



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

MAY 2026

Restoring my Soul

A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

MAY 2026

RESTORING MY SOUL

A Five Day Devotional Guide

May 2026

Contributing Authors

Victor Hall

Peter Hay

David Baker

Contents

Monday 4 May	The King and the Pharisees	2
Tuesday 5 May	The King and the little children	3
Wednesday 6 May	The King in the house of prayer	4
Thursday 7 May	The need for illumination.	5
Friday 8 May	The Lord of the dead and the living.	6
Monday 11 May	I am co-crucified with Christ.	7
Tuesday 12 May	The word of the cross	8
Wednesday 13 May	Departing from the tree of life.	9
Thursday 14 May	Faith for the hope of sonship	10
Friday 15 May	Exchanging truth for a lie in the church age	11
Monday 18 May	Not our own righteousness	12
Tuesday 19 May	An exhortation to return	13
Wednesday 20 May	The fellowship of the tree of life	14
Thursday 21 May	Called to become overcomers.	15
Friday 22 May	Truth exchanged for a lie	16
Monday 25 May	Deception and disobedience.	17
Tuesday 26 May	Cursing and the Law	18
Wednesday 27 May	An unhappy marriage.	19
Thursday 28 May	Sight for deliverance	20
Friday 29 May	Paul's overcoming.	21

The King and the Pharisees

Christ's majesty and indignation as the King was expressed towards the Pharisees when they endeavoured to test Him as to whether or not He would heal a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. When He entered the synagogue, the Pharisees *watched Him closely*. **Mar 3:2. Luk 6:7.** Presuming to be the measure of truth, they desired to find an accusation against Him. However, Jesus had come as the King to deliver them from their bondage to self-righteousness. This was an opportunity for their salvation.

Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' **Mar 3:4.** This question brought into focus the issue that Jesus was endeavouring to address. Their sacramental application of the Law to themselves, and to others, was impeding the life and healing that Christ, the substance of the word, was desiring to minister to those who were infirm. The question, therefore, provided the Pharisees with an opportunity to respond to Christ's fiery eyes with a confession of their fault, which could have led to their forgiveness.

However, the Pharisees *kept silent*. **Mar 3:4.** In this regard, they refused to send a delegation to Christ to ask for the conditions of peace. They trusted, instead, in the 10 000 reasons why they believed they were right. Christ looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts. **Mar 3:5.** He commanded the man to stretch out his withered hand, and it was restored as whole as his other hand. Instead of acknowledging and rejoicing in the majesty of Christ, the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him. **Mar 3:6.** Significantly, they were joining themselves to an alternative, counterfeit kingship. Their hard hearts only produced hatred and murder and brought them under the condemnation of the very Law they sought to uphold.

Further reading: Luke 6

The King and the little children

A little while after Jesus had delivered the demoniac boy, and rebuked his father and the disciples for their unbelief, He had further cause to express His indignant displeasure at the disciples' contrary and deluded actions. On this occasion, people were endeavouring to bring their children to Christ that He might lay hands on them and pray for them. However, the disciples rebuked these parents, forbidding them to present their children to Him.

In his Gospel, Mark recounted that when Jesus looked with fiery eyes and saw what was happening, He was *greatly displeased*, meaning that He was moved to indignation. He said to the disciples, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.' **Mar 10:14**. He took the children up in His arms, laid His hands on them and blessed them. **Mar 10:16**.

In the first instance, Christ was indignant at the disciples for presuming to mediate the access of children, and indeed anyone, to Him. He was making a significant point to the disciples. The work of a messenger is to bring a hearer to Christ through the ministry of the word. They are not the arbiters, or mediators, of a hearer's access and response to Him. Everyone is to receive and respond to the word of Christ with the humility and simplicity of a little child. As Jesus said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.' **Mar 10:15**.

Likewise, parents must not presume to mediate a child's access to the word of Christ as it is ministered by His messengers. They proclaim the word from His hand, and He desires to take them in His hands through this ministry. Accordingly, a parent should be teaching their children to come to Christ by hearing and receiving the proceeding word, rather than reinterpreting the word for their children, or presuming to teach them another word.

Further reading: Mark 10

The King in the house of prayer

On a visit to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Passover, Jesus was moved to wrath when He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. **Joh 2:13-14**. They had specifically set up their businesses in the court of the Gentiles, restricting the access of the Gentiles to this place of prayer.

Jesus went into a deep and very physical expression of rage because of this. He made a whip of cords and drove these vendors, and their livestock, out of the temple. Furthermore, He poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. He said to them. 'It is written, "My house is a house of prayer", but you have made it a "den of thieves"'. **Luk 19:46**. When the disciples saw Christ's actions, 'they remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up"'. **Joh 2:17**.

The King's wrath is against every alternative and entrepreneurial agenda in the church that impacts upon a person's participation in the fellowship of Yahweh's intercession and travail. There must be no entrepreneuring of the word under the guise of offering. Rather, its ministry should invite a hearer into a fellowship with the presbytery, whose fellowship, by the Spirit, is with the Father and the Son. **1Jn 1:1-3**. This is the principal context of prayer, which Jesus identified as 'the secret place'.

Following the last Passover, as He prayed on the Mount of Olives, Jesus said to the Father, 'I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.' **Joh 17:4-5**. Jesus had completed His earthly ministry and was now embarking on the next step of His journey as the *Alpha* and *Omega* of God's covenant purpose. **Rev 22:13**.

Further reading: John 2

The need for illumination

Christ comes to us as the King through the word that is proclaimed by the Holy Spirit through His messengers. A messenger of Christ proclaims the gospel to an unbeliever, saying, 'You are not My people' on account of unbelief. **Hos 1:9**. This is the message to those who are outside of the church. It is *also* proclaimed to those who are in the church who may have drawn back in unbelief as they have succumbed to the anxieties, desires and pursuits that compete with their new-creation life. This is affecting their sight, which Jesus likened to thorns growing in the ground of our heart.

Of course, this is an affront to people whose gospel is imbued with believism, even though the way that they live and relate in the church is contrary to the culture of Christ. Holding fast to their believism, they assert that they are one of God's people, and, in doing so, say, 'We see'. Because a person claims to 'see', denying the word that is revealing otherwise, Jesus said that their 'sin remains'. **Joh 9:41**. That is, they find no deliverance from their sin and remain under condemnation.

In contrast to this, a person who is bankrupt in spirit recognises that they are spiritually blind and are in need of illumination and understanding. This was the confession of the man whose natural blindness was healed when Jesus formed new eyeballs for him from the dust of the earth. **Joh 9:6-7**. After this man had been cast out of the synagogue, Jesus found him and asked him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?' **Joh 9:35**. Demonstrating his poverty of spirit, the man acknowledged his lack of spiritual sight, asking, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?' **Joh 9:36**. Jesus made Himself known to the man, who then confessed 'Lord, I believe', and he worshipped Him. **Joh 9:37-38**.

Further reading: John 9

The Lord of the dead and the living

When the word of the cross is proclaimed, the Lord first declares, 'You are not My people'. Yielding to the Spirit of grace and supplication that accompanies the word, a hearer first recognises that they, with their 'old man', are co-crucified and co-cursed with Christ. Accordingly, they declare, 'You rightly say that I am not one of God's people.' Their old way of thinking is now nailed, with the Law, to the cross with Christ. Evidently, the word of the cross is beginning to sink down into their ears, as it did in the case of the repentant thief who was crucified with Christ on Calvary.

A person who has received this amazing illumination cries out to the King. They have become a God-fearer and address Christ as 'the Lord of glory' who is being crucified with them. **1Co 2:8**. Significantly, He is to them 'the Lord of the dead'. **Rom 14:9**. This was the illumination and confession of the repentant thief.

A person who recognises Christ as the Lord of the dead, is acknowledging Christ's work as 'the Scapegoat'. They are not God's people because they are being taken out with the Scapegoat to the sea of God's forgetfulness. As soon as a person acknowledges this, they ask the Lord to *remember them*. **Luk 23:42**. A person can only ask this when they recognise the distinction between their death with Christ as the Scapegoat and His death as the 'Lord's goat'. The statement 'remember me' is a request for true *atonement* through fellowship in His death. Through His kind of dying, Christ was destroying death. By offering, He emptied to an endpoint all rebellion and unbelief, bringing sin and death into the place of forgetfulness where it has no more substance and power!

Remembrance becomes our reception of reconciliation as Christ replies, 'Today, you will be with Me in Paradise.' **Luk 23:43**. This is the place of first-love fellowship at the tree of life. **Rev 2:7**. Right there, in the place where we were not God's people, the Lord is saying, 'You are a son of the living God!' **Hos 1:10**. Christ has now become to us the 'Lord of the living'. **Rom 14:9**.

Further reading: Psalm 88

I am co-crucified with Christ

As a believer, we continue to journey with Christ, the Lord's goat, as a member of His body. We are no longer cursed. Our confession is, 'I am crucified with Christ: *nevertheless I live*; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' **Gal 2:20**. The life I now live is Christ. That is, the seed of my divine life as a son of God, from Him, now lives in me. As I live by His faith, my sufferings, which belong to fellowship in Him, have a limit.

We see that in the place where the word declares, 'You are not My people', there are two conversations happening. The unrepentant thief received no illumination regarding Christ's lordship. Those who, like this man, maintain their beliefism, do not recognise that 'Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living'. **Rom 14:9**. The thief could have believed, for Christ had already demonstrated to the nation that He was the Prince, or King, of life, when He raised Lazarus from the dead. No doubt the thief had heard this account, for Christ had entered Jerusalem on a donkey's foal as the meek and lowly King of glory.

However, only those who are poor in spirit are able to receive the faith that belongs to believing and participating in the conversation and conduct of the kingdom. Like the father of the possessed boy, we need to ask the Lord to 'look on us'. The Lord Himself has said, 'But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.' **Isa 66:2**. This is the God-fearer who has acknowledged that they are co-crucified with Christ, have met their King, and are walking by His faith as son of God and citizen of His kingdom.

Further reading: Galatians 2

The word of the cross

The first word of the cross is, 'You are not My people.' **Hos 1:10**. This message is proclaimed with anger from the mouth of our King and Lord, as He reveals the need for us to suffer the rejection and pain that belongs to the awareness of being co-cursed with Christ. He implores us saying, 'Let this word sink down into your ears. You are a faithless and perverse generation or person. How long shall I continue to be with you and put up with you?' This is a rebuke that we must all hear.

Inherent in this message is an invitation with a condition. He says, 'If you desire to come after Me, you must deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Me. By offering, you must cease to save your life by demanding of Me that I save your life, which was the petition of the unrepentant thief who died with Me. Then you must lay your life down in offering and lose it for My sake. Then you will save it.' This is the second word of the cross, and it declares the conditions of peace that belong to citizenship of the kingdom of God. Responding in faith obedience to this command is how we obtain salvation.

As we are co-crucified with Christ, His word spoken in the place of His crucifixion – 'You are not My people' – is now, 'You are now My people. You belong to Me and to the Father. You are a citizen of My kingdom and I know you by name for I have remembered you who were lost to Me and forgotten by Me.' He asks us to remember the heights from where we have fallen, to repent and to do the first works of faith. **Rev 2:5**. This is the work of joining the fellowship of Christ's dying and living on the cross.

Further reading: Romans 2

Departing from the tree of life

In relation to the accomplishment of Their covenant purpose, the Father was the source and Great Architect of the creation. The Son, revealing and proceeding from the Father, was the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Creation was brought to pass in time and space through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

When Adam was created, he was established by God as the ruler and administrator over the creation. Detailing this mandate, God said, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' **Gen 1:28**. Adam was to live and to minister, following as his example, the obedience of Christ, his King. From the garden of Eden, Adam ministered in this manner by faith obedience, as he received the word of the Father, from Christ, by the Holy Spirit, at the tree of life each evening. In this regard, the tree of life in the garden of Eden was the fellowship of the word of kingship.

Adam exchanged this mandate and fellowship for a lie when he heeded the voice of his wife, who had been deceived through the sorcery of Satan. He disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord, in mercy, provided an atonement for Adam and his wife, which they then needed to *choose*. Adam and Eve did choose the atonement that God provided for them. The lamb that was slain for this purpose symbolised their *participation* in the process of overcoming sin. This involved making offering every day at the gate of Eden, and embracing the difficulties that they experienced in the context of their work as a participation in this offering.

Further reading: Genesis 3

Faith for the hope of sonship

The Lord said to Eve, 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children.' **Gen 3:16. 1Ti 2:15.** He said to Adam, '*Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you.*' **Gen 3:17-18.**

If Adam and Eve had not chosen the atonement that God had provided for them, they would have been 'given up' by the Lord, as Cain later was. Gen 4:16. The apostle Paul explained that Cain, and those who walked in like manner, did not glorify God, nor were they thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened. Pursuing idolatry, '*God gave them up to uncleanness.*' **Rom 1:21-24.**

In contrast to those who went in the way of Cain, the Scriptures nominate a line of men and women, beginning with Abel, who received and believed God's word. These are often referred to as 'the heroes of faith'. **Heb 11:4-38.** Following the death of Abel, God appointed another seed when Eve gave birth to Seth. When Seth's son, Enosh, was born, men began to call on the name of the Lord. **Gen 4:25-26.** They were identified as sons of God. **Gen 6:2.** This line of believers, including Noah, Abraham and David, were motivated by faith to lay hold of the hope of sonship, *which was yet to come.* They believed the promise that the Seed of the woman, Christ, would crush the serpent's head. **Gen 3:15.** And yet, 'all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise'; that is, they were not, themselves, born of God. **Heb 11:39.**

Once *faith had come*, revealed through the birth of Christ, proclaimed during His earthly ministry, and then given through His death, burial and resurrection, the promise of sonship could be realised. **Gal 3:25.** Sons of men could be born of the divine nature as sons of God and established as members of Christ's corporate body.

Further reading: Hebrews 11

Exchanging truth for a lie in the church age

It is possible for a son of God to exchange truth for a lie *again*, and thereby depart from the fellowship of Yahweh. Paul warned the Corinthian church, writing, 'But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted – you may well put up with it!' **2Co 11:3-4**.

Christ's first letter to the seven churches of Asia, recorded in the book of Revelation, reveals that the Ephesian presbytery and church had fallen from first love because of the very sorcery identified by Paul. **Rev 2:4-5**. The call to every presbytery and church is to remember from where we have fallen, repent, and do the first works. In this regard, we are being called back to the fellowship of faith at the tree of life, which Adam had with Yahweh prior to the Fall. As Christ said to the presbytery at Ephesus, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.' **Rev 2:7**.

This call to faith as kings and priests in the kingdom of God is not triumphalism. It is not the call to become a 'King's kid', as some have previously asserted. Rather, it is a call to be established as a son of God who is returning to the tree of life. In this fellowship, as sons of God, we are emptying ourselves to reveal the authority of the word of Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. This word is sourced from Christ; it is not an expression of ourselves through the works that belong to a projection. This would be sorcery, for sorcery involves exchanging the truth for a lie.

Further reading: 2 Corinthians 11

Not our own righteousness

The religious Jews endeavoured to establish their own righteousness by keeping the Law. Noting this motive, Paul wrote, 'For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God'. **Rom 10:3**. Paul himself testified that he had suffered the loss of all things that he may gain Christ and be found in Him, '*not having my own righteousness, which is from the law*'. **Php 3:9**. Those who used the Law to establish their own righteousness stumbled at Christ. He was to them a stumbling stone and a rock of offence, as exemplified by the response of the Pharisees to His teaching. **Rom 9:31-32**. Even after faith had come, the Jews who refused to receive the word of faith preached by the apostles continued to stumble, opening the door for the gospel to be proclaimed to the Gentiles. **Act 13:46-47**.

Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness. **Rom 10:4**. That is, He brought an end to self-righteousness through the Law, for the Law was taken out of the way when it was nailed to the cross in Himself. Now, when a person endeavours to be righteous according to the Law, it is being misappropriated from the cross. Those who do this forsake the blessing of the cross, and are cursed as part of the body of sin that was taken out to forgetfulness. This reveals that they are not of the faith of Abraham.

When the Lord called Abraham to depart from the land of the Chaldeans, He said, 'I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed'. **Gen 12:3**. This promise applies to *everyone* who belongs, by faith, to the family of Abraham. **Num 23:20-24**. While it is true that those who belong to Christ cannot be cursed by another, we can be *bewitched* by sorcery if we give heed to another word. Through the sorcery of exchange, we can become slaves of sin. **Gal 3:1**.

Further reading: Galatians 3

An exhortation to return

In Adam, we all died. **1Co 15:22**. When the word of the Lord came calling to Adam to restore him, through atonement, to the pathway upon which he could obtain his predestination, *it also came calling to you*. The call of God to Adam, and to humanity in Adam, was *'Where are you?'* **Gen 3:9**.

With this statement, Adam and Eve were given a choice. Likewise, you are given a choice. You are brought to the valley of decision. As the prophet Joel declared, 'Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.' **Joe 3:14**. In the valley of decision, the enslaving power of sin has been pushed back. You are free to choose, through repentance, to return again to Paradise. Making this choice begins with the acknowledgement of your sin and your departure from first love. Then, your repentance is to choose first love. This is the love and fellowship that we had with God at the tree of life.

As you find repentance, God, through Christ, gives faith to you. By faith, you are able to obey from the heart the word of the kingdom that is being taught to you by Christ's messengers. You are now becoming a slave of this word. The word, of which you have become a slave, is the word of righteousness. You are, therefore, now also a slave of righteousness as you heed the proceeding word. **Rom 6:17-19**.

The works that you do as a slave of righteousness are the works that belong to your name as a son of God. Christ has already accomplished these righteous works for you. Accordingly, to do these works of righteousness, you must, again, become His disciple-friend. **Joh 15:15**. In choosing repentance, you are again the friend of Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Your confession is that Christ is your Lord and King, and that you have returned to the fellowship of the tree of life that is in the Paradise of God.

Further reading: Joel 3

The fellowship of the tree of life

Having returned to the fellowship of first love, you are now living in fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. You have returned to the fellowship of heavenly places, which is the New Jerusalem. You have come to Mount Zion and are eating from the tree of life! **Heb 12:22-24.**

In this fellowship, you are holding fast to the word that the Holy Spirit has delivered to you. He came to be your Helper, and your Deliverer from slavehood to sin and Satan. The Holy Spirit gave you power to join the word of Christ, and to become obedient from the heart to the commands of Christ as the expression of your faith. The Holy Spirit accomplished this work within you by pouring the love of God, and the love for God, back into your heart. **Rom 5:5.** The love of God activated the faith of God within you, for faith in freedom, through choice, works by love.

This was the gospel that was delivered to us fifty years ago, when the Lord brought to us the word on the Ephesian Pattern. In this season, we are being visited a second time with the word calling us to return to first love as part of a lampstand church. However, in this season of visitation, we are being addressed by the Spirit in relation to our marriages, families, and households.

When it was first proclaimed, many people did not believe the word concerning lampstand churches, because they did not join the repentance and faith that was being offered. Now, in the light of the word revealing the steps of salvation, the Spirit is speaking to us again and calling us to remember what we first heard. We are being invited to return to partake of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God.

Further reading: Revelation 2

Called to become overcomers

Christ is asking us, through His messengers, to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The Spirit is calling us to become overcomers. We know that Christ concluded His admonition to each lampstand church with a promise to the overcomers. The prophetic burden of the book of Revelation is summed up with the statement, 'He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.' **Rev 21:7**. This promise is accompanied by the warning that the cowardly, unbelieving, and so on, will have their part in the lake of fire, which is the second death. **Rev 21:8**.

The victory that overcomes the world is our faith. **1Jn 5:4**. We receive this faith as the Spirit brings to our remembrance what Christ has already spoken to us. **Joh 14:26**. We further obtain faith as the Holy Spirit guides us in all truth, and reveals, from the prophetic Scriptures, what belongs to our day and generation. Because of this, we are able to 'bear' the matters that belong to these times. **Joh 16:12-15**.

With this word in our mouth and heart, we are to overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The word of Christ our King is the word of the Lion-Lamb of the tribe of Judah. He has already prevailed over every enemy that seeks to rob us of our dominion and sonship. We are, today, being called to turn again to first love. As we repent and do this first work – the work of abiding in the fellowship of the Father and the Son – we will be restored, through the faith that we receive, to have dominion as an overcomer in the midst of contrary circumstances. **Rev 2:4-7**. **1Jn 2:24**. In weakness, we will be made strong, and thus we will overcome and inherit all things.

Further reading: 1 John 2

Truth exchanged for a lie

Mankind's wickedness was to exchange the truth of God for a lie. God, therefore, gave them over to their idolatry, that they should believe a lie and come under condemnation. **Rom 1:20-25. 2Th 2:11-12.** Specifically, man *exchanged* truth for Satan's lie. Through this exchange, Satan became the god of this world. **2Co 4:4.** Evidently, Satan works by advantage through *trading*. This is one of his devices for taking advantage of us. **2Co 2:11.**

In the wilderness, prior to the commencement of Christ's earthly ministry, Satan claimed that he was the god of all the kingdoms of mankind. Taking Jesus to the top of Mount Zion in the third heaven, Satan showed Him, in a moment of time, all the kingdoms of the world, with their authority and glory. Satan asserted that the authority and glory of these kingdoms had been delivered to him so that he could give them to whomever he wished. The Devil proposed to give the authority and glory of mankind to Jesus if He would worship before him. **Luk 4:5-7.** Christ overcame this temptation, stating, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve"' **Luk 4:8.**

Adam, when he was created, was directed by God to become a multitude of nations, and to fill the whole earth. He was then given power to subdue and rule over everything upon the earth. **Gen 1:28.** To fulfil this mandate, Adam was given the wisdom and authority necessary to take dominion over the kingdom of God upon the earth, in fellowship with Christ as the Creator. As a man, he named and integrated every living thing that the Son of God created on behalf of the Father. **Gen 1:26-28. Gen 2:19-20.**

Satan, the serpent of old, masquerading in the physical form of a seraph, sought, through deception, by sorcery, to take the mandate that had been given to Adam and the woman and make it substantial in relation to himself. He did this by becoming the origin and father of lies. **Joh 8:44.**

Further reading: Romans 1

Deception and disobedience

Satan masqueraded as the father of an alternative word. His aim was for his word to replace the word of God, together with its corresponding faith and hope that came from the Father, through Christ.

Eve was deceived and mesmerised, through enchantment, into believing that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would sustain her life apart from God. That is, she perceived its fruit to be good for food so that her life would not be dependent upon God. She also believed that it would give her power to fulfil her desires and expectations, being pleasant to her eyes. She, likewise, considered that the fruit would make her wise as a person who could judge between good and evil. **Gen 3:6**. She thought that this would become her role as the one who could make a difference between good and evil.

In contrast to the woman, Adam was not deceived. **1Ti 2:14**. Rather, in disobedience to the command of God, he departed from the continued *choice* of faith, hope, and love. This was the culture of fellowship that he had with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at the tree of life. This daily *choice* had been the expression of his *freedom*.

Through Adam's disobedience, another law was established in the heart of every person who would be brought to birth through procreation. This other law brings them into bondage to the law of sin and death. **Rom 7:23**. Paul wrote, 'Through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned [being in bondage to the law of sin and death, through the exercise of another law]'. **Rom 5:12**.

Sin-sickness, leading to death, became an '*infirmity*' afflicting every person who would ever be born. Even as Christians, as a result of 'the other law', our human *infirmity* is to misappropriate the word of God for our own ends. It is the drive to covet what we believe will give us life, and then exchange the word of our sanctification for a projection.

Further reading: Romans 7

Cursing and the Law

In response to the Fall, the Lord God *cursed the serpent*, saying, 'Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.' **Gen 3:14-15.**

The Lord God also *cursed the ground* for Adam's sake, because he heeded the voice of his wife and disobeyed the command of God. He said to Adam, 'Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.' **Gen 3:17-19.**

Although the Lord cursed Satan, and cursed the ground upon which Adam worked, it is notable that *He did not curse Adam or the woman*. Notably, once the Law was given as a covenant to the children of Israel, they were now able to be cursed. Moses said to the people, 'I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, *blessing and cursing*; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.' **Deu 30:19-20.**

Further reading: Deuteronomy 30

An unhappy marriage

The Law that was given at Mount Sinai was the *marriage covenant* between the Son of God and the children of Israel, whom Stephen described as ‘the church in the wilderness’. **Act 7:38**. Noting this covenant, the Lord, through the prophet Jeremiah, remarked, ‘Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.’ **Jer 31:31-32**.

This was an unhappy marriage, for the Son’s bride was continually *unfaithful*. For those who lived by faith, the Law should have been a tutor to bring them to Christ. However, the majority of the people forsook faith. **Deu 32:20**. They had no desire for relationship with God. **Deu 32:15-18**. They misappropriated the Law in pursuit of their own life and expression, and repeatedly went after idols.

The substance of faith was promised to Abraham, in Christ, on Mount Moriah, which was named, in the days of Christ, ‘Mount Calvary’. The Lord said to Abraham, ‘In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.’ **Gen 22:18**. This was an Everlasting Covenant that the Lord made with Abraham. This Covenant was given to mankind, as the substance of faith, in the new birth, following Christ’s resurrection from the dead.

The first response that belongs to receiving the blessing of the Everlasting Covenant is to become *bankrupt in spirit*. As Jesus Himself said, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ **Mat 5:3**.

Further reading: Hosea 1

Sight for deliverance

Becoming bankrupt in spirit is the first dimension of blessing, because it delivers sight to a hearer. This was Jacob's experience. Prior to his wrestle with the Lord at Jabbok, he confessed, through prayer, *'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth [illumination] which You have shown Your servant.'* **Gen 32:10.** Jacob, however, was still in bondage to fear, saying, *'Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him.'* **Gen 32:11.** It is this fear that keeps us in bondage to our infirmity, which Jacob had demonstrated through his self-preserving, deceptive manipulations.

As Jacob then endeavoured to cross the ford of Jabbok, the Lord resisted him. He did not understand why he was unable to enter the promised land; why the Lord was resisting him. However, the Lord was resisting Jacob for his sake, having received his confession, *'I am not worthy of Your mercy and Your illumination.'* The Lord helped Jacob by touching the socket of his hip, bringing him to further poverty of spirit. At this point, Jacob was able to *confess his infirmity* – identifying himself as a *'deceiver'*.

The Lord responded by saying, *'Your name shall no longer be called Jacob [Deceiver], but Israel [Prince with God]; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.'* **Gen 32:28.** Jacob found deliverance from his infirmity, which was his self-centred propensity to deception, as he then walked with a limp. This was his connection to the weakness of Christ in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. His new name, *'Prince with God'*, indicated that Jacob had been recovered to dominion in the promised land. Figuratively, he had obtained the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God! **Rev 2:7.**

Further reading: Genesis 32

Paul's overcoming

Like Jacob, Paul also found poverty of spirit as he confessed his own blindness, saying, 'For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practise; but what I hate, that I do.' **Rom 7:15**. He then explained that this was a place of wretchedness, declaring, 'O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?' **Rom 7:24**. Significantly, the place of wretchedness is the place of *choice*. It is the valley of the shadow of death; the valley of decision. **Psa 23:4. Joe 3:14**.

The answer to Paul's query was, 'I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!' **Rom 7:25**. Under the lordship and kingship of Christ, Paul's recovery to the right hand of Christ was the fulfilment of Jacob's prophetic statement concerning Benjamin. We recall that as Rachel was dying, following the delivery of the child, she named him Ben-Oni, meaning 'son of my sorrow'. However, Jacob changed the boy's name to Benjamin, meaning 'son of my right hand'. **Gen 35:18**. Paul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was the expression of this prophetic destiny when he was established as an apostle in the right hand of Christ, and found deliverance from his infirmity in the fellowship of Christ's weakness. **2Co 12:7-10**.

As we acknowledge our infirmity, we are delivered, each day, to choice. We can either continue to live by the other law, endeavouring to serve the Law of God with our mind, or we can set our mind on the Spirit. As we walk according to the Spirit, in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, we are able to put to death the deeds of the flesh, and live by Christ's life. This is the way that a son of God lives! **Rom 8:13-14**. Our confession is, "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.' **Rom 8:36-37**.

Further reading: Romans 8



Restoring
my Soul