



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

JUNE 2026

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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The profile of the scorner

Addressing the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, the apostle Paul said, 'Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: "Behold, you *despisers*, marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, a work which you will by no means believe, though one were to declare it to you"'. **Act 13:40-41**. A 'despiser' is a person who claims to be a believer, but who, on account of their self-righteousness, is unable to receive the commands of Christ that are proclaimed by His messengers. Consequently, they are unable to lay hold of the faith that comes by hearing the word and, for this reason, they 'will by no means believe'.

Elsewhere in the Scriptures, the despiser is described as a scorner or a mocker. For example, King Solomon wrote, 'A scoffer [equally, 'scorner'] seeks wisdom and does not find it, but knowledge is easy to him who understands'. **Pro 14:6**. The scorner assumes the liberty to judge Christ's messengers, their word, and its implications, on account of their presumed competence, expertise, experience or gift. They may, or may not, be malicious in their retort, but through their judgements place themselves in a position of superiority.

Jesus drew attention to this demeanour, or attitude, when He contrasted the prayers of a Pharisee and a tax collector. Luke recorded this lesson in his Gospel, writing, 'He spoke this parable to some *who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others*: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'" **Luk 18:9-12**.

Further reading: Psalm 1

Self-despising

Those who despise others and, through their presumptive judgements, despise the word, ultimately *despise themselves*. They progressively become weary and depressed, particularly when their own righteousness, or their perceptions, are not validated by others. They can become a vengeful victim of others or of their circumstances.

This principle was acutely manifest by Judas, who rejected and despised Christ's teaching concerning His death, burial and resurrection. From Judas' perspective, the teachings of Jesus and His engagement with the Jews were counterproductive; they were hindering His manifestation as the Messiah. Judas took it upon himself to connect Jesus with the Jewish council. He presumed that Jesus would make Himself known to them through the demonstration of a fitting sign. When it was apparent that Jesus would die on account of Judas' betrayal, Judas committed suicide as the ultimate expression of self-righteousness. This was the action of a man who despised himself.

Depression associated with despising oneself belongs to *unbelief*. **Act 13:40-41**. The scorner *does not believe*. This is because they trust in their own understanding of the word and its rationalisation through the law of their mind. That is, '*despising*' belongs to the other law. It follows that the weariness and depression that results from despising oneself is not bankruptcy of spirit; and it does *not* belong to the kingdom of heaven. **Mat 5:3**. It is, in fact, an evil that is present with us. **Rom 7:21**.

Deliverance from this wearisome and self-destructive way of living requires us to heed the instruction of Paul in his letter to the Hebrews. He explained that people become depressed, or discouraged in their soul, because they forget the exhortation that addresses them as a son of God: 'My son, *do not despise* the chastening of the LORD, nor be *discouraged* [or depressed] when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.' **Heb 12:5-6**. Those who receive this exhortation first acknowledge that their weariness is because they despise the chastening of the Lord as they engage with the word through the law of their mind.

Further reading: Hebrews 12

Despising Christ

Every son of God must cease from despising the chastening of the Lord by taking Christ's yoke upon them to learn from Him. In this regard, Jesus directed His followers, saying, 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden [or depressed on account of carnality], and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.' **Mat 11:28-30.**

Christ did not despise others, nor Himself. Rather, He was Himself despised. Establishing this point, the prophet Isaiah declared, 'He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.' **Isa 53:3.**

We hide our faces from Christ, and therefore despise Him through the presumption that belongs to being a *zealot*. A zealot is a person who covets the Law and the life that is promised to those who keep the Law. Our zealotry is revealed by our use of the Law to judge ourselves and to judge others. We find definition and self-validation through these judgements. In so doing, we reject the light of the knowledge of our sanctification that shines from the face of Christ.

Paul was clear that exercising these judgements brings us under the condemnation of the Law. **Rom 2:1.** As we have just considered, hiding our faces from Christ through our judgements of ourselves, and others, demonstrates that we despise Him. Significantly, Paul explained that, by despising Christ, we also 'despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God *leads to repentance*'. **Rom 2:4.** We forego the gift of repentance that Christ finished for us, and desires to give to us, in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings.

Further reading: James 4

The process of healing

Depression associated with despising is *anger*. It is an expression of anger on account of unfulfilled expectations sourced from the law of our mind. The Scriptures refer to these unfulfilled expectations as 'hope deferred'. Anger, resulting from our thwarted expectations, leads to the dystrophy or sickness of a person's spirit. Detailing these principles, Solomon wrote, 'Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes [or true hope is realised], it is a tree of life.' **Pro 13:12**. Furthermore, he observed, 'The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, but who can bear a broken spirit?' **Pro 18:14**.

A person who has a broken spirit can only find healing and recovery through the sevenfold Spirit of God given from the Father. This grace is ministered to a son of God as they receive and walk in the word of the Father that is ministered by Christ's messengers. **Joh 13:20**. As a messenger himself, Paul prayed for his hearers to receive this ministry, testifying, 'For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.' **Eph 3:14-17**.

Our 'inner man' refers to our *spirit and soul*. A hearer's inner man is healed and strengthened through the ministry of the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord from the Father because they are being delivered from living according to the other law as it is expressed through the law of their mind. This deliverance from the other law, which brings us into bondage to sin, is through Jesus Christ, who revealed the Father. Highlighting this point, Matthew recounted, 'He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses".' **Mat 8:16-17**.

Further reading: Ephesians 3

The steps of Christ

Describing the implications of our participation in Christ's offering, the apostle Peter wrote, 'For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, *that you should follow His steps*: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him [the Father] who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes *you were healed*.' **1Pe 2:21-24**. The fellowship of these stripes began in the house of Caiaphas. This is where Jesus turned His other cheek as He was bruised for our iniquities, and where Peter found deliverance from his zealotry.

It is important to note that Peter directed us to follow in the steps of Christ who pioneered the pathway of our salvation. This is how we avail ourselves of the atonement that Christ accomplished for mankind when He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. That is, we are to participate in the seven atoning events of Christ's offering and suffering journey by walking with Him, by the capacity of the Spirit, on the pathway of salvation that He pioneered for us.

Applying this principle, Peter explained that, when Christ was reviled, He did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten but, rather, committed Himself to the Father who judges righteously. Likewise, this is to be the way in which a believing husband relates in his marriage and in his house as he 'lifts up holy hands without wrath' (or, without reviling or threatening) and doubting. **1Ti 2:8**. It is also to be the way in which a believing wife relates in her marriage and house so that, even if her husband does not obey the word, he, *without a word* (or, without reviling or threatening), may be won by the chaste conduct of his wife. **1Pe 3:1**.

Further reading: 1 Peter 2

The recovery of Peter

Peter was able to give this instruction because he had learned this principle from Christ in the court of Caiaphas. In this encounter, Peter received the *gift of faith* from the Father, which was given to him by Christ. **Jas 1:17**. The faith that Peter received from the Father was in answer to Christ's prayer for him. Earlier, at the last Passover meal, the Lord had said to Peter, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed [to the Father] for you, that your faith [received from Him] should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.' **Luk 22:31-32**.

Peter had claimed that he would die the death of a zealot for Christ, saying to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.' **Luk 22:33**. Even after Jesus prophesied concerning Peter's denial, Peter's response was, 'Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!' **Mat 26:35**. His zealous, and seemingly noble, avowal was contrary to the word of the Lord to the disciples. Jesus had said that when He was struck, they would be scattered, meaning that they were to return to their houses. Peter's zeal was, in fact, iniquity; it was not the expression that belonged to his obedience.

Christ's face was marred 'more than any man's' as He was beaten and bruised for our iniquity and self-righteous zeal. **Isa 52:14. Isa 53:5**. Each of Peter's denials corresponded with a blow to Christ's face. As Christ 'turned the other cheek' in apology to the Father, with each blow, the Law was being taken out of Peter's hands, and his other law was being disempowered.

When the rooster crowed, Peter met Jesus eye to eye and was illuminated to see the wickedness and failure of his zealotry. However, he also received, as a gift, the repentance that Jesus had finished for him, and the faith to walk in the sanctified obedience that Jesus had *become* for Him. **1Co 1:30**.

Further reading: Luke 22

The ministry of the word

When Moses led the people out of Egypt and through the wilderness to the promised land, the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light. **Exo 13:21-22**. This continued after they erected the tabernacle according to the pattern that Moses had received from the Lord. **Num 9:15-23**. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night was where the throne of the Son was enshrined above the people. This was the order of the throne that was witnessed by the prophet Ezekiel. **Eze 1:4-26. Exo 14:19**.

In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses described the ministry of the Son from His throne. He wrote, 'The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand came a fiery law for them. Yes, *He loves the people; all His saints are in Your hand; they sit down at Your feet; everyone receives Your words*. Moses commanded a law for us, a heritage of the congregation of Jacob. And He was King in Jeshurun, when the leaders of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together.' **Deu 33:2-5**.

When Moses said that the Lord came with 'ten thousands of His saints', he was referring to the cloud that journeyed with those who were called to be the Father's firstborn people. The word was proclaimed to them as a fiery law that proceeded from the right hand of the Lord. The prophet Habakkuk described this ministry of the word, declaring, 'His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing from His hand, and there His power was hidden.' **Hab 3:4**. Elsewhere, King David likened these flashing rays to fiery arrows that scattered the enemies of the Lord. **2Sa 22:14-15. Psa 7:13**.

Further reading: Exodus 14

Sitting at the Lord's feet

The nation that was delivered out of Egypt, journeyed to Mount Sinai to be *married* to Christ, the Son of God, who was enthroned above the pillar of cloud and fire. The Law was the covenant of their marriage. **Jer 31:31-32**. At this point in God's unfolding covenant purpose, the people were not yet able to be temples for the Holy Spirit. This means that they did not yet possess the seven Spirits of the Lord. Rather, the Holy Spirit was an anointing upon them, enabling them to hear and to receive the word of the Lord spoken through the disposition of angels. **Act 7:53**. The Angel of the Lord spoke the word to Moses, and then he proclaimed it to the children of Israel. **Exo 3:2**.

Moses declared that the Lord 'loved the people' and that 'His saints were in His hand; they sat down at the Lord's feet and received His word'. **Deu 33:3**. Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, demonstrated how we sit at the Lord's feet. Luke recorded that Mary 'sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word'. **Luk 10:39**. Jesus said, 'Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her'. **Luk 10:39,42**. Of course, this was only the beginning of *receiving the word*. She then needed to become a *believer*.

After Mary had met Christ as King, and had received faith to believe for resurrection life in her house, she 'took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil'. **Joh 12:3**. This was a woman whose testimony was, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation'. **Isa 52:7**. Through Jesus' word, as she anointed His feet, she was a participant in the fellowship of His death, burial and resurrection. The fragrance of this testimony, or proclamation, filled the whole house.

Further reading: Deuteronomy 33

The misappropriation of the word

As a result of 'the other law', our human *infirmity* is to misappropriate the word of God. We do not understand why we do this, for what we will to do, we do not practise. Instead, we find ourselves doing the things that we hate.

Rom 7:15. This sickness, or infirmity, was established in us when man ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. On account of one man's disobedience, we were all born with the motive to misappropriate the word for our own ends, which brings us into bondage to the law of sin and death.

Rom 5:12. Rom 7:23. Apart from deliverance through the cross, every person walks, or lives, 'according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.'

Eph 2:2. They remain in bondage to Satan and this infirmity on account of the *fear of death*. **Heb 2:14-15.**

How do we misappropriate the word? We eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and add the Law to this knowledge. Instead of receiving the word from Christ's hand and sitting at His feet, we take hold of the word with the law of our mind in order to energise and justify our judgements of others and ourselves. This makes us captive to the law of sin. Paul explained, 'For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.' **Rom 7:22-23.**

Once we are brought into captivity to the law of sin in our members, Satan and the demons gain power over us, *using the power of the Law against us*. We start to curse each other in anger, wrath, and the emotions of sin.

Further reading: Romans 7

A world of iniquity

When we lay hold of the Law, and then use it to judge and accuse another, it is the expression of *a curse*. It is the manifestation of ‘a world of iniquity’ that proceeds from out of our heart, through our tongue. It is sobering to consider that our tongue is set on fire by hell. As James observed, ‘See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell!’ **Jas 3:5-6**.

By this means, *we make the Law of God another law within us*. It becomes ‘our law’. We then use the Law to condemn others and ourselves. This was acutely demonstrated by the Jews when Pilate brought Jesus before them. They cried out, ‘*We have a Law, and according to our Law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.*’ **Joh 19:7**.

The Law should remain in the hand of God. It should not be in our hands as those who presume to use the Law as mediators. There is only one Mediator between God and man – that is, the Man Jesus Christ.

How then are we to respond to the word of the Lord? Providing the answer to this query, King David wrote, ‘The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those who proclaimed it.’ **Psa 68:11**. Mary exemplified this when she anointed Christ’s feet for burial. We note, in this regard, that proclaiming the word of faith is not the same as using the Law for our self-centred ends. We proclaim the word through the obedience of faith.

Further reading: James 3

The judgement of the Law

When we misappropriate the Law, we come under its burning, destructive judgement. This was manifest in a severe manner when Nadab and Abihu presumed to offer profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them to offer. We know that 'fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD'. **Lev 10:2**. Describing the nature of this fire, the Lord, through Moses, declared, 'For a fire is kindled in My anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell; it shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.' **Deu 32:22**.

This destructive judgement begins to impact upon our identity when we misappropriate the Law so that it becomes our other law. Sin then produces death within us through what is 'good' – that is, the Law – the commandments of which are holy and just. **Rom 7:10-13**. Having come under the judgement of the Law by taking hold of it and making it our other law, we find that evil is present with us; those who, through the law of our mind, 'will to do good'. **Rom 7:21**. This evil, that is present with us, is the *weariness* that belongs to depression and destruction when we misappropriate the Law, applying it to ourselves and to our relationships.

The 'energy' that feeds the other law comes from the power that is in God's Law, creating a strong reaction within us. Paul called this judgement 'the emotions, or passions, of sin', writing, 'For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death'. **Rom 7:5**. In this mode, we maintain our zealous rage and attitude that despises another based on self-righteousness. We claim to love the Law, or word of God; however, this is not true. We covet the Law. In so doing, we break the commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet', and come under its judgement, which is death. **Rom 7:7**. This is our most basic human infirmity.

Further reading: Deuteronomy 32

The Law nailed to the cross

The Law, which was against us, was taken out of the way when it was nailed to the cross through the sufferings that Christ endured at the hands of wicked men. **Col 2:14. Act 2:23.** Death is no longer the consequence of the Law. Rather, death is now the consequence of Christ's judgement, because He possesses 'the keys of hell and of death'. **Rev 1:18.** He obtained these keys when the fire of hell was lit by Christ on His offering journey, which culminated when He was lifted up on the cross at Calvary and great darkness covered the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour. This was the place where the justice and judgement of God were fully manifest and revealed.

During those three hours, Jesus suffered the judgement of everlasting burnings that belong to those who are forgotten by God, until the judgement and punishment of each of us were completed in Him. **Heb 9:14.** That is, He, through Eternal Spirit, endured an eternity of judgement and wrath – an ageless age of years, countless and interminable – which will never cease for those who refuse to repent and to receive the salvation of God. And yet, death could not hold Him. **Act 2:24.** He returned to the Father having learned and fulfilled the obedience that belongs to every person. These two dimensions of His one offering were typified by the two goats – the scapegoat and the Lord's goat – that were offered on the Day of Atonement under the Old Covenant.

The apostle Paul proclaimed the gospel of 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' as a word of present truth in every place. **1Co 2:2.** When Paul first came to Corinth, he 'reasoned in the synagogue' every sabbath and persuaded 'both Jews and Greeks'. **Act 18:1-4.** When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was 'compelled by the Spirit' to testify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. **Act 18:5.** This was a word of present truth that Paul had been specifically directed to deliver to them.

Further reading: Colossians 2

Responding to the word

When the Jews in the city of Corinth, who had initially been persuaded, opposed Paul and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, 'Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.' **Act 18:6.** They were righteous until they heard, and then rejected, the word of present truth preached to them by Paul. On account of their rejection of the word of present truth, Paul was progressively cleansed of the requirement to give priority to the Jews in relation to the proclamation of the gospel. This priority had been established by Jesus Himself, who said, 'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the *end of the earth.*' **Act 1:8.**

Earlier, at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul had also acknowledged this shift in priority. Specifically, he said to the Jews, 'It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: "I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the *ends of the earth.*"' **Act 13:46-47.**

Having been set as a *light* to the Gentiles, Paul was established as a messenger who belonged to a presbytery in the right hand of Christ. That is, through Paul's ministry, a *fiery* word of present truth was proceeding from the right hand of Christ to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles. **Rom 1:16. Deu 33:2.** Although Paul's hearers were righteous before the fiery word of present truth had been proclaimed to them, they then judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life through their rejection of this message.

Further reading: Acts 13

The accountability of a watchman

By particularly testifying that he was 'clean' of the blood of the Jews in Corinth, Paul highlighted that he had been established in the right hand of Christ as a *watchman*. We know this because the Lord said to the prophet Ezekiel, 'Son of man, *I have made you a watchman* for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die," and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; *but his blood I will require at your hand*. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul [i.e. you are clean regarding their blood]'. **Eze 3:17-19**.

Of course, the work of a watchman is not limited to warning the wicked. Like Paul, they are to proclaim the word of present truth *to the righteous* so that these hearers can obtain their salvation as they walk in the light of the word. Detailing this mandate, the Lord said to Ezekiel, 'Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul'. **Eze 3:20-21**.

Further reading: Acts 20

An idol in the heart

Paul's interactions with the Jews in Corinth demonstrate that a righteous person turns from their righteousness to iniquity *by rejecting the word of present truth*. In so doing, they stumble at Christ and fail to be built on Him. The apostle Peter explained that this is the implication of disobedience to the proceeding word, writing, 'They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.' **1Pe 2:8**.

Inasmuch as a watchman, or messenger, has a responsibility to proclaim the word of present truth to the righteous and to the wicked, and to warn them of God's judgement upon their disobedience, they must not engage with, nor answer, those who seek their counsel while coming with an idol in their heart. A person, and in particular a presbyter, approaches Christ's messengers in the presbytery and the church 'with an idol in their heart' when they seek affirmation or validation for their initiatives that deviate from the expression and implications of the word of present truth. They do this in order to maintain their religious or ministry projections.

The Lord warned Ezekiel of this alternative to fellowship in Spirit and truth when some of the elders of Israel came to him and sat before him. The Lord said to Ezekiel, 'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?' **Eze 14:3**. Warning Ezekiel of the implications of answering these inquiries, the Lord said, 'And if the prophet is induced to speak anything, I the LORD have induced that prophet, and I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from among My people Israel. And they shall bear their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be the same as the punishment of the one who inquired.' **Eze 14:9-10**. Paul escaped this condemnation.

Further reading: 1 Corinthians 10

Fiery coals upon the head

By faithfully delivering the message that he had been given to proclaim as a watchman, the apostle Paul was relieved of the accountability for ‘the blood’ of his hearers. However, they came under the fiery judgement of the word that he had spoken. In this regard, ‘fiery coals’ were heaped on their heads as he fed them with the spiritual food and drink that is from heaven. Paul explained this point to the Christians in Rome, writing, ‘Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. Therefore, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will *heap coals of fire on his head*”’. **Rom 12:19-20.**

The heaping of fiery coals upon the head of a person, who rejects the word of present truth that is proclaimed by a watchman, highlights that their rebellion is in relation to the order of headship. We note, therefore, that receiving the word that ministers life and healing to a hearer requires their acknowledgement of the authority that belongs to the order of headship.

This was demonstrated by the centurion who entreated Jesus regarding the healing of his servant. He said to Christ, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, “Go,” and he goes; and to another, “Come,” and he comes; and to my servant, “Do this,” and he does it.’ **Mat 8:8-9.** It is clear from this man’s statement that he had previously heard Christ speak, and recognised that Jesus was the King who came to reveal the Father. Through the word proclaimed by Christ the King, the centurion had received faith, which he was now exercising in this interaction.

Further reading: Matthew 8

Such great faith

Notably, Jesus said regarding the Centurion in Capernaum, 'I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!' **Mat 8:10**. This faith, which is *from the Father*, is both received and demonstrated because a person acknowledges and functions in the order and fellowship of headship. In this order of authority, they receive faith because they acknowledge that the Father has made Christ their Lord and Head. Accordingly, they are able to hear the word that is preached through the ministry graces of Christ. **Rom 10:17. Eph 4:11-12**. This is the word of Christ the King that is "near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **Rom 10:8-9**.

Reiterating the point, it is the *Father* who has seated Christ in heavenly places, far above all principalities and power and might and dominion. **Eph 1:20-21**. He is 'the Head of all principality and power'. **Col 2:10**. The Father has also made Him the Head of the temple and the Head of the church. When we receive Christ in the way that the Father has made Him to be in relation to us, we are able to receive and to live by the faith of God that He gives to us. This is necessary for our salvation.

Moreover, because He is the Head of all principality and power, if we remain submitted in the order of headship, principalities and powers have no access or influence in our life and house. Headship is the covering that is extended over every dwelling place of Mount Zion. **Isa 4:5**. Importantly, if we are submitted to the headship and authority of Christ, we will engage with others in the way that the Father has made them to be in relation to us.

Further reading: Romans 10

Headship in a marriage

A wife who is receiving Christ as her Head and Lord will receive her husband as her head, 'calling him lord'. This is the very point that the apostle Peter made when he wrote, 'For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who *trusted in God* [the Father] also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, *calling him lord*, whose daughters you are if you do good [meaning, are established in sonship] and are not afraid with any terror'. **1Pe 3:5-6**.

We see that a woman's reception and expression of faith is contingent upon her participation in the order of headship. The way that she relates with her husband will demonstrate her submission to the lordship and kingship of Christ. A woman who stumbles at the call to proceed from her husband as the community of the word is stumbling at Christ. **1Pe 2:8**. She is unable to be 'built on Him' and dishonours His headship in the church and in their house.

Likewise, a man who is submitted to the lordship and kingship of Christ, his Head, will present himself as a slave of righteousness in the fellowship of his brethren, having become obedient from the heart to the form of doctrine to which he has been delivered. **Rom 6:17-18**. In this fellowship, he receives grace to dwell with understanding – i.e. in a culture of offering – with his wife, giving honour to her as 'the vessel' of multiplication whom the Father has made her to be. This reorientation is necessary so that a man's fellowship in the intercession and travail of Yahweh is not hindered. **1Pe 3:7**. However, if the man continues to look into the face of his wife, he will stumble at Christ. Bereft of faith, his confession will be, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come [to properly participate in the fellowship of the *agape* meal]'. **Luk 14:20**.

Further reading: 1 Peter 3

A friend of Christ

As a man gives himself as a slave of righteousness, Christ, through His messengers, says to him, 'Greater love has no-one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; *but I have called you friends*, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.' **Joh 15:13-15.**

A man who has become the friend of Christ is a friend of the presbytery, and is a friend of those in the presbytery. As we have just read, their love in this fellowship is 'greater love' than even their love for a woman. This expression of 'first love' was demonstrated by David and Jonathan who honoured and affirmed each other's sanctification. **1Sa 23:17.** Reflecting on their bond of fellowship, David said, 'I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; you have been very pleasant to me; your love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women.' **2Sa 1:26.** The apostle John also testified of this love, identifying himself as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' and recounting that he leaned on Jesus' bosom at the last Passover meal. **Joh 13:23.**

Watchmen are appointed by the Lord and are set upon 'the walls' of the heavenly Jerusalem. He declared, 'I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night [looking for those upon whom their peace may rest]. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.' **Isa 62:6-7.** They are the keepers, or overseers, of the walls. **Son 5:7.**

Further reading: John 15

The work of watchmen

Every man who is sanctified to the work of a watchman must measure themselves to this call. They do this through *repentance*, and through *the conversation of faith* that comes by hearing and receiving the word of present truth that is laid down in the presbytery. Offering, through which life is multiplied, is the fruit of this orientation to the fellowship of the word. As the prophet Isaiah declared, 'Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion.' **Isa 52:8**.

A watchman does not firstly lift up their voice to proclaim the gospel. Rather, they lift up their voice for *understanding*. **Pro 2:3**. This is the response of a man who has been illuminated to the mystery of the stars in Christ's right hand and of the seven lampstands. **Rev 1:20**. They first see how far they have fallen from this fellowship, and then desire to be established in the culture of offering that belongs to the fellowship of Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is 'understanding'. **Pro 9:10**.

The fruit of understanding is the fellowship of offering where watchmen see eye to eye, or according to their sanctification, having put off their projections and the gospels that were sourced from their own histories and reason. They are able to see eye to eye because they do not despise, nor judge, one another through the sight of 'an evil eye'. Rather, their eye is clear, or healthy, through the regenerative work of the word that brings understanding, and they are full of light. **Mat 6:22-23**. This restoration in the presbytery is necessary for the reformation and recovery of lampstand churches – i.e. the 'bringing back of Zion'.

The watchmen proclaim the word that establishes every hearer in the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Isaiah declared, 'The watchman said, "The morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; return! Come back!"' **Isa 21:12**.

Further reading: Isaiah 52



Restoring
my Soul