abide in Christ, participating in His sufferings as a member of His body, the Holy Spirit is regenerating and renewing our spirit by the *zoe* life of the Father that is in Christ's blood. This is *exanastasis* life. **Php 3:10-11**. It is not only regenerating and renewing our spirit from the death of sin but, also, it is the life of our sonship within us, through which we are able to do the works of obedience that Christ also accomplished for us. **Tit 3:4-7**. The fruit of obedience that we bring forth in connection to Christ is harvested by the Father and is progressively built into our heavenly house as an *eternal weight of glory*. **2Co 4:16-18**.

Further Study HEBREWS 4

Our merciful High Priest

When Christ drank the cup of sin, He became mortal, and was then progressively joined, through seven wounding events, to every form of weakness, fear and suffering that brings mankind into bondage to sin. **Heb 2:14-15**. By this, we mean that He suffered the effect, outcome and penalty caused by sin, and the pressure that this puts on a person to survive at any cost. He endured all of this; yet He did not sin. **Heb 4:15**.

Christ was tempted in all points as we are, so He understands our plight and is motivated to help us because He is our *merciful* High Priest. **Heb 2:17**. He has a perfect understanding of our human dilemma. This enables Him to sympathise with us in our weaknesses. **Heb 4:15**. The sympathy of Christ is connected to His mercy, because He understands how hard and painful our life can be. He knows that we have no ability to save ourselves. **Eph 2:8-9**.

The Son became flesh and blood as Man, and is not ashamed to be one of us. He has become a brother to us. **Heb 2:11-12**. He did this on behalf of God so that He could rescue us from our own foolishness and sin, delivering us from the power of Satan and bringing us back to the Father. Christ came to us in the Father's name, to be a pioneer and forerunner of everything that we are to do and are to become. **Joh 5:43**.

In the same way that Christ was the full expression and image of the Father, manifest in the flesh of Man, He was also the full expression and image of who *we are to become* as a son of God and a man created in the image and likeness of God. His face has become like a mirror. When we look into His face, we see the reflection of who we are to become as we join Him in the process of regeneration. **2Co 3:18**.

Further Study HEBREWS 2

Repentance through His obedience

Christ, as our suffering High Priest, has taken upon Himself our total human experience, with all of its sin and shame. He has accomplished for us a full *repentance* through His obedience. Christ *learned* our obedience. **Heb 5:8**. And, by *fulfilling* our obedience, we have been made *righteous*. **Rom 5:19**. Note that *our repentance* from dead works was accomplished *by His obedience*. Repentance is not a sinner's prayer. In our carnal condition, we are, in fact, *unable to repent*. Repentance is *granted* to us as a participation in Christ's obedience, which He learned through suffering. **2Ti 2:24-26**.

Esau was unable to repent because he rejected the obedience to which he was called in Christ. He chose to suffer as a victim of his circumstances. These sufferings were the harbinger of his eternal damnation. **Mal 1:2-3**. The apostle Paul used the example of Esau to emphasise the need to *receive* the repentance accomplished by Christ. He wrote, 'Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he *sought it diligently with tears*.' **Heb 12:14-17**.

Christ bore the outcome and judgement that resulted from our disobedience. This suffering made Him 'a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'. **Isa 53:3**. Christ then judged and punished every disobedience. He cast down every argument and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of our name, which is given to us by God. In doing so, He brought every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ as He pioneered the pathway of our obedience before us. **2Co 10:4-6**.

Further Study HEBREWS 5

Learning obedience through suffering

The whole work of regeneration was a suffering work. It was a labour and travail of His soul. Christ bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was stricken by God and afflicted. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. **Isa 53:4-5**. This was Christ's knowledge as He bore our iniquities. By this knowledge, as a righteous Servant and Priest, He has justified, through regeneration, a multitude. Christ is now seeing the fruit of this labour of His soul, and He is satisfied. **Isa 53:11**.

In his explanation of Christ's offering and suffering journey, Paul wrote, '*Though He was a Son, yet He learned [our] obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek"*' **Heb 5:8-10**.

Through suffering, Christ had to learn the obedience that we need to learn through suffering so that we can cease from sin. Establishing this point, Peter declared, 'Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God [that is, as a son who is obedient to the Father].' **1Pe 4:1-2**.

Jesus pioneered the chastening that teaches us how to be obedient. We are now healed by Christ's wounds and stripes. We, with our disobedience and sin, die with Him. Our death ends our relationship with sin. By His death, Christ demonstrated obedience - which was a manifestation of the *righteousness* of God. As we fellowship in His suffering, we are being healed by *His* stripes. **1Pe 2:24**.

Further Study 1 PETER 4

The obedience of the Son

Offering is 'giving-love'. 'Giving-love' is obedience. **Php 2:5-8**. Yahweh Son's intrinsic glory is the expression of all sonship. What is sonship? What is its first expression? It is *the obedience of a son to his father*. **Joh 4:34**. The very nature of Their offering relationship as Yahweh Son to Yahweh Father is expressed in the obedience of the Son to His Father. Having been predestined as sons of God, this obedience is necessary for our participation in the fellowship of Yahweh as men who have been made in the image and likeness of God.

For this reason, having finished the work that the Father had given Him to do as the Son of God in the flesh, Jesus prayed, 'And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, *with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*' **Joh 17:5**. The glory that Jesus had before the creation of the heavens and the earth was His intrinsic glory as Yahweh Son. Notably, He was asking the Father to be glorified with this glory through His offering and suffering journey from mortality to immortality as the Son of Man.

Significantly, the pathway that Christ pioneered, upon which we could be made in the image and likeness of God, established the process through which we, as sons of men, could *learn the obedience of sonship* that belongs to His *intrinsic glory* as Yahweh Son.

The faith and obedience that belong to His intrinsic glory as *Yahweh Son* were revealed by Christ's prayer in Gethsemane, 'Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.' **Luk 22:42**. Through this prayer, Jesus demonstrated the obedience of a *perfect Man*. Having been made mortal, He then perfected our obedience by fulfilling the works that belong to our sonship. He did this in the course of the seven wounding events that belong to His offering and suffering journey. **Php 2:8**.

Further Study PHILIPPIANS 2

Two kinds of suffering

For us to understand the pathway of our salvation, it is necessary that we recognise the distinction between our sufferings under the judgement of God because of sin, and the sufferings of Christ. Of course, Christ experienced the sufferings that are associated with God's judgement, as well as the sufferings that are necessary to bring us to God. These two dimensions of suffering are symbolised by the two goats that comprised the sin offering that was made on the Day of Atonement under the Old Covenant. **Lev 16:7-8.**

'The sufferings of death' are the fruit of disobedience. **Gen 2:17.** These sufferings are the judgement of God upon the rebellion of mankind. When Jesus drank the cup of sin, He was made mortal and, by grace, began to taste the sufferings of death that belong to our fallen, sinful condition. **Luk 22:41-42. Heb 2:9.** He was tempted at all points as we are, yet was without sin. **Heb 4:15.** Furthermore, He was fully acquainted with the grief and distress resulting from our rejection of God's predestination and the failure of our iniquitous endeavours. **Isa 53:3.**

As '*the scapegoat*', He experienced all of our sufferings on account of sin. These sufferings are the fruit of all the possible alternatives to God's perfect plan for each of us. As He explored every possible alternative, revealing them to be lies, He suffered their consequences. Through these sufferings, He was taken out, with us, into the sea of forgetfulness, under God's judgement.

At the same time as He was descending as '*the scapegoat*', He was also ascending to the fellowship of Yahweh as '*the Lord's goat*'. The sufferings that He experienced as the Lord's goat were a chastening upon Him, through which He learned our obedience, and was brought to God. **Heb 12:6.** Our obedience was being perfected as He was accomplishing the regeneration and renewing necessary for sons of men to be saved from the death of sin, and to be made in the image and likeness of God.

Further Study LEVITICUS 16

Deliverance from our sufferings

Our salvation depends upon our deliverance from the sufferings that belong to the judgement of God upon us because of sin, and requires us to join the sufferings of Christ, through which we are being progressively glorified as sons of God and sons of men in the image and likeness of God. The apostle Peter distinguished between these two forms of suffering, writing, 'For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good [the works of sonship] and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this *you were called* [as sons], because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.' **1Pe 2:20-21.**

There are many Christians whose sufferings are the judgement of God because they reject His word for their life as it is ministered to them by His messengers. The anguish that they feel is not the sufferings of Christ through which they would, otherwise, experience regeneration as they cease from sin and fulfil the works of obedience that belong to their sonship in Christ. **2Th 1:4-5.** This suffering is not even the tribulations and persecutions that arise because of the word. **Mat 13:20-21.** It is *the fruit of their disobedience* as they resist the Holy Spirit when the word of Christ is proclaimed to them by His messengers. They trust in their own understanding and interpretation of the word. **Pro 3:5.** Their sufferings are often psychosomatic in nature, being accompanied by psychological distress and the emotions of sin. Their physical and psychological sorrow, as they stray from the faith, is used to excuse their disobedience and their unwillingness to serve others. They are victims of their circumstances.

Those who are suffering in this manner are deluded by the darkness of their own religious understanding and fleshly desires. They are in desperate need of illumination. Life and peace will elude them unless they see their true condition; humble themselves; entreat the elders; and confess their sin and its implications. **Jas 5:14-16.**

Deliverance through repentance

When we receive the word of Christ and respond in faith to His call upon our life, He does not simply turn our sufferings into a chastening for our good. This is not the implication of His mercy. Rather, *He calls us to repentance* from the dead works that belong to our own way, which are bringing us under the judgement of God. **Act 26:19-20**. As the scapegoat, He bore the sufferings that belong to this judgement as He took us out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. This is our end if we refuse Him who speaks from heaven. **Heb 12:25**. However, if we respond to His initiative toward us, He delivers us from our fruitless sufferings, and joins us to His own sufferings. These sufferings are a chastening through which we are brought to God because we are being regenerated and renewed by the Spirit, and we are learning from Christ the obedience that belongs to our sonship. **Heb 12:7-11**.

Christ, our faithful and suffering High Priest, ministers to us a participation in His sufferings. These are the sufferings through which He learned and perfected our obedience and, in doing so, He fulfilled the will of God the Father. **Heb 5:8-10**. Significantly, Jesus called the will of the Father His 'meat', or 'food', saying, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.' **Joh 4:34**.

Our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ is the means by which we are able to learn and fulfil the obedience that He learned for us. It is, for us, the implication of eating His flesh and drinking His blood in the *agape* meal. Referring to our participation in this meal, Jesus said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.' **Joh 6:56-57**.

Further Study 2 TIMOTHY 2

The example of the apostle Paul

The conversion of the apostle Paul exemplified deliverance from the suffering that is associated with God's judgement, and his embrace of the sufferings of Christ through which he obtained an eternal weight of glory and was able to minister life to others.

Prior to meeting the Lord, Saul, as he was formerly known, was a deeply religious man. He was very zealous for the traditions of his fathers and was committed to the culture defined by the Law Covenant. These practices were 'gain' to him, being a means of identity verification. **Php 3:3-7**. However, as he resisted the gospel of God and the conviction of the Spirit, he became increasingly tormented and psychologically unstable. In the book of Acts, Luke recorded that Saul was 'breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord'. **Act 9:1-2**. Saul's distress, or suffering, was an implication of the fear of death, for the gospel threatened his validity and self-expression.

When Christ confronted Saul on the road to Damascus, it was made clear to him that through his religious, zealous activities, he was persecuting the Lord. Furthermore, he was injuring himself as he 'kicked against the goads'. **Act 9:3-5**. Saul was now aware of his condition and of the impact of his sin upon others. Instead of defining his own repentance or the way forward for his life, Saul humbled himself, asking, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' **Act 9:6**.

In Damascus, the Lord sent Ananias, an elder in the church, to pray for Saul. Through this prayer, Saul's blindness was healed, and he was delivered from the torment and suffering that accompanied his opposition to the Lord and His word. **2Ti 1:7. Act 9:15-16**. Through fellowship with Ananias, Paul was born again and baptised into Christ. He was joined to the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. In this fellowship, he was being saved through regeneration and was now able to fulfil the works of obedience that belonged to his calling as a son of God and as a member of the body of Christ.

Further Study ACTS 9

The trial of faith

The beginning point for joining the sufferings of Christ is receiving and believing the word of God. Jesus highlighted this point in His explanation of 'shallow ground'. He said, 'But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.' **Mat 13:20-21.**

The sufferings that arise because of the word *belong to Christ*. They are for the purpose of proving the faith of the Son of God within us, so that it becomes our precious faith! **2Pe 1:1.** This was the apostle Peter's point when he wrote, 'In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith – the salvation of your souls [as you journey on the pathway that Christ pioneered].' **1Pe 1:6-9.**

Proving the faith of the Son within us, which we receive by hearing His word, is the trial of faith. This trial belongs to the sufferings of Christ through which He learned our obedience. This principle was exemplified in the life of Joseph. In the house of his father, Jacob, Joseph received from the Lord the word concerning his predestination. This word then precipitated a long season of sufferings as he was conformed to the death of Christ. The psalmist explained, 'Until the time that His word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested [or proved] him.' **Psa 105:19.**

Further Study 1 PETER 1

Experiencing judgement and chastening

The outcome of Joseph's participation in the sufferings of Christ was the fulfilment of his predestination. Significantly, he fulfilled a priestly ministry by saving his household from death. **Gen 50:20**. He ministered to his family the resurrection life that he had found in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. This was the outcome of Joseph's participation in the sufferings that belong to the Lord's goat.

While we must not confuse the sufferings that belong to the scapegoat with those that belong to the Lord's goat, it is possible for a believer to suffer under the judgement of God, and as chastening, *simultaneously*. The apostle Paul brought this to our attention in his instructions regarding the *agape* meal.

Paul explained that a person's participation in the *agape* meal is 'unworthy' when they fail to discern the Lord's body. **1Co 11:29**. They do this when they presume to engage in the fellowship of the church while reserving the right to appraise and oppose the proceeding word of God that defines their sanctified participation as a member of the body of Christ. Their disobedience to the word of their name brings them under the judgement of God. The sufferings that are associated with judgement include personal lameness and relational angst because a person is weak in faith. **Heb 12:12-13**. This can often progress to physical and psychological sicknesses, which have no obvious cause, nor an enduring remedy. **1Co 11:30**.

Although he identified these sufferings as being the judgement of God upon a carnal Christian, Paul explained that they are also His chastening. The purpose for this chastening is to provoke the carnal believer to repentance and faith so that they may not be condemned with the world. Specifically, Paul wrote, 'But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world'. **1Co 11:32**. If a carnal Christian does not cease from walking after the flesh, they will certainly 'die', meaning that they will lose their eternal salvation. **1Co 11:30. Rom 8:13**.

Further Study 1 CORINTHIANS 11

Agreeing with our adversary

Jesus said, 'Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.' **Mat 5:25-26.**

In this statement, our adversary is the Spirit Himself. He lusts against our fleshly and self-righteous endeavours in the context of the presbytery and of the church. **Gal 5:17.** His resistance provokes within us the emotions of sin. **Rom 7:5.** These emotions reveal that we are living in a carnal manner; that is, according to our own understanding and the sight of our own eyes. The Spirit does this so that we will cease from our disobedience and, instead, embrace the obedience that Christ is priesting to us.

'The way' that we are walking with the Spirit, who is our *adversary* on account of our carnality, is the way that Jesus pioneered through His offering and suffering journey as 'the scapegoat' and 'the Lord's goat'. **Heb 5:9.** We experience the sufferings that are associated with both goats as we walk on the way that leads to the judgement seat of Christ. We are advised by Christ to 'agree' with the Spirit, as our sufferings reveal our carnal condition. To agree with this adversary, we must humble ourselves, turn from our disobedience, and embrace our participation in the body of Christ where the Father has sovereignly placed us.

If we fail to agree with our adversary, the Spirit, under the conditions of judgement and chastening that we experience because of our carnality, we will be 'thrown into prison'. We will not be able to leave until we have paid 'the last penny'. Jesus was saying that our 'imprisonment' would be *eternal*, for we are unable to make any payments toward our release. It is a terrifying reality that a person can be imprisoned in this manner, *even before they physically die.* **Heb 6:4-6.**

Further Study HEBREWS 6

The sufferings of mortality

Having distinguished between suffering on account of rebellion and the chastening that belongs to the *sufferings of Christ*, it is helpful to acknowledge the sufferings of mortality that are common to us all. **Ecc 9:11**. These are the difficulties that afflict the wicked and the just alike, simply because of Adam's transgression. **Rom 5:14**. The implications of mortality arising from the sin of Adam have been passed on to, and experienced by, every generation of mankind, irrespective of whether or not they have sinned in the similitude of Adam. These sufferings include genetic conditions, which can be physical and psychological in nature, as well as communicable illnesses and the degradation of our bodies through exposure to the natural elements. Of course, the sufferings of mortality also include the physical decline that belongs to the process of aging.

Sons of God who are in Christ do not lose heart as their outer man is perishing, for they have been delivered from bondage to the fear of death. **2Co 4:16**. **Heb 2:14-15**. **2Co 4:16-18**. Consequently, they are not anxiously driven to counter the unavoidable implications of mortality; nor do they compensate themselves for its limiting effects upon them. Rather, they are motivated by the love of God that is poured into their heart by the Holy Spirit, to do the works of their sonship as a member of the body of Christ. **Rom 5:5**.

In this regard, a believer is a recipient of the 'aid' that Christ gives to the children of Abraham. **Heb 2:16**. This aid is the grace of God that enables them to remain connected to Christ and to the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, as a member of His body, *every day*. Through this grace, irrespective of the way in which their outward man is perishing, they are able, by the capacity of *exanastasis* life, to fulfil the works of obedience that belong to their sonship in Christ. By this same life, their inward man is being regenerated and renewed, *day by day!* **2Co 4:16**. **Tit 3:4-5**.

Further Study 2 CORINTHIANS 4

The terrain of our pilgrimage

On account of our fallen and mortal condition, the pathway that leads to life is beset with untraversable valleys and insurmountable mountains. However, having been made like us, Christ pioneered the pathway of salvation from mortality to immortality, for each of us. **Heb 5:9**. Through the gospel, He now invites us to join Him in this offering journey.

At times, when we perceive the ruggedness of the way and our inadequacy for this journey, we can begin to fear and to look for another way that we think will lead to life. Paul called this 'casting away our confidence'. **Heb 10:35**. We do this because we draw back in unbelief, rejecting the word of faith that establishes us in the offering fellowship of Christ's body. **Heb 10:39**.

However, 'We are not of those who draw back to perdition [destruction], but of those who believe to the saving of the soul'. **Heb 10:39**. We receive the word of faith that is proclaimed from the presbytery, and we walk in its light each day. That is, we journey *with* Christ, in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, as a member of His body. As we journey with Christ, the terrain of our life, which is marked by valleys and mountains, *is adjusted* before us.

The 'terrain management' belongs to Christ because '*He is the way!*' **Joh 14:6**. He has already pioneered the pathway of our salvation. For this reason, as we walk each day with Him, the crooked places are made straight before us, and the valleys are exalted. **Isa 45:2**. **Isa 40:4**. Furthermore, the mountains and hills are brought low, melting away before Him, and before us! **Isa 40:4**. **Psa 97:5**. In order to journey with Christ, we must humble ourselves and submit to the lordship of the Spirit. The Spirit joins us to Christ and enables us to obey His word and to journey with Him. In the course of this journey, our identity frailties (likened to valleys) are healed, and our projections (likened to mountains) are able to be put away.

Further Study ISAIAH 40

The rich young ruler

Jesus invited the rich young ruler to journey with Him on the pathway that leads to eternal life. **Luk 18:22,29-30**. To do this, the young man needed to sell all that he had. It appears that this included a profitable family business which he had been groomed to inherit. Evidently, this was a significant 'mountain' in the pathway of this man's salvation. It was a source of considerable provision and security for him.

The mountain was not insurmountable for this man, because the word of Jesus was replete with *faith*. **Rom 10:17**. By this faith, the rich young ruler could have believed to receive provision for his life and family that would be abundantly sufficient for his obedience as a follower of Christ. In this regard, we recall the testimony of the twelve disciples who acknowledged that, having been sent out without a money bag, a knapsack, and sandals, they did not lack anything! **Luk 22:35**.

Christ's command to 'sell all' was the word through which the mountain that was impeding the rich young ruler's pilgrimage could be brought down. By faith, he would have said to the mountain, 'Be cast into the sea', as he went and sold all of his possessions. **Mar 11:22-23**. Disappointingly, the rich young ruler went away very sorrowful. He drew back in unbelief, and forfeited the treasure in heaven to which he was predestined.

Earlier in His ministry, Jesus encountered another man who asked Him to tell his brother to divide the family inheritance between them. **Luk 12:13**. In response, Jesus said, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and *beware of covetousness*, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses!" **Luk 12:14-15**. Jesus was highlighting the reality that *covetousness*, particularly in relation to wealth and possessions, is the primary contributor to the valleys and mountains that hinder one's pilgrimage on the pathway that leads to life. **Luk 18:24-25**.

Further Study LUKE 18

The example of Jacob

The account of Jacob's pilgrimage reveals the sovereignty of the Lord as the 'terrain manager' for those *who fear Him*. Jacob left the house of Isaac and began his journey to Laban's house with only a staff in his hand. **Gen 32:10**. At Bethel, as he slept with his head on a stone, he dreamed of a ladder set up on the earth, with its top in heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. **Gen 28:11-12**.

The Lord stood beside and above the ladder and said to Jacob, 'I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants ... in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will *bring you back* to this land; for I will *not leave you* until I have done what I have spoken to you.' **Gen 28:13-15**. Having received this revelation, Jacob *awoke from his sleep*. **Gen 28:16**. **Eph 5:14**. His 'sleep' was his covetousness, for he desired the physical inheritance and blessing that belonged to his brother.

Jacob was now awake from his covetousness and was established in the fear of the Lord. **Gen 28:17**. Consequently, he was established on a journey that was fraught with valleys and mountains. However, the Lord was with Jacob and enabled him to endure in the season of trial and to proceed to obtain what had been promised to him through the word of the Lord. At the conclusion of his twenty-year trial of faith, Jacob testified, '*I am not worthy* of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth [illumination] which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.' **Gen 32:10**.

Further Study GENESIS 28

A second time

Before Jacob could enter the promised land, he needed to encounter the Lord *a second time*. In this 'second-time' encounter, Jacob again needed to forsake all of his riches and possessions, and even his family, to meet the Lord alone. Accordingly, he sent all of his possessions and all his household over the brook. **Gen 32:22-23.** Jacob, with his staff, remained on the other side of the brook, where he wrestled with the Lord until the day began to dawn. **Gen 32:24.** During this wrestle, every move that Jacob made to enter the land of promise through the exercise of his flesh was being thwarted by the Lord. This was *the patience of Christ* as He endured these carnal actions of Jacob. **2Th 3:5.**

When the Lord saw that He did not prevail against Jacob, He weakened Jacob's natural strength by touching the socket of his hip, causing its dislocation. **Gen 32:25.** Of course, the Creator of the universe did not need to weaken Jacob in order to prevail over him. Rather, Jacob needed help to overcome his own fleshly propensities. His carnality was undermining his capacity to obtain the blessing of sonship that was predestined for him. Until he was helped in this manner, Jacob was cleaving to the Lord with deceit, for his name was still 'Deceiver'.

Now unable to prevail by the strength of his flesh, Jacob clung to the Lord by the Spirit! He had been delivered from his carnal perspective and was able to meet the Lord face to face. He therefore declared, 'I will not let You go unless You bless me!' Moreover, he confessed that he was a deceiver. **Gen 32:26-27.** In response, the Lord said to Jacob, 'Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel [meaning 'prince with God']; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.' **Gen 32:28.** Following this encounter, Jacob now walked in the weakness of Christ, and progressively obtained his eternal inheritance. He entered the promised land, limping, and leaning on his staff.

Further Study GENESIS 32

The ear and tongue of the learned

The Scriptures contain the mystery of the name and predestination of every son of God, all of whom were named *before* within the Covenant of Yahweh. When Yahweh the Son emptied Himself to the bosom of the Father, He was begotten by the word of the Father as the Son of God. **Php 2:5-7**. When this happened, the predestined name of every person who would ever be born was hidden by the Father in Christ. **Eph 2:10**.

The Father did this so that the name of each believer would be revealed in the seven wounding events of Christ's offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. A person's name is made known to them as they receive the gospel message and obey this word in the fellowship of Christ's offering.

Through the prophet Isaiah, Jesus declared, 'The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.' **Isa 50:4-6**. This passage of Scripture describes the second and third wounds of His offering journey in the court of Caiaphas. **Mat 26:67**.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's ear was opened morning by morning, and His mouth was given the authority and wisdom to proclaim the mystery of the name and works that each son of God is to perform for time and eternity. That is, He could speak and minister to each son of God the obedience and works that He accomplished for them and that they were to fulfil in Him, each day of their life, in this present age and also for the whole of the eternal day in the new heavens and earth. **Isa 26:12**.

Further Study JOHN 18

The secret of the Lord

The secret of the Lord is the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, which has been kept hidden since the world began. **Rom 16:25**. Jesus, our great High Priest, is able to minister this mystery to each person because, in the course of His offering journey, He learned the obedience and fulfilled the works that belong to each person's sonship. **Heb 5:8**. **Isa 26:12**. It remains a secret until the time that it is proclaimed to us for the purpose of being fulfilled by us, in Christ.

Christ sends His messengers who proclaim to us the gospel of God from the Scriptures. The gospel declares the mystery of God. By the faith that we receive as we hear this word, we give ourselves to prayer in the secret place, by the Holy Spirit. The Father, who sees in secret, rewards us openly by establishing us, through grace, in Christ. **Mat 6:6**. As we remain connected to Christ, by the Holy Spirit, these works are being revealed to us and fulfilled by us. The mystery, kept secret since the foundation of the world, is being manifest!

Notably, if we are receiving the secret of the Lord, we are able to proclaim this mystery to others! This is an implication of being baptised with the Holy Spirit. Through baptism in the Holy Spirit, we receive power to be Christ's witnesses. **Act 1:8**. That is, we receive the capacity to be joined to, and participate in, the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings as a member of His body. In this fellowship, we are fulfilling the works of obedience that belong to the secret of the Lord regarding our name. By this means, Christ is being revealed to others. They are able to hear, through our testimony, the mystery of God that pertains to their sonship. This is a great work, for which we are made sufficient by the Holy Spirit. **2Co 3:5-6**.

Further Study EPHESIANS 3

The mystery revealed to Peter and John

The revelation of the mystery of God began to be made known to Peter and John in the early part of Christ's offering journey. Peter and John were spoken to by Christ in Gethsemane. Furthermore, Christ communicated with these men in the second and third wounding events that He suffered in the house of Caiaphas.

Peter was joined in repentance to Christ's second wounding event when Christ looked at him and he received salvation by joining Christ in the work of his regeneration. **Luk 22:60-62**. Peter's ear was opened through this encounter. Later, by the Sea of Galilee, as Christ spoke to him concerning his pilgrimage and works, Peter heard what the labour that belonged to the secret of his name would entail. Jesus explained to Peter that the Holy Spirit would gird him day by day, and would reveal to him the works of Christ that he would accomplish in Christ's name. This was Peter's fellowship in the dying and living of Jesus. **Joh 21:15-19**.

We know that John witnessed Christ's second and third wounds, for he was known to the high priest and went with Jesus into the courtyard of Caiaphas. Furthermore, he spoke to the girl who kept the door of the courtyard, so that Peter could be brought in. **Joh 18:15-17**. On the shore of the lake, Christ spoke concerning John's name and works. In response to Peter's query concerning John, Jesus said, 'If I will that *he remain till I come*, what is that to you?' **Joh 21:22**. This mystery, or secret, concerning John's name was finally revealed in his old age, during his confinement on the island of Patmos. Here, John received the second coming of Christ, *by revelation*.

In this regard, John remained, or continued, until Christ came! On the day that he received this revelation, John was told to make known what was contained and hidden in the Scriptures. **Rev 1:19**. This mystery was made known to John, and he has proclaimed it to every generation of the church.

Further Study JOHN 21

The temptations of Christ

The apostle Paul made the astonishing point that Christ was tempted at all points as we are and, for this reason, He is able to sympathise with our weaknesses. **Heb 4:15**. This temptation commenced from His conception, when the Lord *emptied Himself*, all the way to the confinement of immaturity as an embryo. **Php 2:5-7**. He was tempted as a baby, and then continued to experience temptation as He grew and matured in the flesh. The temptations that He experienced as the Son of God in the flesh culminated in His temptation in the wilderness at the hands of Satan. **Mat 4:1-11**.

Then, when Jesus drank the cup that the Father gave to Him in Gethsemane and He was made sin, He was fully acquainted with our mortal condition. **Heb 2:9**. This included His familiarity with our weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and with our temptation to self-preservation, anxiety and survival, which we experience on account of the fear of death. Although tempted in this manner, He was without sin. **Heb 4:14-16**.

Being tempted at all points as we are, Jesus is able to give aid to us in our temptations. This aid belongs to those who are children of Abraham on account of faith. **Heb 2:16**. It is available to us in every phase and circumstance of life, extending even to a baby in the womb of a mother who belongs to a covenant household.

Jesus is able to give aid to us in our temptations because *His* temptations were *our* temptations which He overcame for us. *Our* suffering became *His* temptation and suffering. In the course of His offering and suffering journey, He learned our temptation to disobedience. He suffered all of our disobedience, and then resolved our disobedience by learning and fulfilling our obedience. **Heb 5:8-9**. This was the death that He died. **Rom 6:10**. Significantly, Christ's obedience was not merely compliance with the Father's will. Rather, through obedience, He was overcoming disobedience.

Further Study MATTHEW 4

Christ overcame our disobedience

Christ was the only Person who could overcome our disobedience and learn our obedience. This is not just because He was sinless. Rather, it was because He offered Himself in obedience to the Father *by Eternal Spirit and through the power of zoe life*. This was the resurrection life of Yahweh in His physical blood. Having drunk the cup of sin, and been made mortal with us, He came back from the death of sin through resurrection life as His blood was shed in each wounding event of His offering journey. **Heb 13:20-21**. How did this work?

When Jesus drank the cup of sin in obedience to the Father, He became the sum of all disobedience as the corporate body of sin. **Mat 26:39**. He began to suffer the effect of our disobedience and also the judgement of God upon our disobedience. These sufferings were the seven wounding events that He endured in the course of His offering journey. For example, in the court of Caiaphas, Jesus' face was marred 'more than any man's' as His face was repeatedly beaten, His beard was pulled out, and He was spat upon by those who belonged to the Jewish council. **Isa 52:14**. In this second wound, Jesus was bruised for our iniquities, or disobedience. **Isa 53:5**.

Each blow to Christ's face was an effect of iniquity, and was judgement upon iniquity. Each punch was sufficient to break the bones of His face and to kill Him. Every blow to His face was causing 'death', and was extinguishing an element of iniquity, or disobedience. However, as He experienced this death by Eternal Spirit, causing the shedding of His blood, the resurrection life of God in His blood healed Him and brought Him back from the death that is associated with our disobedience. Not a bone of His body was broken! **Psa 34:20**. **Joh 19:36**. The full outcome of this wound was that He extinguished every aspect of iniquity for each of us, leaving and manifesting only the obedience that He learned and accomplished for us.

Further Study ISAIAH 53

The peaceable fruit of righteousness

Jesus Christ overcame our disobedience and death. By Eternal Spirit and the resurrection life in His blood, He fulfilled the works of obedience that belong to our sonship, thus *achieving our justification*. **Rom 4:23-25**. In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, as we are conformed to His death, we receive the power of *exanastasis* to overcome our temptations and to fulfil the works of obedience that He has already finished for us. *This is how we live a justified life*. **Rom 5:1-2**.

As we are conformed to Christ's death, it is helpful to recognise the different forms of suffering that we will experience as we journey on the pathway of salvation that He has specifically pioneered for each of us. He pioneered this pathway for us, priesting Himself as an offering for sin. This one offering for sin as the Lamb of God had two aspects, symbolised in the Old Covenant as 'the scapegoat' and 'the Lord's goat'. **Lev 16:8**.

The *suffering of mortality* is an eternal, mortal suffering as judgement, bringing sin to nothing as it is taken out into forgetfulness. **Psa 88:12**. By the capacity of Eternal Spirit, Jesus suffered the damnation of mortality as the scapegoat. In contrast, Christ endured *the sufferings of chastisement* by Eternal Spirit as the Lord's goat. **Heb 9:13-14**. Through these sufferings, Christ, who had been made mortal, brought life and immortality to light as He was received by God. **2Ti 1:8-10. Heb 12:5-6**. These sufferings belong to the discipline and instruction of Yahweh.

Significantly, discipline is *not* suffering. We are supposed to live a disciplined life. However, when we are not living in a disciplined manner, we are chastened by the Father. This chastening, for the purpose of discipline, brings us to maturity. It is not a punishment, for it *yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness*. **Heb 12:11**. In this regard, the discipline of God is the fruit of the Spirit, because the fruit of the Spirit is itself the sum of all discipline.

Further Study HEBREWS 12

The chastening of Christ

Jesus was perfectly disciplined. However, in the course of His offering journey, He was tested to the extreme as He endured the hostility, or contradiction, of sinners against Himself. **Heb 12:3**. The apostle Peter noted that Jesus, 'when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten'. **1Pe 2:23**. *Jesus maintained His discipline*. In contrast, Moses reacted in wrath to the rebellion of the children of Israel and struck the rock twice with His rod. The Lord explained to Moses that he did this because he did not believe the Lord, to hallow Him in the eyes of the children of Israel. **Num 20:10-12**. Consequently, he failed to enter rest, symbolised by entry into the promised land.

The chastening of Christ, revealed as suffering, is the eternal element of the Spirit that multiplied the life of Yahweh in Christ's blood. We know this because Paul wrote, 'How much more shall the *blood of Christ*, who through the *Eternal Spirit* offered Himself without spot to God?' **Heb 9:13-14**. The blood of the cross was the blood of a living sacrifice, giving access, by one Spirit, to the Father. It is the blood of an Everlasting Covenant. **Heb 13:20-21**.

Chastening in relation to discipline is not primarily connected to sin. Rather, it is connected to the children of God, who are first made partakers of flesh and blood. Christ Himself also partook of the same when He joined us through incarnation. **Heb 2:14-15**. He then learned our whole human experience from the womb until death, with all of the temptations that we endure because of mortality. Through the sufferings of chastening that He endured in the course of His offering journey, He pioneered the pathway upon which we are delivered from mortality and are established as part of an eternal new creation.

Further Study ISAIAH 49

Judged with the world or in Christ

Although the sufferings of judgement in the world and the sufferings of judgement upon a believer in Christ both belong to the offering of the scapegoat, the Scriptures distinguish between them. Judgement on a believer is the implication of participating in the *agape* meal in an unworthy manner. **1Co 11:29.** Paul said, *'For this reason, many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.'* **1Co 11:30.** The sufferings associated with this judgement are for the purpose of bringing a believer who is eating and drinking in an unworthy manner to repentance so that they may not be condemned with the world. **1Co 11:32.**

If a believer who is becoming weak and sick and is falling asleep under the judgement of God does not repent, they demonstrate that they are not worthy of the kingdom. They are therefore judged with the world. However, if they repent, judgement ends their carnality so that they can join the chastening of Christ. In this regard, the judgement is leading to repentance, which is participation in the obedience that Christ has finished for them and is priesting to them. **2Co 7:10.**

Chastening that belongs to discipline teaches us and trains us. **Heb 12:11.** Jesus experienced this kind of suffering. In fact, He suffered our total human experience, giving Him a perfect understanding of our fallen human condition. This was necessary for Him to be a capable and sympathetic High Priest. **Heb 4:14-16.** Explaining this point, Paul wrote, *'For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.'* **Heb 2:16-18.**

Further Study 2 CORINTHIANS 1



Restoring
my Soul