

Daily Meditations on the Glory of Jesus

VOLUME V

A Thirty-day Devotional

© 2026

Independently Published

Morning Star Cleveland

P.O Box 311063

Independence, OH 44131-4854

bright-and-morning-star.com

ISBN: 979-8171466763

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Preface

It is our great privilege as Christians to know God. It is one of the promises given to us in the New Covenant. The LORD says,

“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know The LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith The LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” [Jer 31:34]

Because Jesus died for us and rose again, He has ever secured for us the ability to know God, and thus to know Him. This is in fact eternal life; Jesus says, *“and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* [Jn 17:3] To know Jesus is to have an infinite supply of unending, pure life. There is nothing better.

Let our introduction therefore be brief; let us quickly continue on to know Christ, to gaze upon His glory, to learn more of Him. It is as a stone most precious, a fruit most sweet; He is to us altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand. Our Groom, our King, our Lord.

I pray that this devotion would ever stir the reader to pursue Jesus on their own; in private fellowship with Him through The Spirit. That they might be provoked unto a greater love and devotion for Him, and unto a greater kindness toward their Christian brethren and fellow-men. It is the glory of Christ which does these things: for when its light pierces through a heart and mind which has been touched by the true grace of God, it begins an unalterable process of change, as it is written,

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” [2 Cor 3:18]

May you therefore, dear reader, give yourself to the pursuit and study of Jesus’ glory, and may you yield yourself to The Spirit’s conviction and ways, so that you might ever be becoming more like Him, and thus be ever transforming into a more productive and fruitful member of His body, of His kingdom, and of this earth.

Day I: God's Good Heart Toward His People

Zechariah 6:11 – Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest.

There came a day, “*in the eighth month, in the second year of Darius,*” [Zech 1:1] when Zechariah was blessed by heaven with certain visions and prophecies. One such vision was that of Joshua the high priest. We read,

“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before The Angel of The LORD, and satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And The LORD said unto satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O satan; even The LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” [Zech 3:1-2]

The vision showed to Joshua and The LORD's reaction to satan's accusations, is the same that we can expect too. Just as The LORD defended Joshua against the accuser of the brethren, satan, so too The LORD defends us, rebuking our enemy and saying in effect, “I have chosen whom I have chosen; I love whom I love.” But the vision goes on.

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment.” [Zech 3:3-4]

Here, we can gather yet more encouragement. For The Angel of The LORD, who here forgives sins and who is undoubtedly therefore Christ Jesus, is shown to be Joshua’s savior, removing those filthy, sin-laden rags, and in place of them, clothing him with clean linen: the very righteousness of God. It is the same treatment that we have received from our Lord, who has taken away our blood-stained garments, and given us His shining, pure-white garments of righteousness; as it is written, *“though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;”* [Isa 1:18] and again, *“and to [the Bride of Christ] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”* [Rev 19:8]

But, as it relates for our encouragement for today, let us see what Zechariah says, who stands looking onward at the vision.

“And I said, let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and

clothed him with garments. And The Angel of The LORD stood by." [Zech 3:5]

In the excitement of the vision, and the glories being unveiled, stirred up perhaps by love, Zechariah sought to add to the beauty being bestowed upon Joshua, and said, "*let them set a fair mitre upon his head.*" It is a good word; for through it, we see a selfless example to follow. And the example is this – that when The Lord begins to work in another persons' life, restoring them and blessing them, let us be those who are not jealous nor envious, but instead those who seek only to add more blessing to that person. Let us say, in effect as Zechariah, "Lord, bless them more; be even more gracious and merciful to them." But though Zechariah's heart was good toward his brother, let us see that soon after his vision, a time came when The Lord sought to use Zechariah in Joshua's life tangibly, and not just in spirit only. For we read in our verse for today The LORD's words to Zechariah, "*Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest.*" [Zech 6:11]

Let us see that whereas Zechariah, even in good spirits, desired Joshua to have the addition of a fair mitre, that The LORD desired even more: crowns of silver and gold. And the same is true of you, dear brother or sister. Whatever others may regard you as worthy to receive: perhaps a fair mitre – The LORD

would look down upon you with more favor than that. Others may look down upon you with disdain, seeing your lack; or, some may look upon you favorably. Whatever the case, whatever your experience has been: do know, precious Christian, that The Lord Jesus' thoughts and desires for you are much better and much more. When others limit our abilities and/or what we are worthy to receive, whether intentionally or unintentionally, we can take heart that The Lord does not, for our abilities are not based in what we can or cannot do, but rather in what The Lord is able to do; and as it is written, "[He] is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." [Eph 3:20] And even when our brethren do not limit us, but rather encourage us and view us favorably, we may still take comfort and strength, because though their heart toward us is good: yet God's heart toward us is better still.

Day II: The Messiah Who Washes Our Feet

John 13:3-5 – Jesus knowing that The Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

There is good reason why The Lord admonishes us, “*put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help;*” [Psa 146:3] and again, “*verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.*” [Psa 39:5] For at least one reason, it seems to be that when men suddenly acquire power – whether through fortunate events or by reason of lineage – that it often distorts their morality. A man, for example, who has spent his life serving in meekness and humility, often bearing the brunt of accusations, persecutions, and other hardships, who later in life suddenly acquires a vast fortune, may very well make a turn for the worst. In similar fashion to Uzziah, of whom it is written, “*but when*

he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction,” [2 Ch 26:16] and in disobedience to The LORD’s admonishment, “beware that thou forget not The LORD...lest...when thy herds and flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied...then thine heart be lifted up;” [Deut 8:11-14] that man forsakes all his former moralities and goodnesses and the true nature of the flesh, hidden deep within his heart, arises and comes forth.

Ah, but let us behold our God. Let us look upon the glories of Christ: for our Lord is holy and set apart, filled with righteousness and goodness beyond what men can comprehend. When Jesus, in the end of His life, came to that point where God had given to Him the full revelation of who He was – God in the flesh, the one-and-only Messiah for all mankind – so that Jesus sat before His disciples at Passover “*knowing that The Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God,*” [Jn 13:3] yes when all the assurances of the glory and riches He would inherit were firmly secured in heart and in mind, that information did not corrupt our Lord Jesus. But in stark contrast to the men of this world, Jesus took that information, and used it not to lord over His disciples, nor to force them to serve Him: no, but Christ Jesus stooped down, “*laid aside His garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself...and began to wash the*

disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

Sit and meditate upon the character of Christ. Was there ever a man upon earth, who when it was revealed to him that he had the power and authority and riches over-and-above all those who once hurt him, so that he might freely do as he wished to them, that he used that knowledge and power to serve them? To wash their feet? May Jesus Christ our Lord be ever thanked and praised: for He is not like men. He is holy and set apart, full of love, and whose mercy endures forever. The man who sat before the disciples and wiped their dirt upon his own self, meekly, humbly serving them, is the same man who is alive today, who is resurrected to the right hand of God Almighty, who continually intercedes for you and I. May we come with freedom and with joy to His feet, knowing that He does not use His authority nor position for personal and selfish gain, nor does He use it to Lord over those who are His: but He uses His power to love and to bless. For we are told, *"let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."* [Phil 2:5] And that mind is this:

"Let nothing be done through carnal ambition or empty pride; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." [Phil 2:3-4]

And so let us rejoice in God our Maker, our Shepherd and Brother, Jesus Christ: for though He has all authority, yet He does not discount us nor look down on us, but instead lifts us up and desires to bless us.

Day III: Jesus is Better Than Anything and Anywhere

Psalms 84:9-11 – Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For The LORD God is a sun and shield: The LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Do you believe that The LORD's presence is the best place to be? Do you believe that it is an all-encompassing source for hope, strength, life, joy, and peace? David writes,

“One thing have I desired of The LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of The LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of The LORD, and to look at Him in His temple.” [Psa 27:4]

And again, *“thy lovingkindness is better than life.”* [Psa 63:3] David saw The LORD's lovingkindness as better than life; His presence and light was the thing to which David continually, fervently sought, that

he might see The LORD's beauty and have sweet fellowship with Him. Again, it is written in the Psalms, "*how lovely are thy tabernacles, O LORD of Hosts!*" [Psa 84:1] Over and over, God's Word reminds us of the beauty and pleasure of God's presence. It is a place to which we ought to seek, and which affords us an infinite supply of grace and abundant satisfaction.

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the abundance of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light we shall see light." [Psa 36:8-9]

In our passage for today, it is written, "*a day in thy courts is better than a thousand [elsewhere].*" [Psa 84:10] There is no better place to be than in God's presence. His presence, His courts – to be there, abiding in the light of His countenance; to be there sitting at His feet and hearing His word; to be there, still before Him in prayer; yes, to be in The Lord's presence in whatever form of worship it takes – it is a thousand times better and a thousand times more profitable than any other place.

This is a truth which magnifies the blessedness and beauty of The Lord Jesus. Is there any person or place which you might say the same for? Jesus' presence is such that to the believer, it is overwhelmingly attractive. Jesus' character makes it

so. His pleasantness, His meekness, His beauty, His love: there is not a single quality He holds that pushes us away, but rather they all draw us near, being more precious to us than any other person or place. The reason that His courts are desirable is because of who He is. And let us notice another thing as well: just one day in them; yes, just one day spent in The Lord's presence, is better than a thousand days anywhere else. Think of the best place or the best person that you can fathom. Just one day in Jesus' presence, which we can truly experience even now on this earth, is better than one thousand days in that other place or with that other person.

Do we see The Lord Jesus' presence as this? Do we see study time in His word or prayer time at His feet like this? If we do not, perhaps it is because we do not fully appreciate who Jesus is or what He is like. But let us allow this truth found in our passage for today, motivate us to spend time with The Lord. I think often the enemy and flesh tempt us when we do not have much time, saying, "oh, my good man, you only have but five minutes: it is not enough to enjoy nor receive from The Lord." But does not our verse encourage us to the contrary? For if a day with The Lord is better than a thousand elsewhere, then extrapolating the logic, we might say that just five minutes spent in God's word is better than five thousand minutes spent in some other place or

doing some other thing or thinking about some other subject.

May we ever seek out The Lord's presence, even if we have just minutes. And may we not become discouraged if we have not much time. For even if today we can only seem to get five minutes with Christ, it is productive still. For that five minutes spent in His presence is better than five thousand minutes spent occupied elsewhere.

Day IV: Life to the Dead

Psalms 88:10 – Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.

Psalms 88 was written by “*Heman the Ezrahite*,” [Psa 88:1] a man whose name means “*faithful*.” [Gesenius] Within his Psalm he asks an interesting question to The LORD, which is highlighted for us today: “*wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead praise thee?*” Let us think seriously upon his question. Shall the dead indeed be able to see God’s wonderful works? Shall they rise up from the grave and give praise to God? What say you, dear reader? Is the God you serve able to do such things, or does death function as an impassable barrier to our Lord and Christ? Is death to God, like Hades is to men, of which Abraham said to the rich man who was being tormented, “*between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence[?]*” [Lk 16:26] What is your conclusion; come on, now, and think a while upon it; think upon the power of your God and what He is able to do and what He is not able to do. If God were to

say the dead might hear His word and see His glory; if He were to say He could raise them up, would you do as those did when Christ said regarding the little girl, “*weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth[?]*” [Lk 8:52] For those who were present at these words of Jesus, “*laughed Him to scorn knowing that she was dead.*” [Lk 8:53] Those in the home, when Christ would raise up the girl, mocked our Lord and His words: for they “knew” altogether more than Him; they “knew” that the girl was dead. And what of you, dear Christian, do you speak as the Psalmist regarding The LORD, doubting of His ability to do anything? Have you forgotten what is written, “*for with God nothing shall be impossible[?]*” [Lk 1:37]

You have had your time to ponder and think upon the words in our verse for today, and now has come the time for us to answer Heman’s questions to God. What was veiled to the Old Testament saints has been gloriously revealed in Christ to the New Testament saints. What looked impossible and hard for them, is easy and simple for us. For we have seen The Lord Jesus and have tasted of His power. My good man, if The LORD were not able to “*shew wonders to the dead;*” if He were utterly incapable of making it so that the “*dead [might] arise and praise [Him],*” then I shall frankly conclude for you that we should all be dead and in hell. For which man among us was not dead at some point? Yea, though he were living in the flesh, he was utterly dead:

much like those Paul spoke of when he said, “*she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she lived;*” and again when Christ wrote, “*I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*” [1 Tim 5:6, Rev 3:1] But praise be to God; for, “*even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath made us alive together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)...*” [Eph 2:5]

What Heman could not fathom under the law, we enjoy and glory in, under grace. Jesus says,

“*Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as The Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given the Son to have life in Himself.*” [Jn 5:25-26]

And truly, as those who are Christ’s can bear witness to, we indeed have heard His words and have received His life. We who were dead have seen the wonders of God, of salvation, and have heard the words of Christ, and have been resurrected as it were to praise Him. Yes, because again as it is written regarding our resurrection in Christ, “*[God] hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus;*” [Eph 2:6] and again, “*if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.*” [Rom 6:5]

So then, if death cannot stop The Lord from showing men wonders; if death cannot stop Him from giving life, then what shall? To men, death is the end-all of every earthly thing. It is that fearful object which is like a concrete wall between men and all things living. But to God, death is not so. For just as Jesus spoke many a time to those who were dead, and raised them up, (as He said to Lazarus, “*Lazarus, come forth.*” [Jn 11:43]), so too He can and does to us. There is nothing, neither death or any other thing, which can separate us from God’s power, work, influence, or anything else He has. Even as it says of His love given to us in Christ, so too He could say for anything that originates from Him:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [Rom 8:35, 38-39]

Day V: The Uncompromising Passion of Jesus

Luke 18:20-22 – Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

It came to pass on a certain day in Jesus' ministry upon earth that "a certain ruler," a "young man" who was "very rich" and "had great possessions," came to Jesus. [Lk 18:18, 23, Mt 19:20, Mk 10:22] The young man asked The Lord, "good master, *what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*" [Lk 18:18] And Jesus, knowing the man's heart, knowing that he loved his money and was not at this moment willing to forsake all; Jesus, thus willing to show the man His condition, says, "*Thou knowest the commandments, do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother.*" [Lk 18:20] To which the man says, "*all these have I kept from my youth up,*" [Lk 18:21] and then added, surely knowing that even though he could with a good

conscience answer Jesus' question he was yet lost, "what lack I yet?" [Mt 19:20] Jesus, then, "beholding him loved him, and said unto him,"

"Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." [Lk 18:22]

At this, the young man "went away grieved: for he had great possessions." [Mk 10:22] Jesus shows us the heart of the matter later, when He says to His disciples, "children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" [Mk 10:24] Those who have riches are not prevented from entering heaven; rather, it is those who trust in them who are withheld. For no man might trust and look to anything other than Christ, whether it be money or something else, and think that they shall enter into the kingdom. It is those who as the disciples, forsook all and followed Him, who shall enter in and partake of the blessedness of salvation's fruits. Though not recorded in Luke's gospel, Mark records Jesus as adding to His last instruction, "and come, **take up the cross**, and follow me." [Mk 10:21] The rich, young ruler, as he is called, was unwilling to take up his cross. For him, the cross was money: Christ would have him to forsake all his riches and follow Himself. For you, dear reader, it may be riches, or perhaps it is a substance, a person, an activity. Whatever the case, we cannot expect to love

our lives on this earth and seek to please ourselves – we cannot seek to both lay hold of this world and of Christ: we must let go of this world and die to ourselves, as Jesus said,

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.” [Lk 9:23-24]

In this story we do find great admonition and warning: *“for what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose [his own soul], or be cast away?”* [Lk 9:25, Mk 8:36] However, it is not to this that we shall look today. Rather, let us find our encouragement in Jesus’ instruction to the young man.

First, remember what the man was and what he had. He was a rich, young ruler. He had money, he had influence, and he had the energy and passion of youth. And let us think upon Christ and His ministry. What did Jesus have? Jesus was poor, having practically nothing. Though a king indeed, yet Jesus came to the earth humble, meek, and lowly, not garnering much influence at all, especially as it related to the political and religious sectors of society. And finally, Jesus, I am sure, lacked energy – for is it not written of Christ’s body, *“He hath no beautiful form nor decoration; and when we*

shall see Him, there is no appearance that we should delight in Him[?]" [Isa 53:2] The scriptures boldly proclaim, and rightfully so, "*[Jesus, our High Priest], was in all points tempted/tested like as we are, yet without sin.*" [Heb 4:15] If there is a weakness of the body, if there be any temptation and trial relating to fatigue, weariness, and weakness: ought not Christ to have suffered it? If The Lord had the body of a Greek god, as it were, an athletic machine, capable of great feats of energy, do you not think that He then would hardly be able to relate to the common man, who often suffers from fatigue and weakness. Of this there is no doubt: for when Jesus walked this earth and lived the life we must live, He did not do it with advantage, but was our forerunner: living as we must and suffering as we do, and yet without sin.

See then a great and glorious thing of Christ, when he says to the young man, "*sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor.*" [Lk 18:22] Why, I think there is hardly a minister upon earth, who would not look at the presence of this man as answered prayer. After all, the young man seemed to fill all the needs at hand; he would appear to be a great addition to the ministry. Who would not heartily and readily and speedily take in this young man, eager for either himself or the ministry to be advantaged by his youth, influence, and money? From the flesh's eyes, it would appear that the rich,

young ruler had all that Christ needed. But it was not so. It was as if Jesus said, "I need none of your money, nor the power and influence it produces for you: sell it all, give it to someone else, and then come follow me." What a tremendous word from Christ, our Lord, who was utterly unmotivated by money, but was only driven by His Father in heaven.

May we look upon Jesus with awe. A man who was not led of self, nor of desire; a man who was not led by money, or people, or any other thing: but who was only led of The Spirit and of God His Father. And may you, dear reader, compare yourself to Christ. How do you fare to His disposition? If a man came to you, such as the rich, young ruler, how would you take it? Would it be to you an answer for your prayers? Or would you, as Christ, challenge and admonish the young man, even at the cost of all his useful money and influence? Our Lord sought to save souls. He was concerned with the man's soul, not with what He could get from Him. Jesus was even as Paul, (though much greater), when he said, "*I seek not yours, but you.*" [2 Cor 12:14]

Day VI: Equally Loved

1 John 4:17 – Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.

Jesus is “*The Son of [The Father’s] love.*” [Col 1:13] He is the One-and-only, unique Son of God, the beloved Son of The Father, even as The Father spoke out loud to Jesus from the heavens, “*thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” [Mk 1:11]

Jesus was so confident in The LORD’s love for Him, that He said in prayer,

*“Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
And I knew that thou hearest me always: but
because of the people which stand by I said it,
that they may believe that thou hast sent me.”*
[Jn 11:41-42]

Jesus was confident in God’s love for Him; so much so, that He could say without fail: “*I thank thee that thou hast heard me.*” It was never a doubt in His mind that God heard Him or would answer His prayers. Again, in similar fashion, Jesus shows us His great confidence in God’s love. Through the merit of God’s love for Himself, He says to His

disciples, and thus to us as well, “*The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God;*” [Jn 16:27] and again, “*whatsoever ye shall ask The Father in my name, He will give it you.*” [Jn 16:23] Is there anyone among us as Christians, who could boldly proclaim these things to others, being so full of confidence in God’s love for us? Sometimes I think that the flesh would have us to think doubting God’s love is a holy thing and a righteous thing. And yet, Christ Jesus, The Righteous Branch, said, “*The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth...*” [Jn 5:20] And, “*...thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.*” [Jn 17:24]

Again, it is written, “*The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand.*” [Jn 3:35] No doubt, God loves Jesus, His Son. But what of you, dear reader? Does God love you? And if He does, are you confident to say it? Do you wear it as a bride wears her garments? For it was because of His great love and mercy and grace that He saved us; and it is written, “*I will greatly rejoice in The LORD...for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation...as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*” [Isa 61:10] Our verse for today says, “*as He is, [that is, as Jesus is], so are we in this world.*” As Jesus is in heaven; as Jesus is loved by and seen by The Father: just as Jesus is, so are we in this world. The love that God has for Christ, is the same exact love He has for us: for

Jesus prays, “...[thou] hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” [Jn 17:23] And again, the love that has been gifted to us is found in Christ, wherein it is unshakeable and eternal. “For I am persuaded, that [nothing at all]...shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [Rom 8:38-39]

If you have doubted The Lord’s love for you; if you have felt insecure regarding His affection, be encouraged that The LORD loves you. He loves you just as He loves His Son. And the same confidence that Jesus displayed regarding that love, is what we can have as well, similar to John who spoke of himself as “*the disciple whom Jesus loved.*” [Jn 19:26; 20:2; 21:7] For just as Jesus is, so are we in this world. And so much so, that “*we may have boldness in the day of judgment.*” We can come to the Bema Seat of Christ without terror: for perfect love casts out fear. We can come to Him in the day of our judgment, not afraid, not trembling, but with holy reverence, confident that God accepts us and loves us.

Day VII: The Unfailing, Unfading Strength of The Savior's Salvation

Deuteronomy 31:4-6 – And The LORD shall do unto them as He did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom He destroyed. And The LORD shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you. Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for The LORD thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

When The Lord first saved us, sending us forth “*out of the pit wherein is no water;*” when He “*delivered [our] soul from the lowest hell;*” yes, when our good Lord did see our affliction and “*[came] down to deliver [us],*” thus “*[lifting us] up...from the dunghill, to set [us] among princes,*” it was then, that just as with Paul so too with us, “*the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*” [Zech 9:11, Psa 86:13, Acts 7:34, 1 Sam 2:8, 1 Tim 1:14]

Our salvation, which was effected by God and graciously given to us “*while we were yet sinners,*”

[Rom 5:8] and which was “*not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us,*” [Titus 3:5] was unto us, and unto any onlookers, a great and magnificent display of power and glory. As powerful a display as when Christ Jesus raised Lazarus and others to life, (the act for which cause “*many of the Jews...[to believe] on Him,*” and for which “*the chief priests and Pharisees...took counsel together for to put Him to death,*” [Jn 11:45, 47, 53]), so too the working of God was equally powerful in our lives, when He raised us up to new life in Christ, making “*us alive together with Christ.*” [Eph 2:5]

The power displayed in our salvation was like the glory of God descending upon the temple or the tabernacle. It was like the fire which consumed the sacrifices of old. Salvation is an event which causes the angels in heaven, who are continually occupied with the glories and beauties of God Almighty, to rejoice – as if they had never seen such a beautiful and good thing. As Jesus says, “*...joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.*” [Lk 15:7] Think of what power and glory of God, (yes of God, and certainly not of man), is displayed in salvation, to make even the angels rejoice and celebrate. The glories of God Almighty are continually before their face; they are always before His throne, as it says in Isaiah, crying out “*unto another...’Holy, holy, holy, is*

The LORD of Hosts: *the whole earth is full of His glory.*” [Isa 6:3] They are they whom The LORD speaks of in Job, saying rhetorically to Job, “*where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?...When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for Joy?*” [Job 38:4, 7] They are they who dwell in God’s presence: a place so beautiful and good, so full of peace and joy and strength, that it is written, “*for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand [anywhere else];*” [Psa 84:10] and again, “*[those who put their trust under the shadow of thy wings] shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house...*” [Psa 36:8] And yet, though the angels are continually accustomed to such passions and pleasures, yet they are broken out of that rhythm when a man is saved. The glories and pleasures and entertainments of heaven, of that place where “*every one doth speak of His glory,*” [Psa 29:9] are not so bright as to outshine and overshadow the grand event of a man’s salvation. And that, truly because it only adds to The LORD’s glory. Our salvation is so entertained with joy, so gloried in by the angels, because by it The LORD is exceedingly magnified. As when a mighty warrior defeats a hard foe; as when a strong athlete wins the race; as when the mighty tempest blows fierce, or the volcano explodes; as when a man and wife are wed – so too God is utterly glorified in salvation, for it speaks of His power, His ability, His strength, His love, and His great person. And for that reason, at each

salvation, wherein an exceeding amount of power is displayed, heaven erupts in praise.

Now, with all this being said, what of our verse for today? How does it fit in? Of what significance is it? My good Christian, look again at what The Spirit speaks: *“The LORD shall do unto them, [that is, unto these new enemies], as He did unto Sihon and to Og, [to those whom He first defeated when you came out of Egypt]...”* [Deut 31:4] The LORD encourages Israel through Moses, that He shall do unto all the enemies they come across just as He did to Sihon and Og: to those giants whom Israel defeated when they first came out of Egypt. Therefore, The LORD says through Moses,

“Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for The LORD thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” [Deut 31:6]

And shall it not be equally true in your life, dear reader? For if the power and glory and goodness of God was so displayed in your salvation, as we have seen, if God exercised such force and power in your salvation, to redeem you and defeat those enemies which held you in tight bondage, what of the enemies that shall come after? Shall He not do so in equal measure? Defeating them and granting you a great victory, with the same force and might He displayed at salvation? Certainly He shall. And so

therefore, take heart and be of a good courage: for
The LORD, *“He it is that doth go with thee; He will
not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”*

Day VIII: The Spirit of Christ's Perfect Prayers

Romans 8:26-27 – Likewise The Spirit also helpeth our weaknesses: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of The Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

All of us know the weakness of these frail bodies which we inhabit. They are, as Paul says, “*vile [bodies],*” and “*earthen vessels.*” [Phil 3:21, 2 Cor 4:7] The fact that they are broken and failing is natural, and a direct result of sin, which inhabits these fallen bodies (as Paul says, “*sin...dwelleth in me..that is, in my flesh...*” [Rom 7:17, 18]). Yes, the “*outward man is perishing,*” but God is to be praised because, “*the inward man is being renewed day by day,*” [2 Cor 4:16] and that is the part that shall endure. The outward beauty of these bodies, whether male or female, “*is vain*” [Prov 31:30] and very short lived. Even Christ, when He took upon Himself flesh and walked upon this earth, had “*no form nor comeliness.*” [Isa 53:2] It is our common suffering as men and women, that

our bodies are failing and often grieve us. And too often these bodies prevent us from or make it hard to pray. Though we would pray; though we would earnestly seek God, yet these bodies can often tug us down to the earth and keep us in silence; or, they are such that they make it hard to think and form words, making us feel as though we cannot or should not approach the throne; yea, and if we do but chance a look at Christ through prayer, these bodies often make us feel silly, weak, and fruitless.

Though the situation of our bodies is dire, yet The Lord has given us victory. Though prayer is hard, and sometimes exhausting, yet The Lord has given us a Helper. For it is written, "*likewise The Spirit also helpeth our weaknesses;*" that is, the weaknesses of our bodies. [Rom 8:26] And though "*we know not what we should pray for as we ought,*" yet "*The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us...according to the will of God.*" [Rom 8:26, 27] The very Spirit of God, of whom it is written that He "*searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,*" [1 Cor 2:10] searches us too, and knows just how and what to pray. Though we are weak, and though we have but one feeble word to utter to our God, yet The Spirit never grows weary nor discouraged and is continually interceding for us, praying in exact accordance with God's will. Though we feel our prayers are fruitless and ineffective; though we hardly can form two words together at times; yet, The Holy Spirit, The

Comforter and Helper, knows us deeply and prays for us. He helps us to pray, and He also prays Himself. With a perfect knowledge, and with perfect words – with all the power of God, The Spirit prays for us and with us.

Have you come today, dear Christian, with a heaviness about prayer? Have you come weary, not able so much as to pray? Have you come with little desire to approach that shining throne of grace? Fear not, nor be discouraged, for your God has provided a Helper. A Helper who shall pray for you, and help you to pray; who shall scoop up even the littlest and weakest prayers, and present them to God as if those feeble, poor prayers of yours had been formed and produced by the best and most profound accumulation of thoughts by a thousand of the best scholars. For The Spirit of God knows how to pray. Is there any who could pray better? Any who could pray with more power and with more zeal and with more personal initiative? God forbid; for The Holy Spirit is God Almighty, and with that same zealous love that went to the cross, The Spirit does intercede for us, “*with groanings which cannot be uttered.*” Praise be to God. And therefore, dear brother and dear sister, pray. Lift up your voice with confidence, not for confidence in your own words, but with a powerful expectation that The Holy Spirit will take your words and present them faultless before The Father.

Day IX: Bound By Hope

Zechariah 9:12 – Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

One reason why Jesus came, who was anointed and chosen of God to be the singular savior for men, was, “*to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.*” [Isa 61:1] Jesus has come to set us free from all our enemies, whether that be sin or whether that be the law. Christ has come to usher in freedom for those who believe in Him. Again, as it is written, The Father speaking to Jesus, “*I The LORD have called thee in righteousness...to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*” [Isa 42:6, 7] And again,

“*Thus saith The LORD...[I will] give thee for a covenant of the people...that thou mayest say to the prisoners, ‘go forth;’ to them that are in darkness, ‘shew yourselves.’...*” [Isa 49:8, 9]

The Lord has come indeed and set us free; He has heard “*the groaning of the prisoner,*” and He has come down, humbling Himself to earth, “*to loose those that are appointed to death.*” [Psa 102:20] And now, for

those of us in Christ, we can gloriously rejoice in what Jesus said, “*if The Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*” [Rom 8:36] It is to us an eternal source of happiness: for we are free; we used to be slaves, but no longer; we used to be bound, but never again – for Jesus our Lord, The Christ, has “*by the blood of [His] covenant*” freed us from “*the pit wherein is no water,*” [Zech 9:11] and has given us abundant drink and refreshment, an overflowing source of liberty and life: as Jesus said, “*living water;*” and, “*the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*” [Jn 4:10, 14]

We are no longer slaves; that much is certain. Though we are bondslaves of Jesus Christ, servants of God, yet we are free. For, “*where The Spirit of The Lord is, there is liberty.*” [2 Cor 3:17] Why then does our verse call us “*prisoners of hope?*” It is here that we shall find our encouragement today.

If a man were a prisoner of a certain country or government, how would he fare? Why, he would be subject to the authority of that government. They could, or should like to, do as they wish. His provisions, his shelter, the rules he must follow: all of it would originate solely from that entity which had imprisoned him. If this is so, then what of the man who is, as Zechariah prophesies, a “*prisoner of hope[?]*” We are those who are prisoners of hope. A prisoner is, “*a person under arrest or in custody of the*

sheriff...” [Webster] That is, a man who is seized by or kept by one who has authority. For the Christian, we are seized by hope. Hope is that one, that sheriff as it were, who has taken us and who keeps us. We are not prisoners of Rome as it were, nor of any government; nor are we prisoners of satan, sin, nor of any enemy whatsoever. But alas, we are prisoners of hope.

The man who is in Christ must hope. He is bound to hope, tied to hope. He can never stop hoping, for he is a prisoner of hope. The Spirit within him, the promises given to him, the Christ who shepherds him: all of it unalterably leads him to and fills him with hope. He is a prisoner of hope. The salvation that Christ Jesus has wrought for us, and which is secured for us by His blood and our belief therein, fills us with hope – an eternal hope. A singular, blessed hope: Jesus Christ Himself, who is as Peter says, our Living Hope – a hope so profound, so blessed, so powerful, so effectual, so lasting, that those who are saved must always hope and shall always hope. For in Christ Jesus, by God The Father’s will, we have been “*given...[an] everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.*” [2 Th 2:16] Again, speaking of this hope, Hebrews describes it as an everlasting anchor, founded upon the unchangeable God who cannot lie.

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His

counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” [Heb 6:17-19]

May God therefore fill you afresh with hope today. May you find yourself gladly a prisoner of hope, one who cannot help but hope: because the one upon whom all their hope rests, Jesus Christ, is alive forevermore. Amen.

Day X: A Triune, Unbreakable Hope

Ecclesiastes 4:12 – And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Because of “*the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*” we have been, “*according to [God’s] abundant mercy,*” given a “*living hope.*” [1 Pe 2:3] This living hope is a hope which shall never die. And it is by God’s grace which is “*exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus,*” [1 Tim 1:14] that we have been given this “*everlasting consolation and good hope.*” [2 Th 2:16] Our hope is strong, eternal, and good. It is a hope which is described to us like an anchor for our soul, an object which keeps us secure and from drifting away. In Hebrews The Spirit writes,

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two unchangeable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast,

and which entereth into that within the veil.”
[Heb 6:17-19]

Our living and good hope, given to us by God's grace, is like an anchor. And truly, as we can see from Hebrews, that hope is Jesus Christ Himself. [1 Tim 1:1] He is that living hope who sits at God's right hand today, interceding for us, acting as our High Priest, and shepherding us. It is He who secures indefinitely any and all rewards, blessings, promises, privileges, or anything else, that has been given or offered to us by The LORD God, our Heavenly Father.

But as it relates to our hope being an anchor, let us remember that an anchor is only useful if it is attached to a rope. For an anchor without a rope does nothing for the ship, it is but another rock at the bottom of the sea. Yes, and further, the rope is only profitable to the vessel to which it is attached. An anchor and rope are equally unprofitable if they are not secured to a boat. One that is not secured at all, as fine and beautiful as it might appear, yields no security. And moreover, one that is not on one's own boat, but another's, also is for naught. So then, an anchor and rope are only useful when they come together, and when they are attached to a vessel. In the same way, if our hope is an anchor, then truly a rope is implied; and, as it has been shown, that hope must be clung to for it to bear any usefulness to a man. See then, that in the same way a boat uses

an anchor, so too we must cling to Christ Jesus our High Priest and unto all that He has accomplished for us. It is our clinging to Him, our faithful abiding in Him, which shall yield security at the last. Christ shall do us no good if we but stare at him without clinging; nor will He offer us any real or lasting benefit if we only see others doing so and never do so ourselves. But Christ our everlasting hope will yield His strength and fruit to those who cling to Him as a rope: to those to whom they are attached and He in return is attached. As Moses reminds Israel in the Torah, so too it is true today: “*but ye that did cleave unto The LORD your God are alive every one of you this day.*” [Deut 4:4]

Now, regarding ropes, it is said in Ecclesiastes, “*a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*” If our hope is closely connected to a rope, then that rope is like the one in Ecclesiastes, “*not quickly broken;*” for our hope is upon The LORD God, who like the threefold rope, is also three: Father, Son, and Spirit. Our hope is the triune God. Though we exercise our hope mainly upon Jesus: clinging to Him and seeking Him, praying to Him; yet, our hope is truly in all three personalities of our One God. For they are all equally God and all share equally in our salvation and any promises or inheritances resulting from such. Even as it is written, “*hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.*” [Deut 6:4]

Let us therefore rejoice; for our hope, that is our rope, is strong – yes, even stronger than Solomon writes. For it is not just that our hope in Christ/in God is not quickly broken: but it is that it shall *never* be broken. Our hope is such that it shall never die nor become brittle in any sense. It shall never be diminished nor shall it fade. Our hope is eternal. It is a rope which shall never be cut off; a rope made of such strong material that no matter what blade our wretched enemy doth use, it shall always fall upon our hope dull and feeble, doing it no harm whatsoever. In Psalms, using the word “*hope*” which can also be translated “*rope*,” it says, “...*the hope; [that is, the rope] of the poor, shall not perish forever.*” [Psa 9:18]

If we have felt at all that our hope in Jesus has been shaky or lacking integrity; if we have felt or supposed that it were weak and could break, let us quickly remedy our thoughts. For our hope in God shall never break, never be cut off, and never fail. It is an everlasting hope which is as fresh and as good as it was on resurrection day.

Day XI: Compassion for the Hungry

Mark 8:1-2 – In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat.

On many occasions throughout the gospel accounts, Jesus was moved with compassion. There was a certain day when Jesus and His disciples, attempting to enter into a solitary place to rest, came to that desired haven and were met with over five thousand people. But Jesus, *“when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.”* [Mt 9:36] Despite many people interrupting His plans and His desires for rest and quiet, what came out of Jesus was not irritation or harshness, but compassion. This was not a once-in-a-while reaction; this was the habit and pattern of Jesus’ life. When confronted with situations that might otherwise provoke one to anger, wrath, irritation, or some such fleshly emotion: Jesus’ continual response was compassion. Again, in another place, it says, *“and Jesus went forth, and saw a*

great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and healed their sick.” [Mt 14:14] And again, in a parable describing His mercy and forgiveness, “then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.” [Mt 18:27] And once more, “Jesus had compassion on [the blind men], and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight.” [Mt 20:34]

The compassion of Christ is as wide and large as His love. Whether it is to those in need, to those who are weak, to those who have sinned against him, to those who cannot understand or see – whoever it is, those who come to Jesus are always met with compassion. Our weaknesses and shortcomings are no deterrent to The Lord’s mercy and compassion: He freely and abundantly shows us His pity. And praise be to God for this, for, “*it is of The LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.*” [Lam 3:22]

In addition to these passages above, wherein we see the compassion of The Lord exercised, our verse for today speaks of another occasion where Jesus showed a multitude His mercy. The second time Jesus multiplied bread, it was not until after three days of teaching and fellowship, that He performed the miracle. After three days of having nothing to eat, those among the crowds who were more interested in a quick fix or miracle had no doubt left, becoming hungry and leaving before the third

day came. Those who sought after Christ and His words, and not so much for only what He could give them, remained until the third day. And when Jesus saw them, that they were hungry, He said, *“I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat.”* Their need and hunger was not an abhorrence or an inconvenience to Jesus. The weakness of their frail and broken bodies was not unto the stirring up of Jesus’ correction or some sort of irritation, but unto His compassion and provision.

The compassion that Jesus showed this crowd, in giving them something to eat because they were hungry, is the same compassion that He will show us. But let us look at these things with a spiritual perspective. Has it ever come to pass in your life, that you have become spiritually hungry? That you have gone, as it were, three days without food? If you are a Christian, dear reader, I would think the answer is yes. For there are many times where we, as The Lord’s sheep, must go a few days fasting as it were. Many-a-time it has come to pass in our lives, where we have found ourselves hungry for The Lord and His word. Whether it be the circumstances of life, our own faults, or a deliberate withdrawing of The Lord in order to produce and/or test faith – whatever the case, at one time or another, we have become hungry for The Lord. Do you think that Christ looks upon us in these times with disgust?

With cruelty? With irritation? There is a temptation in the flesh, perhaps incited by our enemy, Mister Legality, which would urge us to such conclusions: that because we are hungry, and do not feel overflowing with God, that we have somehow missed the mark and have come to a place where we have disappointed Christ yet again.

My brethren, this is not so. Do you come today hungry? Do you come feeling some spiritual lack? Does not the scripture repeatedly encourage us as Jesus says, “*blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled...[?]*” [Lk 6:21] And again, “*for I will pour water upon him that is thirsty...*” [Isa 44:3] If we have become hungry and needy for Christ, whatever the cause, may we rejoice. For that presence of an appetite is assuredly also the presence of life – for the unsaved man has no appetite for Christ or His bread, the word. To the Christian reader who has sought The LORD, and yet not seemed to have found Him; who has longed for Christ, and yet is today still hungry and unsatisfied: be encouraged and be blessed, for The Lord Jesus looks down upon you, as He did on the crowd, and says, “*I have compassion on the multitude, because...they have nothing to eat.*” When we thirst or hunger for Jesus, let us rest in the fact that Jesus is compassionate toward us. He desires to feed us, to satisfy our souls. So let us go to Him. And if we have, and do not yet see the fulfilment of what Jesus says, “*he that cometh to*

me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst,” [Jn 6:35] then let us continue to seek Him, and abide with Him, just as the crowds: for it is through “faith and patience” that we “inherit the promises.” [Heb 6:12; 10:36]

Day XII: Encouragement in Creation

Psalms 104:15 – And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

In Psalms 104, there are many reasons given for why the psalmist begins with the cry of praise, “*bless The LORD, o my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty.*” [Psa 104:1]

Of the reasons given to support the true and glorious statement, “*thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty,*” the psalmist writes, “*who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.*” [Psa 104:5] All of the beauty and goodness of earth has been created by God.

Whether it is the rushing brooks of clear water, or the towering heights of mountains and volcanoes; whether it is the breathtaking detail of cells and DNA; or whether it is the endless variety of colors, sounds, textures, flavors, and life – all of it, without exception, has been created by The LORD. Truly, as The Spirit provoked the writer, God is indeed “*very great.*” Yes, and The LORD is also He who has “*set a bound that [the waters] should not pass over [their determined boundary]; that they turn not again to cover the earth.*” [Psa 104:9] Our God and Creator is the

one who divides water from land, saying to the waves and the waters, “*hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*” [Job 38:11] This has been set up of God “*by a perpetual decree;*” yea, “*and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over [God’s determined boundary].*” [Jer 5:22] Our Father has done all these things, and many more, which, as John says, if we should endeavor to now write them all down we should fill all the books in the world. Nevertheless, let us ponder a little, and draw up some encouragement from this well; for these words in Psalms, which talk of The LORD’s doings, do not just apply to earth and creation in a physical sense, but also to us in a spiritual sense.

Just as The LORD “*who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever,*” so too The Lord has laid the foundation of us, if so we be in Christ. And just as the earth cannot be removed, but abides forever, so too for those in Christ, upon whom The LORD has founded us, and in whom The Lord has begun by His word to do a great work, they shall not be moved either. As it is written, “*for other foundation can no man lay that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*” [1 Cor 3:11] And again, just as The LORD sets a bound for the waters of the sea, so that they cannot pass over and do as they like, so too The LORD sets up boundaries for us: so that

the influence of the enemy or a trial, or any such thing, can only go so far as The Lord permits. And even if that person, enemy, trial, or some other such thing, were to fight and roar and push and scream, just as it says of the waters and waves, so too it should be said of them: “yet *they can not pass over.*” Praise God – for through these remarks on God’s creation, we can see how He does work in our lives, in us who are new creations in Christ Jesus. And we can thus be confident in our unchanging Lord’s character, that if He so founds the world, and if He so protects and controls the waves, then He shall also securely and eternally found us upon Christ, as well as protect us and preserve us from any undue harm/influence.

Let us take another of these and come to our verse for today, which says that God has created “*wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine and bread which strengtheneth man’s heart.*” In keeping with our other interpretations, let us now draw from this verse two spiritual points.

One, The Holy Spirit fills our heart with joy, and two, God’s word strengthens our heart.

Regarding our first point, see first that both wine and oil are used to speak of The Holy Spirit. Of the former, it is written, “*be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be being filled with The Spirit.*” [Eph 5:18] And of the latter, in explanation of the vision of

two olive trees emptying out their golden oil into a lampstand, “*this is the word of The LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith The LORD of Hosts.*” [f.f., Zech 4:6] Just as the latter wine, the new wine, which Jesus miraculously provided and which made the wedding guests glad, so too The Spirit brings gladness into our hearts, even as we see in Acts, wherein it says, “*and the disciples were filled with joy, and with The Holy Spirit.*” [Acts 13:52]

And as for the second point, Jesus shows us that there is a great connection between God’s word and bread when He quotes Deuteronomy, saying, “*it is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*” [Lk 4:4] Just as bread gives energy and strength to the body, so too The Lord’s words bring energy and strength to our spirits and souls.

So then, just as The Lord has made wine, oil, and bread, to bless man; so too by His goodness and foresight, He gives us His Spirit and His word, which fill us with joy and strength.

In light of these things, may we go about our days with a new perspective. May we come to each part and thing of our day and see how it reminds us of Christ. Whether that is like water, wine, or bread, as we have seen today, or something else, may we see the glory, grace, and character of Jesus in all things. For it is not just bread that The Lord has

made for us: it is also written that The LORD
“*giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*” [1 Tim 6:17] And
part of that great enjoyment of all that The LORD
has made, is seeing how it connects to Jesus and
reminds us of Him, for it is written that “*all things
were created by Him and for Him;*” that is, for Christ.
[Col 1:16]

Day XIII: Open by His Sovereignty & Strength

Revelation 3:8 – I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

The LORD alone is strong. In the Psalms, it is written, “*God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.*” [Psa 62:11] Power, strength, might: they belong to The LORD, they are His alone. It is He who is strong and not we ourselves; He is the one who has created and who upholds all things. Again, it is written, “*ascribe ye strength unto God;*” [Psa 68:34] and, “*...in The LORD Jehovah is everlasting strength.*” [Isa 26:4] Seeing then that The LORD is the source of all strength, we read, “*it is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.*” [Psa 18:32] He is the one who “*gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.*” [Isa 40:29] It is The LORD who “*fainteth not, neither is weary.*” [Isa 40:28] He is the sole possessor and distributor of strength. Therefore, seeing that The LORD is indeed mighty, He being “*the Mighty God,*” [Psa 132:2, Isa 9:6] then

let us draw some encouragement from our verse for today. Jesus says, *“I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.”* There are three reasons The Lord Jesus gives for why the door He has caused to be open shall not be shut. One, those He speaks to, of the church at Philadelphia, have *“a little strength.”* Two, because they have *“kept [His] word;”* and three, because they have *“not denied [His] name.”* It is mainly to the first that we shall look today: that the saints at Philadelphia were weak. For again, Jesus says they have *“a little strength.”*

Imagine that there was before you an open door. It is a door that you wish to go through; a door which you wish to use. Then imagine a force beyond your control: either a strong wind or other person, began to attempt to shut the door. What would keep it open? If both parties were opposed in their struggle, which would win? Would not we say the stronger would win: either of you, attempting to keep it open, or of the other attempting to shut it? But in Jesus' exhortation to the church – and truly not just to Philadelphia but also to us as well – He says that one of the reasons the door laid before them is open, and remains as such, is because they are weak. This goes against the world's, and our flesh's, natural way of thinking.

It is not our strength that keeps doors open. Have you an open door, dear Christian reader? Is there an available opportunity before you? Whether it is to do good, join this, go here, or do that? The encouragement for you today is that its open position is not dependent on your strength. There is a temptation to think that we must strive and struggle and fret, that we must exert ourselves much in order to keep opportunities open. That if we would but rest for a moment, the opportunity might pass, the door might close shut. And so, with zeal, albeit an erroneous and self-produced zeal, we should, if giving in to such temptations, diligently exercise ourselves to exhaustion in an attempt to control situations and keep things open. But if it be a door set there of God it shall remain open, not because of our own strength, but because of God's. If The Lord Jesus, the King of Glory, has wedged His foot in the door, there is not a force upon earth or in heaven which can usurp His decision. There is not a power in existence that can overcome Christ's desire for something to stay open or stay shut. And so, may we rest in Jesus' words, knowing that if there is a door set before us – that is, if there is an open opportunity before us to do something – if it is of God, then it does not depend on us to keep it open; rather, Jesus is the responsible party. It is through His strength that the door will remain open.

Therefore, may we trust Him and look to Him; rely on Him. Yes, and rejoice in Him too. For if you have felt rushed as of late: rushed into making a decision or moving forward, despite having a lack of peace, fear not. Rest in The Lord and do good; dwell where He has put you contently, knowing that if that thing be of Christ, it shall remain open and He shall give you the peace when the appropriate time comes. And if the peace does not come, and the door becomes shut, then we can rejoice too: for even in this God's will is revealed more clearly. Again, if you, dear reader, have felt the opposition of men or of spiritual forces, that they seem to have at once risen up to shut the door laid before you and to prevent you from God's will: fear not. For Jesus is "*He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth.*" [Rev 3:7] There is nothing that Jesus has set before you which the enemy can thwart or close. For, "*there is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against The LORD.*" [Prov 21:30]

Day XIV: An Unbreakable Will

Matthew 26:5 – But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

It says in Psalms, “*The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect.*” [Psa 33:10] If The LORD has spoken, if He has determined, who shall turn Him back? Who can bring His counsel and desire to nothing? But The LORD brings all the counsel of the enemy to nothing. When God speaks a word, things happen; as it says, “*and God said, let there be light: and there was light.*” [Gen 1:3] But when the enemy speaks, it is nothing: for it is The Lord’s words which are eternal and shall last, as it is written, “*but the word of The Lord endureth for ever...*” [1 Pe 1:25] Yes, and even His thoughts: “*the counsel of The LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.*” [Psa 33:11] As when Ahithophel gave evil counsel to Absalom, David’s son who had rebelled and led a coupe, saying, “*let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night...and I will smite the king only,*” but Hushai David’s friend spoke favorably regarding David and thus saved him, “*for The LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel...*”

[f.f., 2 Sam 17:1-2, 14] So it is with us. For when the enemy comes to speak evil into our lives and cause destruction, The LORD helps us and defends us: He defeats the counsel of the enemy and brings it to nothing, as it is written. Truly, no one can stand against God who has positioned Himself to do something, as He has, for example, positioned Himself to our aid and our betterment, saying, “*yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good...*” [Jer 32:41] As it says in Daniel,

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?”
[Dan 4:35]

Though none can come against The LORD and be victorious, (as Job records, “*who hath hardened himself against [The LORD], and hath peace?*” [Job 9:4]), yet many have tried. The Pharisees and religious leaders in Jesus’ day were some of those that have tried. For even though Jesus was set to be the savior of all men, to rise again, and to eventually return as king; yet satan, through the religious leaders of that day and through Judas, sought to incite them against Christ and kill Him. Though he was successful and turning the Jews against their very savior, yet he was not successful in smiting or destroying Jesus. But it was not just in Jesus’ death and resurrection that

this was proved. Even before that climactic event, the enemy sought to hinder Jesus from fulfilling God's will, and yet Jesus always came out on top. Despite their constant traps and their constant scoffing and lies, yet Jesus continued to heal and save, and garner followers to Himself, whom He secured eternally by His blood; yes, and even still is securing those who believe. And so, looking at our verse for today, we see that the enemies of God did not want to take and kill Jesus "*on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.*" Passover was not when they wanted to take Jesus. It was not according to their plan. Their counsel was to wait until a different time, that they might seize Him and kill Him. In their estimation there were too many people, especially too many people who looked upon Jesus favorably, even as if just a prophet. And so, they would not take Him on the feast day, or so they supposed.

Just as we have seen that God brings to nothing the counsel of the heathen, so too here in the gospels. For even though the religious leaders did not want to take Jesus on Passover, yet it was ordained and orchestrated of God otherwise. No matter how hard and how long they plotted a different day, their counsel would be brought to nothing, and Christ, according to the scriptures, would be sacrificed for our sins on Passover. For it was not the religious people nor Rome, nor even satan, who killed

Christ, but Jesus “*gave Himself for our sins,*” as He said, “*no man taketh [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord...*” [Gal 1:4, Jn 10:18] And again, Paul writes that Jesus, “*gave Himself a ransom for all, the witness in His own time.*” [1 Tim 2:6] And so, in fulfilment of God’s word, the counsel and plans of the Pharisees were nullified, and God would as always, have His way.

Praise God, for in the same way that the enemy could never have the last say in Jesus’ life; in the same way that the enemy could not order nor call the shots in Jesus’ life, so too it will be in us. God shall bring the counsel of the enemy to nothing, and God’s will for our life shall always prevail.

Day XV: A Wonder Unto Many

Mark 3:20-21 – And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself.

There was a certain time in Jesus' life when, as happened regularly, that the multitudes of people came together around Jesus so overwhelmingly that Mark records, "*that they could not so much as eat bread.*" [Mk 3:20] And it was here that Jesus' "*friends*" – or rather as the Greek suggests, those who were familiar/close to Jesus, those who were of Him/related to Him – it was here that those close to Jesus, "*went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself.*" The phrase "*He is beside Himself*" literally means Jesus was out of His senses: that is, insane.

Think a moment or two upon this verse and the situation. Do you think that the fact that many people were surrounding Jesus – that He happened to be in the midst of a great crowd – were warrant enough to declare Jesus insane by those who were close to Him? That would seem to be quite a hasty

conclusion. But see how The Spirit writes, “*again.*” “*The multitude cometh together **again.***” This points us back further in Mark’s account to see then how the multitude came together at the first. Mark then records that when Jesus “*withdrew Himself with His disciples to the sea,*” that “*a great multitude from Galilee followed Him*” and, “*He spake to His disciples, that a small ship should wait on Him because of the multitude, lest they should throng Him.*” [Mk 3:7-9] This gathering was because Jesus “*had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, thou art the Son of God.*” [Mk 3:10-11] Matthew likewise records that even at this particular gathering, when the great multitudes followed Him, that Jesus “*healed them all.*” [Mt 12:15] Therefore we can draw a more accurate picture to why those close to Jesus, upon seeing the great crowd and He in the midst, said, “*He is insane.*” It was not merely for the number of people, but for what Jesus was doing, and why they were gathering. Jesus was teaching, healing, and casting out demons, as He was often doing. And the people were thronging Him and reaching for Him, if but that they too might experience His power. And Jesus gladly accepted these people. He did not turn them away, did not discourage them from seeking Him for healing or teaching, did not discourage any from worshipping Him. He willingly accepted these things, and freely taught and healed.

This was the reason those close to Him thought Him insane.

In Isaiah it is written, Christ speaking through the prophet,

“Behold, I am the children whom The LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from The LORD of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion.” [Isa 8:18, C.f., Heb 2:13]

And Jesus, in fulfilment of this word, indeed was, and still is, a wonder. He is that which many gazed upon, even those close to Him, and who could not figure Him out. They saw the miracles, the gracious words proceeding from His mouth, the audacious claims of divinity, and He was to them a wonder. Here, so much so, that those closest to Jesus called Him insane.

Jesus was so overcome with passion, (as it is written, *“the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;”* and, *“the zeal of The LORD of Hosts will perform this.”* [Psa 69:9, Isa 9:7]), and so filled with power by The Spirit, (as it is written, *“The Spirit of The Lord GOD is upon me.”* [Isa 61:1]), yes, Jesus was so brimming and overflowing with love and with God’s good character, that those in the flesh, those of the world, thought Him to be insane. Have you ever met, dear reader, a person who was so joyful, so positive, so full of light, that you thought for a moment to yourself that they must be mad? Or a person with

such peace, that you thought, they must not realize the seriousness of the situation that they are in? Jesus was so full of those blessed qualities, and so eager and willing to save and help others in selfless love, that those who looked on Him from the outside, even those close to Him, thought Him to be insane.

May this give us encouragement; for there may come a time when someone looks at us – even some of our family or friends – and thinks that we have taken Christ and His doctrine too far; that we are altogether too giving, too peaceful, too forgiving, too trusting in God, too sacrificial. There may come a time when others, as they did to Jesus, do to us and call us insane. But it is no matter, for we are not of this world, being in it strangers and sojourners; and as it is written, *“I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge.”* [Psa 71:9] Though others look down upon us for our faith and love, thinking that we have altogether lost it, may we find encouragement in the fact that the same thing was present in Jesus’ life. May we not draw back unto destruction at these things of men, but may we reach forward unto Jesus, looking at Him who has gone before us and who first endured these things.

Day XVI: Generously, Freely Satisfied

Psalms 34:10 – The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek The LORD shall not want any good thing.

In the prophets, it is written, “*thus saith The LORD unto the house of Israel, seek ye me, and ye shall live.*” [Amo 5:4] And in the Psalms likewise, “*...your heart shall live that seek God;*” [Psa 69:32] and again, “*the meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise The LORD that seek Him: your heart shall live for ever.*” [Psa 22:26] The LORD is such, His goodness is so effectual and marvelous, that even the mere seeking of Him brings life: eternal, unending life to the heart and soul. Truly, as it is written, “*thy paths drop abundance.*” [Psa 65:11] Those paths which are God’s, and thus lead to Him, drop abundance. For those who are on those paths, pursuing after/seeking The LORD, they shall experience that abundant life which Jesus promised, “*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*” [Jn 10:10] The abundant life of God is found in the pursuit of Him; that is, the seeking of Him. And let us also be careful to note, and we shall be blessed if we do, that Amos and others do not write, (under influence of The Spirit), that the

man who finds The LORD shall find life; nor do they admonish that only the man who understands God perfectly shall have life. No, but they simply and gloriously state what The LORD says, “*seek ye me, and ye shall live.*”

Are you seeking The LORD, dear reader? You may say, “yes; however, I do not feel as though I seek Him well.” Or, “though I seek Him, yet I do not find Him or understand Him well.” Yes, that may be so, but what does God encourage us with? He simply states that it is the very act of seeking Him that brings life. It is the very act of a man who gets up onto those paths of The LORD which drop abundance and who sets his face toward Christ, who shall find life. He may not immediately see, understand, or know Him well, but he seeks Him. And it is that which is rewarded with life.

It is this practice of seeking The Lord to which we draw our attention today. In the Psalms we read further that even “*the young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek The LORD shall not want any good thing.*” Even the ferocious beasts and kings of the wild lack and suffer hunger. Even they have needs and wants. Though they puff themselves up, and though they strive for meat; yet, many nights they come back empty. Yes, even those bloodthirsty animals, fitted for hunting, go without. Yet, The LORD says that the man who seeks The LORD shall not lack any good thing. If there is any good,

the man who seeks God in sincerity shall find it. And if that man says, "I have sought The Lord and yet I am lacking this thing," then we may conclude that thing was not good nor necessary. The LORD is our shepherd and we are not lacking; those who seek The Lord shall have no lack.

What a wonderful word for us today. For there are young lions among us today who lack and suffer hunger, and yet we, in our souls and hearts, go fully satisfied in Christ, being filled with His life. There are those of this world, who like the wild lions, pursue with ferocity the wealth and materials of this world. They are fitted for such, and they know the game well; and yet, even they have lack: yes, for though they may find the money or power they seek, yet none can satisfy their own souls save the man who sets His face to seek Jesus. Jesus says, "*he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*" [Jn 6:35] May we praise God for this truth. For all we need is found in Christ. We are complete in Him. He is the one who gives us life. We do not need to, as the world, to hungrily and hastily pursue the things of this life as a lion hunting prey; for we can be satisfied deep within our souls from seeking Jesus.

This word signifies to us the great nature and character of Christ. For if one were to seek after and acquire a relationship, for instance, and the other party were a cheat, a liar, and an overall terrible

person, then no doubt the man who sought such a relationship would at the last go away discouraged and empty. And again, the man who seeks alcohol, money, or anything else the world has to offer, will always come away in the end whimpering and hurt, for nothing the world offers can give true life. But it is Jesus alone, because of His glory and His goodness, because of His blessed character, that shall satisfy eternally all who seek after Him. For in stark contrast to the world's blessings/promises, it says, "*the blessing of The LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.*" [Prov 10:22]

Day XVII: Comfort for Every Circumstance

Matthew 14:27 – But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

After Jesus had multiplied bread to feed over five thousand people, “*Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side.*” [Mt 14:22] Then, after sending the multitudes away, “*He went up into a mountain apart to pray.*” [Mt 14:23] While Jesus was upon the mountain praying, “*the ship,*” wherein the disciples were, “*was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves: for the wind was contrary;*” and “*[Jesus] saw them toiling in rowing.*” [Mt 14:24, Mk 6:48] While the disciples were toiling in rowing, attempting to get to the other side as Jesus had directed them, Jesus saw them from afar, upon the mountaintop. And as Jesus does for us today, no doubt He was engaged then, interceding for them in prayer, as it is written, “*wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*” [Heb 7:25] Then eventually,

“In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were

troubled, saying, it is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."
[Mt 14:25-27]

It was in the midst of this great trial that Jesus came unto His disciples. The disciples, after struggling intensely for a multitude of hours, who were in that moment much like those in Gideon's day, "*faint, yet pursuing,*" [Jdg 8:4], were finally met with aid, as Jesus approached them. However, when they saw Him through the storm, Jesus did not seem to them as aid; for in that moment they cried out for fear as if having seen a ghost. However, despite their ignorance, despite their inability to see the truth of Christ who was approaching them, immediately upon their cries He helped them. And so, it is Jesus' response to them wherein we shall be encouraged today: for it is a response we may freely apply to ourselves as well, in whatsoever trouble we come to.

Jesus said in response to His disciples' fear, "*be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*" The phrase "*It is I,*" is the Greek phrase, *ego eimi*, which is the phrase literally, "*I Am.*" As Jesus said to the Pharisees, "*verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I Am,*" [Jn 8:58] so too He says here: "*I Am.*" This comfort given to the disciples is the same comfort we can receive today. Does any man reading this today find themselves in trouble? Find themselves struggling and tired? Find themselves in need? May

you hear the words of Christ fresh today: “I Am.” Jesus is The I Am; He is God. And for that reason, we do not need to fear. We can be of good cheer and have joy because Jesus is I Am. He is The LORD; the Creator; The one for whom all things were made and presently exist. Jesus is beyond all things and above all things. Whatever problem exists; however complicated the situation – Jesus Christ is The I Am, and He is able to help, to fix, to restore, to encourage, to do all that is necessary.

Because Jesus is God, we do not need to be afraid; rather, we can have joy in even the darkest of situations, even like Paul said, “*I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.*” [2 Cor 7:4] What a truly everlasting encouragement that we can receive from Jesus’ words: I Am. May we apply His words to all circumstances. The Lord over all things, who is eternally wise and strong and loving; the One who has the power and the will to change any person or thing, to help us, to give us victory, or whatsoever result may be required so that He is honored and lifted up – yes, He is with us and for us: Jesus is The I Am, and we can rejoice and be of good cheer as a result. What troubles you? What ails you? What tugs at your heart or soul today, dear reader? May Christ’s eternal consolation pierce your heart and fill it with His love, that He is God; He is The I Am, and He says still today as He did upon the sea, “*be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*”

Day XVIII: Always Fresh, Never Stale

Psalms 100:5 – For The LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.

The LORD's truth, "*endureth to all generations.*" From the beginning, when The Lord opened His mouth and "*said, let there be light,*" [Gen 1:3] unto the latter times yet to come, when He shall "*smite the nations*" with the two-edged sword from His mouth, [Rev 19:15] from beginning to end, first to last, as God is so too is His word: it shall endure to all generations. As it is written elsewhere, "*the word of The Lord endureth for ever.*" [1 Pe 1:25] Yes, "*forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*" [Psa 119:89] There is neither jot nor tittle that shall be anything less than eternal, but The LORD's words, and all of His words, shall last forever. Whether it be His counsel, His statutes, His law, His testimonies, or His truth: all of them shall likewise endure. Past every galaxy and every mountain; past every king and every servant: The Lord's "*truth endureth to all generations.*"

For most of us, this is not a truth uncommon, nor a word that is sluggishly accepted. Our very salvation

is founded upon the fact that God's word is everlasting: for if His word were not, what confidence may we have in anything He has said, whether it be related to the gospel or some law? But may we take this truth today, and look at it anew, seeing afresh its great power.

Let us first be particularly reminded of how Christ Jesus is The Word. In Revelation Jesus' name "*is called the Word of God;*" and in John, we read of Jesus that, "*In the beginning was The Word...[and] The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.*" [Rev 19:13, Jn 1:1, 14] Jesus is The Word, and The Word is Jesus; even as Jesus speaks through the Psalmist in reference to God's word, "*Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.*" [Psa 40:7, Heb 10:7] If we must choose just one topic that God's word is about, we must say emphatically: Jesus Christ. And regarding Jesus, who is The Word of God, we are given a promise. In Jesus' letter to the churches, He says, "*...to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna...*" [Rev 2:17] Regarding the manna, Jesus says, referencing Himself, "*this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.*" [Jn 6:50] Yes, Jesus is that manna: it represents Him: and for those who eat of Him, they shall inherit and experience both in this life and the life to come, everlasting life. As it was with the manna so too it is with Jesus, and God would say to us, "*this is the*

bread which The LORD hath given you to eat,” [Ex 16:15] very similar to what Jesus expressed at the Last Supper, “take eat; this [bread] is my body.” [Mt 26:26] And as we have been relating God’s word to Christ, and now the manna to Christ, we should also expect to see manna related to God’s word, and in fact we do. For it is written,

“And [The LORD] humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna...that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that is proceeding out of the mouth of The LORD doth man live.” [Deut 8:3]

And so, now that we have seen the connection of God’s word, manna, and Jesus, we can understand what Jesus means when He promises that He shall give us *“to eat of the hidden manna.”* Back in Moses’ day it says, *“as The LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid [the manna] up before the testimony, to be kept.” [Ex 16:34]* Some of the manna was stored up in a jar and put before The Ark. This is also spoken of in Hebrews:

“And after [the first holy place, there was] the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all...wherein was the golden pot that had manna...” [Heb 9:3-4]

This is the hidden manna: that manna which was stored up in the jar and then laid before The Ark. It

was located in the Holy of Holies, a place which was off limits except for once a year, and then only by the High Priest. In effect, the manna was hidden: out of reach and out of view – and this was much like Christ in the Old Testament, even as it says regarding Christ and His glory to the Jews who are still under the law today: “*but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.*” [f.f., 2 Cor 3:15] But now, through Jesus, we have access to His word and to Him. We have the hidden manna, and we are able to eat of Him; to experience Him, to fellowship with Him, to learn of Him.

But how does all this relate to our verse for today? It relates in that we have read, “*His truth endureth to all generations.*” Think of that manna: that manna, which God said, (and which was proved to be true), would be eaten of worms and become worthless if stored up greater than a day. The manna had to be gathered daily and could not be stored up except for the sabbath day. And so how then could manna be stored up in the jar before The Ark? Would it not grow stale and stink, as the other stored manna did? Ah, but thousands and thousands of years after, Jesus promises us “*the hidden manna.*” That manna which was stored up represents Christ; and Christ shall never grow stale. For the Word of The LORD endures forever, and Jesus is The Word. Therefore, that hidden manna never doth spoil. No, but forevermore it remains: each generation, each

millennia, each day, for eternity of eternities, shall be accessible and fresh: as fresh as it was the first day it was placed there. The Jesus which was powerful in His resurrection, or last week, or at your salvation, is the same Jesus today. He doesn't grow old nor fade, nor spoil: both He and His word are eternal, and ever available for us to enjoy and receive from.

Have you yourself a promise, dear reader? Have you encouragement and exhortation from The Lord? Have you a remembrance of some account in scripture regarding the work and power of The Lord? That promise and that word, that display of God's character, is still good today. Do not think that it has grown stale and lost its effectiveness. As it touched you then, may it touch you afresh today and grant strength.

Day XIX: Blessed Through His Name

Revelation 3:12 – Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

One of the promises given to the overcomer, (and “*who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” [1 Jn 5:5]), is that Jesus “*will write upon him the name of [His] God...and...[His] new name.*” To the man who believes in Jesus, this promise is given: and though it certainly has a greater and more literal fulfilment in the future, yet even now we can say in a spiritual sense that The Lord has written His name upon us. For again, we are “*sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise*” “*unto the day of redemption.*” [Eph 1:13; 4:30] There is not a chance that we should be lost: presently and always forevermore we are Jesus’ possession, “*a possession for Himself,*” [1 Pe 2:9] for He has “*purchased [us] with His own blood.*” [Acts 20:28] And so, though we may not literally have His name stamped upon us as of yet, even still we are

His – we are The Lord’s own private possession. Just as when a name is affixed upon an object, signifying that object belongs to the name, so too it is with us: we “*belong to Christ.*” [Mk 9:41]

To add to this truth, The Lord says, “*in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*” [Ex 20:24] The LORD promises to Moses that in all places where He puts His name, He will bless. And as we have seen, in Christ, we are such a place that The Lord has put His name. Therefore, because Jesus’ name is upon us and in us, because we are in Christ, The LORD has promised to bless us. And we shall be blessed. The LORD shall come unto us, as He has said, and bless us; and as David says in prayer, “*for thou blessest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed forever,*” [1 Ch 17:27] so too we shall forever experience The Lord’s blessing. Because we are forever in Christ, never to depart, (a truth which Jesus Himself is determined to fulfil, saying, “*and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*” [Jn 10:28]), we shall forever experience the blessing of God.

May Jesus be ever praised for this. Because it is for His great character and position that we are blessed. It is because His name is upon us, the very name of God, that The Father is determined to bless us. It is not for our excellency, nor our prestige, nor anything that we have or do or can do – but only

for Jesus His Son. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”* [Eph 1:3]

Day XX: Clothed With The Lamb

Proverbs 27:26 – The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field.

In God's word, salvation and righteousness are often compared to clothing. In Isaiah, it is written,

“I will greatly rejoice in The LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh Himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”
[Isa 61:10]

Just as a bride is clothed on her wedding, adorned with jewels and beautiful apparel, so too we are clothed with salvation and righteousness. God says in another place as well, *“I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.”* [Psa 132:16] In keeping with the wedding imagery, our salvation is paired with joy in both places. *“Let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.”* [2 Ch 6:41] To be sure, our salvation must be exceedingly good, to promote such joy and to be spoken of so highly. Speaking of garments, it is the most beautiful and

luxurious garment one can find. In Revelation, speaking of such, it says of the church, Christ's bride, "*and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*" [Rev 19:8] These clean, white linens, which are the righteousness of the saints, are without blemish – for their righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, is also without blemish. Paul reminds us by The Spirit that through Jesus we are presented as "*holy and without blemish and unreprouvable in His sight.*" [Col 1:22] Our righteousness, and thus salvation, which God says, "*is of me,*" [Isa 54:17] is without blemish, spotlessly white: just as our inheritance is spoken of: "*unable to decay, and unstained, and unfading.*" [1 Pe 1:4]

Let us rejoice and be glad, because we have been clothed with the garments of salvation. Jesus has adorned us as His bride and we are clean in His sight. But what has Jesus adorned us with? His righteousness, which has been imputed to us by means of His death and resurrection and our continued belief therein. He has clothed us truly with Himself. He, The Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world, has offered us Himself as our clothing, in fulfillment of what was written long ago, "*God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering;*" and, "*The LORD God [did] make coats of skins, and clothed them.*" [Gen 22:8; 3:21]. As

Proverbs says, “*the lambs are for thy clothing.*” [Prov 27:26]

Indeed, this is a very good thing. For in times past, “*The LORD spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto Aaron, saying, whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.*” [Lev 21:16-17] Without Jesus’ spotless righteousness as our covering, we cannot approach God. Who is there among us that is without blemish or spot? There is none, for there is none righteous. And so then, who can approach God? Yet, in Jesus we are counted and esteemed as spotless, for Jesus Christ, The Lamb of God, clothes us with His very own righteousness. And He says to us, speaking nothing but the truth, “*thou art all beautiful, my love; there is no blemish in thee.*” [Songs 4:7] Praise God that though our clothing has been muddied and dirtied through our sin, yet we have been given clean, white linen: the righteousness and salvation of Jesus. And praise God that though we are not worthy, nor are we able – due to our sinfulness – yet in Christ we are freely, readily accepted by God, being presented to God not as sinful, but as righteous: for all of Jesus’ spotless merit has been accredited to us.

Day XXI: Forsaken That We Might Be Delivered

Psalms 22:4-6 – Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

There is not a saint of God, whether great or small, male or female, bond or free, who, though they may be mightily used of God, who is flawless. Whether we speak of David, or Noah; of Moses, or Jacob; of Sarah, or Rahab – every saint of God, old and new alike, have one common thread: sin. We have all sinned; yes, and still do sin. And to this, scripture bluntly agrees, proclaiming, “*for all have sinned, and are falling short of the glory of God.*” [Rom 3:23] The glory of God: it is not just that we have in the past fallen short; no, but all of us alike are presently falling short.

It can be tempting to look at the Old Testament saints of old, or even of someone presently whom God appears to be using, and assume that they have earned such a degree of favor. That because of their

goodness, they have earned God's trust and that is why He uses them. Or, the temptation easily comes to assume that they always have more victory and are more spiritual. But as James reminds us regarding Elijah –

“Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and sixth months.” [Jam 5:17]

As great of a man that Elijah was, he was a man subject to the same flesh as we: and a man who fell to that flesh likewise. Paul says a similar thing to those who would think him above what is written: “sirs, *why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you...*” [Acts 14:15] Peter says that we are those who have “*obtained faith equal in privilege with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.*” [2 Pe 1:1] The faith that we have, or Paul had, or Elijah, or any other saint, is always the same. We have a faith equal in privilege. Because we have all acquired our faith by Jesus Christ and Him alone. One cannot boast that they have tried harder or had been more worthy of salvation. No one can rightfully boast that they yearned and strove more for salvation and so theirs is harder-won or more worthy of attention, favor, or glory. No, in no wise, for it is written, “*for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.*” [Eph 2:8-9]

But even though we have all sinned – from the highest saint to the lowest – yet, God still chooses to love us, bless us, and save us. Yes, many-a-time when we have been in trouble, our God has gladly delivered us. Again, and again, He seeks to give us victory, help us, deliver us, and many other things. The LORD promises, “*call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*” [Psa 50:15] And again, because the righteousness of God has been imputed to us through Christ, we can claim the promise, “*the righteous cry, and The LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*” [Psa 34:17]

There is, however, one who never did sin: Jesus Christ. It is He in whom our righteousness is based. And yet, for all His righteousness and goodness, for all His flawless living, in His greatest hour of temptation and need, He was forsaken of God; as it is written, “*my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” [Psa 22:1] With these things in mind, let us read again what Christ uttered through the prophet in our passage for today,

“*Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered...but I am a worm, and no man...*” [Psa 22:4-6]

If there was ever a man who could lay full right to the promises of deliverance, it was Jesus. After all,

the promise is given to the righteous and He is the only one to ever be righteous. If there was ever a man who deserved and earned God's love, favor, and salvation: it was Christ. And yet, in His greatest trial upon the cross, He found no deliverance.

Though He were righteous, yet upon the cross Jesus could not find fulfilment for the promise, "*many are the afflictions of the righteous: but The LORD delivereth him out of them all.*" [Psa 34:19] And yet, though Jesus was not delivered, yet those sinful saints of old were. David who murdered; Noah who was drunken; Jacob who connived; kings who dabbled in women and idolatry – each of them, without fail, if they called upon The LORD and at least sought Him in some manner by faith, were delivered. But Christ, The Righteous One, was not delivered.

In this truth we can find great encouragement. First, for it is because Jesus was forsaken in such a manner that we can lay hold of salvation. Our assurance of salvation and help rests upon this very act: Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection. And second, because it shows us the great love, mercy, and grace of God and of Jesus, who would willingly empty and lower Himself to such a position so that we might benefit from His forsaking. So that we might lay hold on these glorious promises and find deliverance in our time of need, Jesus, who knew no sin, willingly suffered, being made into sin for us. [2 Cor 5:21] His blood has secured for us these things,

and we can freely and joyfully come to Him, assured of His mercy. [Isa 55:3] May Jesus be praised for this, who saw us as a joy; [Heb 12:2] who saw us as worthy – not for our works but simply because of His love – and suffered in our place.

Day XXII: Awake And Available

Luke 8:23 – But as they sailed, He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

Have you ever felt that Jesus was asleep? Have you ever felt, that in your sojourn here through earth, that your God had forgotten you or was less-than-caring? Perhaps it has even come to pass of late, dear reader, that you have felt less of His presence, and though you have not outwardly said it, have supposed Jesus to be asleep: that is, not caring, even as the disciples said of Jesus who slept in the storm, “*master, carest thou not that we perish?*” [Mk 4:38] Certainly, from the disciples’ point of view, in the boat, as the storm raged on, Jesus was asleep. For He, in that human body, did grow tired, and it is written, “*and He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow.*” [Mk 4:38] Therefore, when the storm began to increase and go on, the disciples, presumably because Jesus continued to sleep, accused Him of not caring. The Lord’s incredible peace – a peace which He promises to us – was such that others viewed it as apathy. But the truth of the matter, is that Jesus cared very much for them, and when He awoke at their request, it is recorded,

“And He saith unto them, why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.”
[Mt 8:26]

It is written in the Psalms,

“He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”
[Psa 121:3-4]

Though the disciples could not see it, Jesus was always available for their help. God was guarding them, and Jesus was on earth a perfect representation of God’s character. Did not Jesus awake at their first cry and save them? But they saw Him asleep, at peace, and saw themselves astir and troubled, and because He was not like them, they assumed that He did not care. But truly, as the matter stood, Christ Jesus was there always ready for their aid, and so too The Father. For our God never sleeps, but is always watchfully guarding us and ready to help us.

In our lives, it may seem at times that God sleeps. That He doesn’t hear our prayers, or that His aid is far away. But in these times, that is merely our weakness, as The Psalmist also concluded. [Psa 77:10] Though it may feel at times our God is far away, yet He is not; for again, it is written, “God is

our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”
[Psa 46:1]

Day XXIII: The Ever-Abiding Presence of God's Spirit

John 14:16-17 – And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even The Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

It is a great truth and a great comfort that The Lord has promised us again and again, “*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*” [Heb 13:5] As God has promised to the saints of old, He has promised to us likewise, “*behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest;*” [Gen 28:15] and, “*The LORD will not forsake His people for His great Name’s sake: because it hath pleased The LORD to make you His people.*” [1 Sam 12:22] Even as Jesus said before He ascended, “*and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*” [Mt 28:20] There are few promises in scripture as reassuring and as good as the plain fact that The LORD shall be with us. And here in our passage for today, The Lord Jesus comforts us again, reminding us that He shall always be with us through the presence of The Holy Spirit, whom Jesus names, “*another Comforter.*”

Again, as Jesus says, *“I will not leave you orphaned: I will come to you.”* [Jn 14:18]

This too is a longstanding promise. In Haggai it is written,

“According to the word that I covenant with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.” [Hag 2:5]

This promise of The Spirit goes all the way back to Egypt, when The LORD redeemed His people; and in a similar way, the certain promise of The Spirit’s presence and indwelling for us is original to our salvation in Christ, when our Lord delivered us from Egypt as it were. As The LORD said to Moses, *“my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest,”* [Ex 33:14] so too God says to us.

It is a simple word: I am with you. But because it comes from the best source, the most authoritative and powerful source, it is an exceedingly good word. It is a promise and word which transcends all trials and troubles, a promise good enough for any circumstance one may find Himself in. In Isaiah, The Spirit is called, *“The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of The LORD.”* [Isa 11:2] Is there any among us today who need wisdom? Who need understanding? Counsel, might, or knowledge? Or what of grace and prayer – for The Holy Spirit is also *“The Spirit of grace and of*

supplications.” [Zech 12:10] Then may you, dear Christian, find hope and encouragement in the fact that the very Spirit who holds that which you require lives within you. And may you, by His power and presence within your heart, cry out to God, Abba Father.

Yes, what a good promise it is for us that The Holy Spirit remains with us, and is in us: that God is always with us through His presence. Whatever we have need of, He is there at hand. As Moses said, so it remains true for us, “*what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as The LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?*” [Deut 4:7] And whatever we require power for, The Spirit is able and willing, if that thing be of God; for it is written, “*now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*” [Eph 3:20] So then, praise God who is near; and praise God who has promised to abide in us forever by His Spirit.

Day XXIV: Unashamed, Unafraid

Zephaniah 3:11 – In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me...

In Isaiah, The LORD says,

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of The LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” [Isa 40:1-2]

The LORD speaks comfortably to us that our *“warfare is accomplished,”* and in conjunction with this, that our *“iniquity is pardoned.”* And why is this? *“For [we have] received of The LORD’s hand double for all [our] sins.”* Because Jesus Christ has overcome and conquered all our enemies – because He, *“The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle,”* The LORD, who *“is a man of war;”* [Psa 24:8, Ex 15:3] – yes, because Christ has overcome through the cross, defeating all our enemies, our warfare is accomplished. The war is won; Jesus reigns victorious. And through His victory we have been utterly pardoned of our sins. Every transgression has

been covered by the blood of Jesus, for we have been “*forgiven [of] all trespasses*” [Col 2:13] and “*though [our] sins [were] as scarlet, they [have been made] white as snow.*” [Isa 1:18] As The LORD says through Isaiah, “*for all [our] sins,*” we have been given by His hand “*double;*” that is, a double inheritance. The inheritance of the firstborn – the inheritance of Christ Jesus – for we are “*joint-heirs with Christ,*” and “*shall inherit all things*” alongside Him. [Rom 8:17, Rev 21:7] This is why The LORD calls these words in Isaiah comfortable. They are good words; pleasing words; encouraging words: that for all our wickedness and sin, we should be given an inheritance and a complete pardon. But is this not what Paul/The New Testament agree to? Saying, “*the free gift [of salvation] is of many offences unto justification;*” and, “*where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*” [Rom 5:16, 20]

The same words are spoken in Isaiah elsewhere, as well as Zechariah.

“*For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.*” [Isa 61:7]

And,

“Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee.” [Zech 9:12]

Instead of shame and confusion, The Lord promises us inheritance, blessing, and joy. And in our verse for today, we see the same: *“in that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me...”* The grace and love and mercy of God know no bounds. For we have come to Him with nothing; nothing except shame and sin, and for those He has taken and exchanged, given to us, for no righteousness of our own, every heavenly blessing available.

The Lord does not desire for us to be ashamed of what we have done, of our past. He calls us not to Himself to humiliate and shame us. No, but The Lord calls us to Himself for the greatest exchange: our sin for His spotless, shame-free righteousness. And if we come to Him, as we often do, trembling and low for our sins and wickedness, anxious that we have lost His ear or our good standing before His throne, He reminds us of His glorious perspective: *“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: The LORD His God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.” [Num 23:21]*

Do you come today, dear Christian, with shame? Ashamed of your bad attitude, ashamed of your

recent failures, ashamed of your past? Do you come to Christ heavy with such things? Fear not, nor be discouraged: for as it is said to Israel, “*in that day,*” so too it is said for us in that day that we accept Christ, (and forevermore after that), “*thou shalt not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed...*”

Day XXV: God's Unstainable Reputation

2 Kings 19:6 – And Isaiah said unto them, thus shall ye say to your master, thus saith The LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

When Assyria came up against Judah in the days of Hezekiah, the enemy grievously blasphemed The LORD and proudly spoke great words of discouragement against God's people. Rabshakeh, the Assyrian king's messenger came and spoke,

“Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, what confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?...Am I now come up without The LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, go up against this land, and destroy it....Thus saith the king, let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in The LORD, saying, The LORD will deliver us...” [2 Ki 18:19-20, 25, 29-30]

The enemy sought to diminish Israel's trust in The LORD, saying that The LORD was not able to deliver them from Assyria. After all, thought the enemy, "*hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?*" [2 Ki 18:33] But the enemy was in great error: for the gods of the nations were no gods at all and that is why they could not deliver their people from their hands. The enemy sought to sow seeds of doubt within the people regarding God's character as well, saying that "*The LORD said to me, go up against this land, and destroy it.*" The words which the Assyrian spoke to Hezekiah are much of the same words satan speaks to us today. He attempts to dismantle our trust in The LORD, either through lies that He cannot deliver us, or lies regarding His character and thoughts towards us. The enemy, our accuser, would have us to believe that The LORD does not love us and will not save us. But may we take the words of satan, spoken through the Assyrian, and shed true light on them.

Let us first remember what Jesus says about satan. "*When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*" [Jn 8:44] Satan is the father of lies. Is there ever a word that satan speaks to us – whether through a person, or through the world, or through the flesh – regarding The Lord's person, that is true? Should satan ever encourage us in the ways of The Lord, reminding us of His

steadfast love and mercy? I should think not: for he “*was a murderer from the beginning,*” and satan, the thief, “*cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.*” [Jn 8:44; 10:10] Therefore, when we read the words of Assyria, saying that The LORD will not deliver and that The LORD desires to destroy us, we can immediately take refuge and comfort in that these words are false. Thus, the counsel of the enemy is destroyed and confused and truth emerges: for if the enemy is wholeheartedly attempting to convince us that God is in fact evil, then we can be restfully assured He is not.

Have you heard the words of our enemy of late, dear reader? Have you had thoughts of God’s bad character? Of His meanness, strictness, pettiness, harshness, or legalistic nature? Ah, then you, my good man, have heard the words of satan. You have not heard the true and living words of God, nor have you heard from His Spirit; for regarding The Spirit, who brings to our remembrance things Christ has said, Jesus says, “*He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*” [Jn 16:14] And if we be inundated with thoughts or messages that are contrary to Christ’s loving and meek nature, whose nature mirrors The LORD’s perfectly, with thoughts that do not glorify Him, then we can safely reject them, taking advantage of that word, “*and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*” [2 Cor 10:5] Therefore as

Isaiah encouraged, *“be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard.”* [2 Ki 19:6] Do not fear or tremble at the words of the enemy, no matter how loud they may come; for they are all but lies. Cling to your God who loves you; and cling to His word which endures forever, and take to yourselves the exhortation of Hezekiah,

“Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: with him is an arm of flesh; but with us is The LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles...” [2 Ch 32:7-8]

Yes, let us be strong and courageous and trust in The Lord: for there is no word against Him which shall prosper. His reputation, His name, His glory: is unstainable and perfect. Therefore, dear Christian, may you reject and rebuke all the lies of the enemy that have come against God’s character in your life, resting yourself on His proven worth, merit, and truthfulness – all of which have their climax and foundation in Jesus’ glorious cross, wherein out of love He shed His blood and died for our sins.

Day XXVI: Just One Touch

Luke 6:19 – And the whole multitude sought to touch Him: for there went power out of Him, and healed them all.

In reading this verse, where, “*the whole multitude sought to touch Him,*” we are reminded of elsewhere in the gospels where this occurred. Take, for instance, the woman who had the running flow of blood for twelve years. “*She said within herself, if I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.*” [Mt 9:21] And because she acted in faith, trusting in the power of Christ, from just a single touch, “*immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.*” [Mk 5:29] And again, it is written, “*and [they] besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*” [Mt 14:36] As it was prophesied, so it has come to pass, and remains true even today: “*but unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in both hems of His garment...*” [Mal 4:2]

What are you seeking after today? Healing?
Direction? Power to live a Godly life? What is it of

Christ that you seek? For there are no limits to His power and strength; He is able, even a thousand times over, to do anything that is needed, and He is very willing to help us, for God *“hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things for the church[’s sake].”* [Eph 1:22] Whatever it is that you have need of, if it be in the will of God, go to the feet of Jesus with great confidence. As those people of old sought out Christ Jesus *“to touch Him: for there went power out of Him,”* so too may you seek out Jesus for just a touch. As the woman under the table sought for just a measly crumb of what Jesus had to offer, confident that even a crumb would suffice for her needs, so too all we need is just one touch. One touch from the powerful Messiah, our King, our Shepherd, our Groom, our Lord – yes, just one touch is all that we need.

Praise God. And praise God again; for Jesus is not just a passerby in the crowd for us. We are His possession; His bride; His people; His children. He is not far off; we do not have to think or be anxious about if Jesus will show up today. He is here; He is near. *“Thou art near, O LORD.”* [Psa 119:151] And if you do not presume Him to be near, seek Him still; for, it says, *“draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.”* [Jam 4:8] Jesus is near to us, and His power is available. Let us therefore reach out toward Him to lay hold of His garment, in faith that if we but

chance one touch of Christ we shall be healed, or
get wisdom, or whatsoever good thing we seek.

Day XXVII: Any Day, Every Day

Isaiah 49:8 – Thus saith The LORD, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee...

In Corinthians Paul, quoting our passage for today, urges the Corinthians to lay hold of God's grace and His salvation. He writes,

"We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of salvation have I ran to your aid: behold, now is an accepted time; behold, now is a day of salvation.)" [2 Cor 6:1-2]

The Holy Spirit also writes through Paul in another place, saying, "[God has] delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." [2 Cor 1:10] Just as we have been "saved by grace through faith," [Eph 2:8] so too we shall continue to be delivered. The deliverance and victory that Christ has gotten us over sin, (for it is written, "He shall save His people from their sins." [Mt 1:21]), continues to persist through our lives, and will also appear for us in the future, as Paul also

writes, speaking of the deliverance we shall experience over these fallen bodies, “*we ourselves [also] groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body.*” [Rom 8:23] It is not just that we have once in the past received God’s grace and have been saved; no, but even in the present, as The Spirit reveals through Paul, we continue to get victory and deliverance over sin. So then, as we look at Paul’s words to the Corinthian Church in chapter six, “*receive not the grace of God in vain;*” and, “*now is a day of salvation,*” we can apply it also more specifically to a tangible, daily victory/deliverance over sin. Today is the day, Paul encourages, to lay hold of God’s grace and experience His deliverance over sin, temptation, or the spiritual enemies we face, etc.

And herein is our short, yet powerful encouragement: the word “*day.*” What is the day that is being spoken of? That day which shall bequeath to us God’s glorious salvation? What is that day wherein we shall experience in great and tangible way the power and salvation and grace of God? Today! Today is the day; now is the time. And notice that The LORD, in Isaiah, does not write “*the day*” but “*a day.*” It is not a specific, marked out day in which we shall experience salvation. No, but it is any day – “*a day.*” Not **the** day, but **a** day. Any day will do.

Therefore, dear Christian, ask yourself this rhetorical question: is today a day? Do you find yourself in the midst of a day? The question is obvious: yes! There has not been a time in your life, nor any man's life, in which they had not found themselves in the midst of a day. We are always in a day. It may be the beginning, the middle, or the end, but the fact remains: we are in a day.

Therefore, this promise and this deliverance is for us: it is for you, dear reader. The LORD has promised, "*in a day of salvation have I helped thee;*" and, "*in an acceptable time have I heard thee.*" Do not think to say to yourself that today is not the day, neither is now the time. Today and now are exactly the times: no matter what day and time you find yourself in when you read these words. If you have breath and if you have heard these words, then the day and time you find yourself in is exactly that day and time in which The LORD would have you to experience His deliverance. "*Now is an accepted time; behold, now is a day of salvation.*"

So then, let us with freedom and access, with liberty, approach God's throne of grace. For He is not as the unjust judge or the bothered friend; He is not one who would forbear from helping because today or now is too inconvenient. The LORD is ready to help and ready to rescue, He is, as He was to the leper, very willing. As He said to the leper's

statement, “*Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,*” so too to us: “*I will; be thou clean.*” [Mt 8:2-3]

Day XXVIII: Free, Full, and Immediate: The Overwhelming Forgiveness of Christ

Luke 23:43 – And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

When Jesus hung upon the cross for our sins, it is recorded,

“And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with Him [also] reviled Him.” [Mk 15:29-32]

In His greatest hour of hardship, Jesus was without comfort. From above, The Father had forsaken Christ; as Jesus spoke upon the cross, “my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” [Mt 27:46] From beside, even the two thieves “reviled Him.” [Mk 15:32, Mt 27:44] And from below, “they that passed by railed on Him...likewise also the chief priests mocking

said...*He saved others; Himself He cannot save.*" Yes, even Jesus' disciples had forsaken Him, as it was prophesied, "*smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;*" and, "*then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled.*" [Zech 13:7, Mt 26:56] There were many people present at Jesus' crucifixion, including some who loved Him; but in that moment Jesus was utterly without aid, destitute and destroyed: a man forsaken by God and men. From His perspective, Jesus speaks through David, saying,

"I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on The LORD that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him." [Psa 22:6-8]

But even though Jesus was so treated by those around Him, He was still full of love. Take for example the Pharisees, whom Christ addresses, saying, "*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*" [Lk 23:34] Those wicked religious rulers who for their own selfish benefit and out of envy delivered Jesus to death, their very own Messiah, Jesus forgives. Even in the midst of His suffering, even while being harmed and killed by them, Jesus was able to forgive them. And praise God for that: for in Romans we read, "*for when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly;*" and,

“God demonstrates His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” [Rom 5:6, 8] If we have thought the religious hypocrites bad, who put Jesus on the cross, we may very well think again. For it is us too: wicked sinners, for whom Christ died. If it were them Jesus spoke of, saying, “*father, forgive them,*” then it is toward us too – for we are just as sinful and just as guilty.

Truly, the grace and mercy of God is great. It is higher than heaven is above earth; greater in depth than the ocean. We have seen how Jesus forgave and forgives those who harm Him, even those who put Him to death. And though many of them did not repent, yet Jesus forgave them still. But Jesus also forgave the thief who was dying beside Him, a man who perhaps after hearing Jesus’ merciful words, had second thoughts about his own reviling. It is to this man, and what Jesus tells him, that we shall now look.

Earlier in Jesus’ life He said, “*whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him.*” [Mt 12:32] Jesus proclaimed in advance He would forgive any-and-all who would speak ill of Him or about Him. Whatever the word, and whomever the source, Jesus promised to forgive them. And even to this day, Jesus still forgives similar offences. It was upon the cross that this claim was put to the test.

Remember how we read, “*and they that were crucified with Him reviled Him.*” Let us be careful to note that this includes *both* thieves. It was not just the “bad” one – not just the one who never repented; no, but both thieves. And though with one breath in one moment the thieves cursed Christ to His face, all while experiencing the same punishment, yet in the next moment with another breath out of the same mouth, one of the thieves repented, saying, “*Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*” [Lk 23:42] And in that moment Jesus proved what He said earlier in His life; for Jesus said to the man, “*verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.*” Jesus did not take offence at the previous curses and insults thrown upon Him by the thief; He did not revile back. Instead, Jesus forgave the man and allowed him into heaven, even that very same day. There was no cooldown period needed; there was no penance required; there was no purgatory (nor shall there be for any man); there was not a single shred of ill-will from Christ to that man. No, but there was only love and an immediate, full forgiveness. There is nothing that a man can do to sever Himself completely from Christ. Even in death, even hours before death, even while suffering for all the sins of mankind, Jesus’ love and mercy could not be diminished, but remained strong and remained willing to forgive and allow into heaven the repentant thief, despite

his railings and expressed unbelief only moments before.

May Christ be praised. His mercy is everlasting. His forgiveness is real, enduring, and strong. And if Jesus were willing to forgive the thief in a moment's notice, completely covering over his transgressions, then know that He is still willing today. And if Jesus displayed, yes and still does display, such mercy and grace, then we too, who belong to Him, should also display the same, walking worthy of the kingdom and calling to which we have been called.

Day XXIX: The Unending Riches of God's Word

Psalms 119:162 – I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

God's word is precious; it is valuable. And it finds its value in Jesus Christ: for regarding the word, Jesus says through the Psalmist, "*lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.*" [Psa 40:7] Jesus is "*The Word,*" [Jn 1:1] and because He is without price, the precious and prized Son of God, therefore The Word is also equally precious. Job says regarding it, "*I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.*" [Job 23:12] And Jeremiah, "*thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.*" [Jer 15:16] And David, "*the law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*" [Psa 119:72] And again, "*more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*" [Psa 19:10] God's word is exceedingly valuable: a treasure above all else; and chiefly, as we have said, because it reveals to us Jesus Christ, He who has been "*given...a name which is above every name.*" [Phil 2:9]

In our verse for today, we read of the excitement and awe of a man who has come to enjoy and love God's word. The Psalmist writes, "*I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.*" God's word presents to us spoil: spoil and reward as gold, silver, or the finest of foods. As the men of war fight and gain reward; as the farmer endures with longsuffering in order to receive fruit from the earth; as the miner digs into the hard rock and comes away with precious jewels – so too it is with God's word, and when we come to it with faith and expectation, we may come away also with what the Psalmist described: "*great spoil.*" There is no depth to the treasure found in God's word. Again and again, though we come to the same place in scripture, yet there always seems to be more. There is yet another angle to the diamond, yet another flavor not perceived before, yet a fuller and more blessed experience than we had previously thought. The knowledge of Jesus Christ, which is found in God's word, is described by Christ Himself as eternal life. "*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*" [Jn 17:3] The knowledge of God contains within it eternal, unending life. An eternal spring of blessings, of life, of hope, of joy.

And so, the man that makes a pursuit and study of God's word is like one that finds great spoil. It is

even like the spoil obtained from Jehoshaphat's great victory, of which it says,

“And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.” [2 Ch 20:25]

So too is God's word. As the king and his people went to the enemy camp over which God had given them victory, finding three days' worth of spoil, so too because Christ has saved us and gotten us victory over our enemies, we may come to God's word, even just one line of it, and find three days' worth of precious spoil.

Day XXX: A Mustard Seed & A Mountain

Matthew 17:20 – ... If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Multiple times in the gospels Jesus tells us that with faith nothing shall be impossible. *“If thou canst believe, all things are possible to Him that believeth;”* and, *“the things which are impossible with men are possible with God;”* and again, *“verily I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not...all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”* [Mk 9:23, Lk 19:27, Mt 21:21-22] Through faith in The Lord all things are possible. And it is our faith in Him that holds power. Remember the woman who had faith before Christ and thought within herself, *“if I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.”* [Mt 9:21] Jesus said to her, *“daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.”* [Mt 9:22] It was the woman’s faith in Jesus which was powerful; for Jesus said, after she had touched Him in faith, *“somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that power is gone out of me.”* [Lk 8:46] Peter pointed out, *“Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, who touched me?”* [Lk 8:45] To those who simply

brushed up against Jesus, no faith was released; to those who pressed upon Him, but without believing that it would do anything, again, no power came forth. But to the woman who touched in faith, great power was released. It is not merely faith that is powerful, but faith in God, faith in Jesus.

In Acts we read,

“And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: the same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.” [Acts 14:8-10]

Peter had performed a similar miracle earlier in the book of Acts. And when, as it happened to Paul, those who saw it marveled, Peter then said to them,

“Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?...[It is through Jesus'] name, through faith in his name [that] hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by [Jesus Christ] hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.” [Acts 3:12, 16]

It is the faith of Jesus which empowers a man to be healed, to be strengthened, etc. Because Jesus is

strong, those who place their faith in Him will be strong as well. It is because He holds all power, that those who place their faith in Him, and in Him alone, shall experience/lay hold of that power.

And so, let us see that in our verse for today how Jesus says, *“if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove.”* [Mt 17:20] The mustard seed is the smallest of seeds, exceedingly small. And yet, Jesus proclaims to us that even that small amount of faith is large enough to move a mountain. If there were any object present on earth that displayed power, strength, and stability, a mountain would be it. Who could walk up to a behemoth mountain towering into the sky and have the audacity to think they should move it? And to move it with a word? It seems to be an impossible task; a task which escapes reality. And yet, Christ Jesus says to us that if we have but the faith the size of a mustard seed we can move it. Even the smallest, weakest saint among us, surely, can muster up at least one mustard seed of faith. It is not much faith; but it is enough. And why is it enough? Because of whom the faith is placed in. We may very well translate this that even a mustard seed of Jesus’ power is enough to move a mountain: for the mustard seed of faith released His power.

Dear Christian, what stands before you today? What towers in front of you like a mountain? What do

you require strength and power for? Have faith in Jesus: for He is able. Just a mustard seed of His power, accessed through a mustard seed of faith, shall be enough. You may say, “yes, but I am weak and little; I am no giant of faith; I am no strong Christian.” Well, you may be right; you may be the weakest saint there is. But you are a saint still; and therefore, you have at least some faith. And my good man, that faith is enough; in fact, it is plenty: for just a mustard seed is enough to move a mountain.

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