

PARABLES

Bringing Hidden Things to Light



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.1.3

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 6-8 of the book *Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ*.

Did you know that mankind's greatest need is to receive life? Some might ask, "Aren't men and women already living, unless of course they are dead?"

The truth is, when man sinned, he died. Men who are born of natural descent from the lineage of Adam are spiritually dead. They may have an earthly spark of life, but the divine life of God is missing.

If mankind is to live as God lives, to love righteousness and hate sin, they must have divine life

within them. This divine life is missing in all men and women at the time of their natural birth. This is why the Son of God told the Jewish ruler Nicodemus that the great need of all men was that they be born again.

Man has been born of woman. What he also needs is to be born of the Spirit of God. If you have not been born of God's Spirit, you are spiritually dead. It is impossible for you to please God.

Many men and women vainly pursue a transformed life by simply trying to reform the natural life they have. They try hard to not do the things that are evil, and to do the things that are good, but they stumble

and fail repeatedly.

This failure should be expected. Dead men cannot please God.

If you have not been born again of the Spirit, you will find in these chapters the path to this new birth. If you have already been born again, then these chapters will help you to understand that which has taken place. You should also be better equipped to tell others who are spiritually dead what the great need of their life is.

It is my hope that as you read these chapters that the mystery hidden from the ages will become clear to you. This mystery is "Christ in YOU!"

Food for Thought

The purpose of Christianity is not to avoid difficulty, but to produce a character adequate to meet it when it comes. It does not make life easy; rather it tries to make us great enough for life.

James L. Christensen

Scripture Memory

Psalms 119:11

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.1.3
- *Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ*
- Chapters 6-8

Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ

Chapter 6 - The Spirit is Life

In the first chapter of this book the statement was made, "The only real answer to the problem of addictive behavior is to restore light and life to our beings." Death, physical and spiritual, is the natural consequence of sin. Mortal man needs to receive life back into his being in order to walk in victory over sin. When we receive the divine life of God into our being we are able to walk as spiritual men, both desiring and performing the will of God.

Philippians 2:13

For it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.

[Amplified Bible]

"The only real answer to the problem of addictive behavior is to restore light and life to our beings."

The life of God must enter into man's being in order for man to live a life of righteousness. Apart from the life of God, all we have in these bodies is death, the principle of sin at work in us.

Yahweh has made a way for men and women to receive His life inside their mortal bodies. This is through the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Romans 8:11

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The Spirit of Christ is imparted to the believer to do much more than act as a guide. Not only does He reveal those things that Yahweh wants each individual to do, but He produces the desire to do God's will, and supplies the power to do it. This is

the result of the very life of God being present in us.

In the previous chapter we spoke of asking God to give us His Holy Spirit. Without this Spirit dwelling in us we have not truly changed. We may be forgiven for our sin by the shed blood of Christ, but we have no power to walk in victory over sin until we receive the Spirit of Christ into our being. Without the Spirit we can have forgiveness of sin by faith in Christ, but our bondage still remains. That faith in Christ's atoning work and the impartation of the Spirit are two separate works, is shown in the following Scripture.

Acts 19:1-6

It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Yahshua." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Yahshua. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them...

Salvation in Christ Yahshua incorporates both of these events. By faith we believe and confess that Christ has atoned for our sin, and has restored our fellowship to the Father. This provision allows us to stand before God and appear righteous before Him, no longer separated by sin. The second part is equally as important. Christ does not merely provide forgiveness for sin, but He supplies all that is necessary to no longer walk in sin. This is accomplished as He sends forth His Spirit to dwell in our hearts.

The entire plan of salvation through Christ is pictured in the events of Israel leaving the slavery of Egypt and journeying through the wilderness to take possession of the Land of Promise. The Holy

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Spirit being given to the people in order to enable them to live lives pleasing to God is also foreshadowed there. This occurred at Mt. Sinai when Moses went up on the mountain to meet with God and he brought back down with him the Law inscribed by the finger of God on tablets of stone.

Like all the other symbols we have looked at thus far, this event provided only a shadow and a type of the good things to come. It was not the perfect provision Yahweh envisioned for man. Even as the blood of a lamb was deficient in that it was unable to completely remove the penalty of sin for all time, nor could it remove the consciousness of sin from a person's life, so too did the Law fall far short of accomplishing those things that Yahweh envisioned for man, and would one day bring forth. Even as Yahweh planned on that first Passover to one day send His Son as the perfect sacrifice to atone for the sin of man, so too He planned on the first Pentecost to send His Holy Spirit into the hearts of men and women to create in them the desire and the power to do His will.

Yahweh chose to give mankind many parables through which we might understand the nature of His salvation, and the particulars of His plan of redemption. These shadows were not the actual thing, nor were they intended to remain perpetually, for they would one day be replaced by that which was perfect. Even so, the covenant that God made with the Israelites in the wilderness was a temporary covenant that would remain only until it was replaced by that which was perfect.

Hebrews 8:6-13

But now [Christ] has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I

took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete.

Even as it is no longer necessary to sacrifice a lamb each year at Passover, for Christ has been slain now at the end of this age, one

time for all sin, so too has Yahweh sent forth His Spirit to produce in us a life of righteousness, bringing an end to the Law's role in this matter. The Law was never able

The Law was unable to impart life.

to make men and women righteous. The testimony of Scripture is abundantly clear concerning this. The reason it could not do so is that the Law had no capacity to produce spiritual life in the hearts of men and women. Without the life of God present within us, we cannot walk in righteousness.

Galatians 3:21

Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

With these words, the apostle Paul reveals the true deficiency found in the Law written upon tablets of stone and delivered to Moses. It was unable to impart life. This event where Moses received the Ten Commandments inscribed by the finger of God on tablets of stone, looked forward to a day when God would write His law on the hearts of men.

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The fact that Yahweh wrote the first Law on tablets of stone was itself a spiritual parable. He was declaring to mankind that they were presently walking in a condition of being hard-hearted. They were hardened against doing His will, desiring rather to seek their own ways. What was really necessary in order for mankind to change, to be freed from sin and begin to live a righteous life, was for mankind to receive a new heart. Mankind needed a heart that was soft and which would respond with eagerness to Yahweh's desire for them.

Ezekiel 11:19-21

"Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says Yahweh God.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Until the day when mankind would receive the Spirit of Christ to indwell them, they would remain in their stony hearted condition. Our stony hearts could not obey the ordinances of God, always going astray. The result was broken promises and a broken covenant. The Israelites upon hearing Moses read the Law of God to them, said that it was good, and they agreed to be bound to it. However, they were never able to keep it.

The words had barely been written on the tablets of stone before the Israelites broke the command.

This breaking of the Law was also foreshadowed at

Mount Sinai. As soon as the Law had been written Moses descended the mountain to find the children of Israel worshipping before the idol of the golden calf that they had fashioned. The first of the ten commandments was a command against idolatry. Yahweh said:

Exodus 20:3-5

"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God..."

The words had barely been written on the tablets of stone before the Israelites broke the command. We see the truth of man's condition when Moses observed the sin of the people and he cast the tablets of stone to the ground and broke them to pieces. Whenever the Law of God is written on a heart of stone it will be broken. We need to receive a new heart and a new spirit within us.

The Law of Moses therefore became a minister of death to those who received it. Rather than producing in men and women the life of God with its desire and power to walk in obedience to Yahweh, the Law merely exposed their inability to keep the commands of God. The Law revealed that men were slaves to sin, and therefore death, not life, was working in them. On that first Pentecost in the wilderness, after Moses cast the tablets of stone to the ground, he called for those who had transgressed the Law by worshipping the golden calf to be slain. On that day three thousand men were killed.

In a direct contrast to this event, on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the Spirit of Christ came upon those disciples who were waiting in an upper room. Peter then went out in the power of the Spirit and preached a message to those gathered in Jerusalem and on that day three thousand men were saved. The Law was a minister of death, but the Spirit brings life.

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The apostle Paul describes what happened at that first Pentecost in the wilderness when the Law was given.

Romans 7:9-12

And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me.

The apostle Paul speaks much of the effect of the Law upon the life of one who does not have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them. The Law stirs up sin, leading us to want to do the very thing that the commandment forbids. Apart from receiving the life of Christ, no man can live a life pleasing to God. Paul further tells us:

Romans 7:5-6

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

The giving of the Law at Mount Sinai serves as a parable looking forward to that day when Yahweh would remove the stony heart of man and give them a heart of flesh. He would produce men and women whose desire was to do His will, and who had the power within them to carry it out. If you have been born again of the Spirit of Christ, then you have this Spirit dwelling in you, producing divine life in your members. If you have not received the Spirit of Christ, then you need to ask God to give you His Spirit.

When Yahshua walked upon this earth during the years of His ministry, He revealed to mankind an image of what man could be like when they re-

ceived the indwelling Spirit. The Scriptures declare that Yahshua was tempted in all ways as we are, yet without sin. This was due to the life of God in Him. Yahshua did not overcome sin by the power of the flesh, nor by willpower, nor by gaining some hidden knowledge. He overcame by the life of God present in Him.

John 6:63

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing..."

Yahshua demonstrated before the eyes of His disciples that a man who is walking in the Spirit can overcome every desire and passion of the flesh. He then told them that He was going to depart from them in order that He might send His Spirit to indwell them, even as the Spirit was in Him.

John 16:7

"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."

Perhaps you are beginning to understand now why the word *Helper* seems inadequate to describe all that the Spirit of Christ does for Believers. Understanding these truths is vital to a walk of victory over addiction. There are many people who go to twelve step programs in order to seek to overcome their addictive desires. But any twelve step program that does not include the truths we have been looking at here cannot set men and women free from the things that hold them captive. If a twelve step program does not point men to Christ alone as the One who has made atonement for sin, and if this same program does not direct men and women to their need to receive the indwelling Spirit of Christ, then it presents a false

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message of victory over addiction.

John 8:31-32

Then Yahshua said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Any program that does not include the truth of God which we have been setting forth here, cannot set

"How do I know for sure if I have received the Spirit of Christ?"

men free. If a program teaches men that it is acceptable to hold to a concept of a "god of their understanding," and it declares that any god will do, it is a work of decep-

tion. There is salvation in only one name.

Acts 4:10-12

Let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Yahshua Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead-- by this name this man stands here before you in good health. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very corner stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."

Only in Yahshua, Yah's Salvation, is there deliverance. Any program that does not direct people to their need to receive the life of God into their being by being born again of the Spirit of Christ, has not declared that which men and women need to hear and understand. They are doing no more than placing a fig leaf covering over mankind, while leaving them in bondage to sin. They have not touched the problem of mankind's stony heart. We must receive a new spirit and a new heart within us to begin to walk as overcomers in this life.

Receiving the Spirit is so vital to that which Yah-

weh desires to accomplish in the lives of His chosen people, that this matter is set forth as the true test of whether or not we are Christians.

II Corinthians 13:5

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Yahshua Christ is in you -- unless indeed you fail the test?

Christ dwells in His children by the Spirit who has been given. You may then ask, "How do I know for sure if I have received the Spirit of Christ?" The answer is that the Spirit Himself testifies to us that we are God's children.

Romans 8:15-16

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God...

There are certain branches of Christianity that teach that the proof of having received the Spirit is that one will speak in tongues, or experience some other manifestation of the Spirit of Christ. This teaching is taken from examples in Scripture of some men receiving the Spirit who had these things occur.

Acts 19:6

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

Speaking in tongues is a manifestation of the Spirit, as is prophesying, but not all men and women experience these things, nor were they ever stated by Christ or His apostles to be a test of having received the Spirit. In another place the apostle states that the indwelling Spirit does not produce these manifestations in all people.

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I Corinthians 12:28-30

And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

These are all rhetorical questions that the apostle is asking. The implied answer in each instance is “No!” If all men and women spoke in tongues immediately upon receiving the Spirit, then Paul could not have asked this question.

We have read that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Perhaps you are unsure of this witness, however. There are a number of reasons why you may be uncertain, even if you have received the Spirit of Christ. You may be walking in sin. Sin separates us from God, and makes it difficult to hear His voice. You may have been disturbed by false teaching, and have unrealistic expectations of what happens when Believers receive the Spirit. As mentioned before, some believe a Christian will never sin, nor even be tempted to do so. Others declare that speaking in tongues always accompanies the receiving of the Spirit.

Many ministers fall into the ditch on the opposite side of the road as they tell people that all they need to do is pray a sinner’s prayer and confess Christ and believe they have been born again of the Spirit. Such teaching is ill informed.

I have found that it is not prudent to try to convince people that they have received the Spirit, any more than it is prudent to badger a man or woman to say a sinner’s prayer. We are told that it is the Spirit that draws men to God, and it is also the Spirit that testifies to us that we are His children.

Now, don’t misunderstand me, I am not saying that I do not believe in evangelism. If that were true I would not be writing this book. As Christians we are instructed to be led of the Spirit in all of our actions and words. We must allow the Spirit to direct us to those whom He has prepared to hear the good news of salvation in Christ. Yahshua Himself urged His disciples to use discernment in their ministry.

Matthew 7:6

“Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.”

There are some things that a person needs to wrestle with for themselves. I have often heard the example cited of a chick emerging from an egg, or a butterfly emerging from a cocoon. At times an inexperienced person will witness this struggle, and fear for the chick or the butterfly and will attempt to help them out. But the struggle is necessary in order to acquire the strength to survive. Many have “helped” a chick out by removing the shell from around them only to watch the newly freed chick die as a result. The same is true of the butterfly.

There are some things that a person needs to wrestle with for themselves.

It is good for people to manifest the effort required to obtain that which they need. Someone who truly realizes their sinful condition and the salvation offered in Christ should not need to be prodded to pray to God confessing his or her need. It should be impossible for us to hold them back. We would do better to pray for those who are manifesting a careless attitude toward their soul, asking God to impress upon them the peril of their condition.

The same is true concerning the indwelling Spirit. We are naturally compassionate toward the struggles of others, and are desirous of giving them some relief. However, it would be tragic for us to

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convince a person that they have received the Spirit if in actuality they have not. It is a healthy and desirable thing for each man and woman to press in themselves to achieve the assurance of both their salvation and their reception of the Spirit. This is why the Lord urged those who needed the Spirit to “ask,” “seek,” and “knock.”

The actual words the Lord used denote a continuous activity. They can be translated as “keep on seeking, keep on asking, keep on knocking,” until you have received the Spirit from the Father. In the

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same passage, which was cited in an earlier chapter, we read of the Lord’s parable where He spoke of a man needing some food to set before his visitor that arrived at a

late hour. This man went to his neighbor and knocked on his door and asked for some bread to set before his guest. The neighbor replied that he had already gone to bed and could not get up. But the man persisted at the door and would not go away until his request had been satisfied.

These things the Lord spoke as an example for us. We are to manifest perseverance in receiving the Spirit. We are to be confident that if we do not go away, but keep on asking, that the Lord will see our unwavering determination, and He will give us what we ask for.

Just like the chick and the butterfly, it is necessary for the Christian to begin his new life in Christ with such an effort. Life in Christ is full of challenges, and many fall away when the going gets tough. Some have been hindered by well meaning saints who sought to spare them the early trials of faith.

My advice to all those who are unsure of their having received the Spirit is to press into God until you are sure. Seek the answer from Him alone. Storm the gates of heaven until you obtain an answer of peace to your question.

Chapter 7 – A New Creature

This book is written both for those who are strangers to Christ, as well as those who are Christians. I have found that many men and women who have been Christians for years have not come to an understanding of the ways of God, and even the foundational principles of Yahweh’s work among mankind is little comprehended. Partly due to the many misconceptions there are regarding life in Christ, many who have long been Believers are not walking in victory over sin. This chapter seeks to explain one more critical truth that we might proceed in the following chapters to begin to address a practical daily walk that will lead to victory over every addiction and besetting sin.

Many men and women hold to the misconception that when they became a Christian they remained essentially the same, but Christ forgave their sins. Not understanding what had changed in their life, they believed they would be more pleasing to God simply because they would now try harder. Such a mindset is far from the truth.

When a man or woman receives the Holy Spirit of Christ into their being, the Holy Spirit transforms them into an entirely new type of creature than they were before. They receive a new dimension to their being that other men and women lack. In truth, there are two entirely different types of men and women walking this earth today. Some are what can be called an old creation, and some are a new creation. The apostle Paul states it this way.

II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

If you are “in Christ” then you are no longer the same type of man or woman that you were formerly. A very fundamental change has occurred. This change is so radical that it is almost as if you

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had become another species among God's creation. The Scriptures tell us exactly what has changed in us. In the following passage the apostle Paul contrasts the first creature which is seen in Adam, to the new creature that is observed in the person of Christ. The word *Adam* means man. Therefore we see Paul referring to Christ as the second Adam, or second Man. What Paul is declaring is that there are now two distinct types of men walking this earth.

I Corinthians 15:45-49

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Let's look closely at what is stated here. The first man, Adam became a living soul. In the opening chapters of the book of Genesis we find the creation of Adam described. Yahweh reveals to us that the first man was a two-part being consisting of body and soul.

Genesis 2:7

Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The word for soul in this verse is the same Hebrew word *nephesh* that we looked at in an earlier chapter. It is apparent from this verse that at this time man consisted of only two parts. He had a body formed from the dust of the ground, and he had a soul that was formed by the breath of God. Paul states that the last Adam (Christ) was a different type of man. He is not described as a living soul, but as a life-giving spirit. So too are all those who are in Christ. In the New Testament, when the

apostles describe the parts of a Christian, they speak of a three-part being.

I Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Yahshua Christ.

When a person receives the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit does an unseen work in the midst of their being. He causes a new part of their being to be birthed into existence. This is the spirit of man. It is by virtue of obtaining this spiritual part of our being that we are said to be "new creatures in Christ."

It was Yahweh's plan from the very beginning for all of mankind to become three-part beings. He declared in Genesis Chapter one, "Let us make man after our image. Let us make man in our likeness." God is also a three part being. We see these several parts in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Yet God's plan to make man a three-part being like Himself was largely hidden to mankind, even though the prophets of the Old Testament spoke of the day when this would happen.

It was Yahweh's plan from the very beginning for all of mankind to become three-part beings.

Ezekiel 36:26

"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you..."

When Yahshua walked upon this earth He was the first of this new type of man to appear. Because He was a new creature, a spiritual creature, He was able to walk in victory over sin where all other men failed. One evening a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who was a teacher from among the Jews, came to Yahshua. He began to tell Christ that he recognized

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Him as being sent of God, and he acknowledged Christ as a teacher. He came to see what Christ would teach him. What he received was totally unexpected.

John 3:3-8

Yahshua answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him,

Yahweh has set many things in the creation to serve as parables of spiritual truth.

"How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Yahshua answered, "Truly, truly,

I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

The only type of birth which Nicodemus was familiar with was that of flesh. He understood that man came from woman through the natural birth. This is what Yahshua referred to as being "born of water." There is a water birth that immediately precedes a baby coming forth from the womb. All who are born of woman are living souls. They have a body and a soul.

Yahshua told Nicodemus that in order to become all God desired, men had to be born a second time. This second birth is a spiritual birth. It is accomplished by the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit cannot be seen by the natural senses, and therefore His work is hidden, but we can observe the results of His work in our lives. This hidden work with noticeable results is what Yahshua is referring to in the last verse quoted above. We cannot see the wind, but we can tell where it is by observing its passage through the trees and among the grass. We there-

fore know the wind has passed by.

Spiritual birth is like the passage of the wind. We do not observe it as we do the natural birth, but we can see that something has indeed been born that was not present before. We find that there are new desires in our being, urging us to walk in a manner pleasing to God. There is also a new power to walk in righteousness that we did not have before. We are able to see things that were formerly hidden to us, even as Yahshua declared "unless one is born again he cannot **see** the kingdom of God."

Yahweh has set many things in the creation to serve as parables of spiritual truth. As we observe them, and have our understanding opened, we are able to discern more about God's work in our life. One such parable is found in the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly.

The caterpillar and butterfly are the same creature at two different stages of life. They are so vastly different, however, that they are referred to by different names. The caterpillar is like unto the first Adam. It is a creature of flesh. Its appearance even resembles a lump of flesh. It is earthbound, and it has appetites for things that grow close to the earth. This too is like the first Adam. When we are born of woman we are fleshly creatures. We have appetites for earthy things. Even as the serpent was cursed to eat dust all the days of his life, so is man, for he submitted to the serpent for obedience. The natural man's appetites are those things that satisfy the cravings of sinful flesh. Even as a caterpillar cannot leave the earth, the natural man is unable to rise above the captivity of the flesh.

A magnificent thing happens in the life of this creature we call a caterpillar. After a period of time in his fleshly state, he enters into a cocoon. This cocoon serves as a hidden chamber where a marvelous transformation occurs. What happens is hidden from sight, but after emerging it is apparent that something of profound substance has taken place. So too do we find that the work of the Spirit in our life is largely hidden from sight. Yet when

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the Spirit has completed His work we will be as radically different from the men and women we were formerly as the caterpillar is distinct from the butterfly.

A butterfly truly is a new type of creature. A butterfly has wings while a caterpillar does not. Therefore a butterfly is no longer bound to the earth. It can now soar in the heavens. This speaks of the spiritual life of the Believer. It also speaks of our being able to rise above the captivity of the old Adamic nature which was captive to sin. The butterfly has appetites for different things than that of a caterpillar. Caterpillars are largely leaf eaters, while butterflies live on the nectar of flowers. This too contains a symbol. The new creature in Christ is now drawn to those things that are beautiful in the sight of God, and we feed on that which is sweet, even the word of God.

Psalms 119:103

How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

The natural man has no appetite for the things of God, but the spiritual man craves that which comes from God.

I Corinthians 2:14

A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

In the cocoon a remarkable transformation occurs. The fleshly form of the caterpillar disappears, and a new creature adapted to life in the heavens arises. This is a parable of what the Father seeks to perform in the lives of men and women. The old man we were in Adam, with its fleshly appetites, its captivity to earthly things, and its sinful nature must be diminished. The new creature born of the Spirit that seeks the pleasure of God must increase.

Our growth as spiritual creatures parallels our growth as natural men. No one is born as an adult. Life begins with the implantation of a seed into the uterus of the woman. This seed begins to divide and multiply, and divide and multiply again. Over time it begins to resemble that which it will one day be. Even as the natural man must pass through these formative stages into infancy, then childhood, until it arrives at a mature man, so too must the spiritual seed pass through these stages until we come to the fulness of the stature of Christ.

As Christ is being formed in us the old man is being diminished. Even as it is impossible for both a caterpillar and a butterfly to emerge from the cocoon, it is impossible for us to take on the likeness of Christ while still being the old creation that we once were. The old must pass away, and the new must come. This process is expressed in numerous ways in the Scriptures.

Ephesians 4:20-24

But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Yahshua, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

As Christ is being formed in us the old man is being diminished.

Our victory over sin is assured as we allow this process of transformation to go forward. The old self is laid aside and the new self is put on. Once a person receives the Spirit of Christ this process begins, and it is as natural as a physical babe growing into an adult. Our transformation into the image of Christ is not something we have to force to happen, neither do we need to figure out how to make it come about. All we need to do is surrender to that which the Spirit is doing in us. We can, however,

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resist this work and cause this new creature to not develop normally as it should.

Yahshua said that of those born of woman there was none greater than John the Baptist. Yahshua testified that there existed no greater prophet than John. Perhaps the reason for this high praise was that John recognized clearly that Yahshua was the Son of God and that He was the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the world. John also testified of this very key work of God where Christ must become more and more within mankind, while the old self must become less and less. John declared this truth in the following words.

What we eat has a tremendous influence upon our being.

John. Perhaps the reason for this high praise was that John recognized clearly that Yahshua was the Son of God and that He was the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the

John 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

This occurrence of Yahshua increasing in us, while we decrease, is the natural result of a life surrendered to the Spirit of Christ. Hear what I am saying. "This is only the natural result of those **SURRENDERED** to the Spirit. Many Christians continue in bondage to the flesh, and they fail to overcome addictive desires, because they **RESIST** the Spirit.

We will look once more in the next chapter to the parable of Israel in the wilderness to discern both how we can surrender to the Spirit, and how we resist Him.

Chapter 8 - The Bread of Heaven

There is a modern adage that states "You are what you eat." There is much truth to this at all levels of our being. What we eat physically impacts our bodies in profound ways. There are many authors who have provided tremendous evidence that the vast

majority of diseases in western culture are due to diet. What we eat either promotes health, or promotes disease.

This same principle of what we eat shaping who we are is true in the realm of man's soul. Yahshua declared the following:

Matthew 12:34-35

"You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil."

The heart often serves as a symbolic reference to the inner man. As the men Yahshua was speaking to were not yet born of the Spirit, the heart here is a reference to their soul. Yahshua declared that whatever filled their heart would be revealed in their words and actions. Whatever these men had spent their time feeding upon during the years of their life had made a tremendous impact upon their soul. It had literally shaped their soul. If they fed on truth and righteousness, their soul would be shaped by this and the result would be seen in their words and actions. If they fed upon lies and impurity, then their soul would likewise be shaped by these things.

What we eat has a tremendous influence upon our being. This is why there is so much written about clean foods and unclean foods in the Bible. We should not think that Yahweh's primary reason for speaking about foods was the health of man's physical body. Christ stated that the more important matter is what we feed our souls.

Matthew 15:11

"It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man."

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In the previous passage of Scripture we read that what comes out of the mouth is what is in the soul of man. Whatever our soul has been feeding upon will be revealed in our words. For example, a man who spends his life in the pursuit of worldly possessions will spend much time feeding upon that which his soul craves. He may subscribe to magazines such as Fortune and Forbes, or papers such as The Wall Street Journal. He will go directly to the stock reports, when he looks at the news online, and he will seek out other people with whom he can converse about finances and investments and the economy. When this man is engaged in conversation it will be apparent what his soul has been feeding upon.

Not only is the man's conversation affected, but so are his values and his actions. If a man has focused all his life upon making money, he will begin to view situations through this lens. When meeting a person he may consider whether they are someone who can help him to achieve his desires of financial wealth. If they are not, he may avoid them. If they are deemed valuable to his goals, he may seek them out, often without even recognizing that his motive is selfish. When faced with a business decision, his actions will be dictated by his desire for profit. He will do whatever helps him to achieve the desire of his soul.

We could use many different examples. We could speak about men who are consumed with thoughts of sexual desire. What they look at, what they read, who they associate with, the tenor of their conversations, are all influenced by that which is driving them. They will feed their soul what it wants, and consequently their soul will be shaped by what it feeds upon. It is very difficult for a Christian man who feeds upon such food to view an attractive woman in an unselfish manner. He will not look at an attractive Christian woman as a sister in Christ who is to be protected and supported, but as an object of sexual desire. The same thing occurs when he sees an attractive non-Christian woman. Rather than having an evangelistic mindset that seeks her eternal welfare, he will see her through the carnal desires of his soul.

We see then that we are shaped by what we choose to feed upon. As this is true concerning man's body and soul, it is also true regarding the spirit of a man or woman. We can learn much about the food that nourishes and strengthens the spirit of a man by looking once more at the parable of the Israelites in the wilderness.

While the Israelites were in Egypt they ate what the Egyptians ate. I will mention once again that Egypt stands as a symbol of the world. While they were enslaved to Egypt, the Israelites ate a worldly diet. Their only source of food was Egypt, and because they were slaves, the diet of Egypt was just fine with them.

I trust you can see the Scriptural parallels in this. While we were slaves to sin in the world, we fed upon a diet that was worldly. Because those in the world are enslaved to lusts of all types, their diet is that which satisfies their lusts. That which is broadcast on television, at the movies, and provided through magazines, radio and the Internet is what satisfies the soul of sinful men and women. The more they feed upon this food, the more they are shaped by it, and their desires grow even greater.

Whatever our soul has been feeding upon will be revealed in our words.

A thing observed about our appetites, both physical and soulish, is that they are not satisfied long with the same food. They want something more sensual, and more stimulating.

When I was a child growing up we did not eat very spicy food. When I was twenty I moved across country and lived with an aunt and uncle for a period of time. One of their favorite meals was tacos, and they had them regularly. The first time I ate tacos with them I was urged to try some hot sauce on my taco. I put one or two drops of Tabasco Sauce on my taco and my mouth felt like it was on fire. I liked the taste and sensation, however, and I

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kept putting Tabasco Sauce on my tacos. I found that very quickly my body adjusted to this and soon I was splashing lots of hot sauce on my tacos.

This same phenomena is seen in many types of food, and it is true regarding that which we feed our soul as well. Most men who start out being enticed by an appetite for sexual stimulation are at first satisfied to look at pictures of women wearing

We can feed our souls on positive and healthy foods that shape us in very beneficial ways.

sensual clothing. As time goes by they want to see more skin and begin to look at women in bikinis. It would be hard to estimate how many teenage boys are enticed into a

life of lust as they are exposed to the annual swimsuit issue of Sport's Illustrated. This is one of Satan's most successful traps as he takes young men who are enthused about sports and ensnares them in a life of sexual lust.

It does not take long, however, until women in bikinis do not offer enough stimulation to satisfy the soul. Softcore pornography is the next step, and then hardcore pornography. Should a man be taken completely captive by the desires that he has been feeding, these desires will become a raging monster inside and lead to a life of adultery, fornication, or worse. Sexual predators do not become what they are overnight. Their soul is shaped over time by that which it feeds upon.

Those who struggle with drug addiction experience this same progression. I have listened to many men who stated that they first engaged in underage drinking, perhaps having some beer with friends. This then leads to a search for greater stimulation. Liquor or marijuana is often the next step, and then cocaine, and other drugs with a more powerful effect upon the body. The drive to satisfy the cravings for these drugs grows more intense over time, until a person finds themselves stealing in order to acquire that for which their body is now clamoring.

This principle of being transformed by that which we feed upon, is not all negative, however. We can feed our souls on positive and healthy foods that shape us in very beneficial ways. We can also feed the spirit of a man, and find that we are increasing in conformity to the Son of God.

As the children of Israel prepared to depart Egypt they observed the very first Passover Festival. As part of this event they were instructed to remove all leaven (yeast) from their houses. Leaven is an ingredient added to many breads and baked goods that causes the batter, or dough, to rise. Throughout the Scripture bread is a symbol for man's flesh. Leaven is also a symbol for sin.

The apostle Paul said "In my flesh dwells no good thing... Sin dwells in my flesh." Sin is that which causes the flesh of man to rise up. The Scriptures tell us that in Christ there is no sin. He was the Lamb of God without spot or blemish. He was tempted in all ways as we are, yet without sin. Just before Christ was crucified He partook of the Passover meal with His disciples. A part of the Passover meal was the serving of unleavened bread. As Yahshua took up the bread, He said, "This is My body broken for you. Take and eat in remembrance of Me." There was no leaven in this bread, for it was a symbol of the Son of God Who is without sin.

Just prior to the Israelites leaving Egypt they removed the leaven from their homes, and they kneaded dough without leaven which they took with them as they left Egypt. This is symbolic of a change of diet. They were to leave behind the diet of Egypt, and begin to eat that which was cleansed and purified. As the Israelites were going forth into the wilderness, they would need to continue to eat, and God wanted them to continue to eat that which would shape them into an image of godliness. He did not want to feed their flesh. He wanted them to become like He is, holy and righteous.

The Israelites could not carry enough food to sustain them in the wilderness, so the Father did a remarkable thing. He gave them the bread of heaven.

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Exodus 16:13-15, 31

In the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which Yahweh has given you to eat... The house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.

Yahshua testified that this bread from heaven was given to serve as a type and symbol of Himself.

John 6:32-35

Yahshua then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." Yahshua said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

We see then that both the unleavened bread of Passover, and the manna in the wilderness, serve as images of Christ. Interestingly, one of the most common titles the church uses for Yahshua is the word "Lord." This word is derived from an old English word that meant "loaf ward." The loaf ward was the steward, or master of the house, whose duties included providing bread for the servants. This is an appropriate title for Christ, for He provides bread for His household to eat, and this bread is His own body.

John 6:53-58

So Yahshua said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He

who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

Yahshua was using symbolic speech when He uttered these words. He was speaking of His disciples feeding upon the life that was in Him. This life is imparted to the Christian by the Spirit of Christ that comes to indwell them. We learn some important lessons that have great bearing upon the issue of overcoming addiction as we examine the account of the Israelites and their response to the manna Yahweh provided for them.

Both the unleavened bread of Passover, and the manna in the wilderness, serve as images of Christ.

Numbers 11:4-6

The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna."

God provides us with a perfect food. It has everything necessary in it to promote life and spiritual health. As Yahshua testified, those who eat the bread He gives them "will live forever." What we have been testifying throughout this book is that divine life is the answer to the problem of sin. As we receive the life of Christ into our beings we are filled with the desire to please God, and the power to accomplish these desires. When we eat the Bread of Heaven we become filled with the fulness of Christ. He ever lived to do the will of the Father, and so will we.

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We understand through the parable of the manna that this receiving of life is obtained as we feed on that which Yahweh has provided for us. The food that God provides for the Christian to eat is de-

The food that God provides for the Christian to eat is designed to increase Christ in us.

signed to increase Christ in us. However, this bread from heaven does not appeal to the flesh. The rabble in Israel provide a type of those who are called out of the

world by God, but who are not satisfied with His will for them. They still crave evil things, and are not willing to lay aside their former appetites. They begin to complain about the things God provides for them to feed upon. Rebellious men and women look at God's provision and say, "Who will give us flesh to eat? There is nothing to look at except this manna!"

When a child of God is born spiritually, they receive a new spirit within them that desires to do the will of the Father, yet they still are clothed in sinful flesh. The flesh will always desire that which satisfies the flesh. It will continue to crave sinful things. God has revealed through the history of Israel that when He calls us out of the world we are to immediately change our diet. We are to cease feeding our flesh, and begin to feed our spirit. Only in this way will we find the statement fulfilled, "I must decrease, but Christ must increase."

Many Christians have been called out of the world by God, yet after many years they are still fleshly creatures, bound to the appetites of the flesh. The reason is that they rejected God's provision of food for them, and have yearned to eat those things they once fed upon while in the world. Like the Israelites they cry out, "We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic."

It has been shown through numerous surveys by a number of companies that there is as much sin in the church today, as there is in society outside of the church. The reason is that they are both feeding

upon the same diet. They watch the same television shows, go to the same movies, read the same magazines, listen to the same music, and pursue the same pleasures. It does not matter if the Christian has been called out of the world by God, if they continue to feed on the same worldly offerings then they will not find Christ increasing, and self decreasing. Victory over the flesh will elude them.

Because the Israelites cried out to God for flesh to eat, despising the manna, He told them He would give them what they wanted.

Numbers 11:18-20

"Say to the people, "Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat **flesh**; for you have wept in the ears of Yahweh, saying, "Oh that someone would give us **flesh** to eat! For we were well-off in Egypt." Therefore Yahweh will give you **flesh** and you shall eat. You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you; because you have rejected Yahweh who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, "Why did we ever leave Egypt?"""

The church is walking in a mirror image of the path that the Israelites walked. They have despised Yahweh's provision and have demanded that which will satisfy their flesh. Yahweh has therefore given them their desire. He has given them ministers who will tell them the things their flesh wants to hear. He has granted them ministers who proclaim a message of worldly prosperity, and comfort and worldly success. Most Christians remain fleshly and are persuaded that God is pleased with them. Professing Christians fill churches the size of football stadiums to listen to these men who answer the cry of their heart, "Who will give us flesh to eat?"

Churches today shy away from telling people that they need to be cleansed from all the evil of the world. Ministers know that most people do not

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wish to hear such a message, so they say nothing to their members concerning removing leaven from their lives and leaving the ways of the world behind. Instead, the new Christian is assured that they can remain as they are. They need not change their appearance, their pursuit of worldly entertainment, or their pleasure focused lives. Many churches have come to resemble entertainment centers, offering to Christians everything that they loved in the world, from rock concerts to cruises. If these ministers understood the parable of Israel's transgression in this matter, they would fear God's judgment upon what they are doing.

Numbers 11:31-33

Now there went forth a wind from Yahweh and it brought quail from the sea, and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp and about two cubits deep on the surface of the ground. The people spent all day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten omers) and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. While the flesh was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of Yahweh was kindled against the people, and Yahweh struck the people with a very severe plague.

Whether you are a brand new Christian, or have been one for many years, you will find that your victory over sin is contingent upon your accepting the food that Yahshua has provided for His disciples to feed upon. If you continue feeding upon fleshly things, you will remain in bondage to sin. If you feed upon Christ, you will find yourself becoming more like Him. You will have more power over sin, and the flesh's power will diminish.

How then do we feed upon the Bread of Heaven? The answer is found as we look at a few Scriptures that will open our understanding. In the Bible the word of God is compared to food. Christ is called the Word of God, and He is also the Bread of Heaven, so we can see that Christ is food, and divinely breathed words are spiritual food. We see

this further in the following verse:

Jeremiah 15:16

Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart...

There are a great number of Scriptures that use the imagery of words being likened unto food that a man eats. Following is another.

Hebrews 13:9-10

Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

In these verses the apostle Paul compares teachings to foods. He is declaring that many are carried away with teachings that do not profit them, the result being that their hearts (inner man) are not strengthened. As mentioned already, there are many such foods being served up to Christians today. These foods appeal to the flesh, but do nothing to build up the inner man.

The last phrase recorded above is also filled with meaning. "Those who serve the tabernacle" refers to those who are focused on the flesh of man. The body is merely a tabernacle in which the Spirit of God is to dwell with the spirit of man. There are those whose focus is upon fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and they cannot eat from the same altar from which the overcomers in Christ eat. The altar of God provides food for the spirit.

In the Bible the word of God is compared to food.

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As we understand these things we are able to discern that it is very important that the Christian who wishes to decrease, that the life of Christ in them might increase, must feed upon the word of God. In one sense this word is the Bible. There are many admonitions for the Believer to study the word of God; To meditate upon it; To hide the word in their heart. It would hardly seem possible to overestimate the value of this, particularly in a society where Christians rarely read the word of God today.

As we stare intently at the glory of Christ revealed in the word of God we will find ourselves being transformed into His image. There is a wonderful

The Christian begins to take on the glory of the Lord as He feeds on the word and beholds the presence of Christ.

example of this occurrence foreshadowed in the Old Testament. In the Tabernacle of Moses there was a table set up in the Holy Place that was called the Table of Showbread. On it were

placed twelve loaves of fresh bread that were replaced weekly. This bread was called in the Hebrew *paniym*, which is translated “The Bread of faces.” This bread was considered holy, and only those of the tribe of Levi could eat it.

The tribe of Levi was chosen to be the priestly tribe of Israel because they stood apart, and did not participate in the idolatry of Israel, when Aaron made a golden calf for them to worship. What is pictured in the bread of faces is the food that those who keep themselves set apart unto God may eat. We read later in Scripture that David took some of this holy bread and ate it, even though he was not from the tribe of Levi. Yet God allowed this for David was a man after God’s heart.

Feeding on the word of God, and beholding the face of God, are therefore intertwined. The Christian begins to take on the glory of the Lord as He feeds on the word and beholds the presence of Christ. Conversely, if we spend our time pursuing the things of the world, and setting impurity before our faces, we will take on the image of that which

occupies our minds. The apostle Paul wrote:

II Corinthians 3:18

But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit.

[Darby Bible]

It is not just by reading the Bible that we are transformed. We are also transformed as we commune with Christ through the indwelling Spirit. We are called to be temples of the Spirit of Christ, and our bodies are to serve as a house of prayer. In these bodies we are to abide with Christ, dwelling with Him in fellowship and communion. This is not as mysterious as it may sound. It is simply an acknowledgment that we dwell in the body God has given to us, and if we have received the Spirit of Christ, then He dwells along with us.

How can two dwell together in the same house and not enjoy the presence of one another? Yahshua said, “My sheep hear My voice.” When the Spirit comes to dwell in a man or woman, He comes to commune with us. The word *commune* is the root of the word *communicate*. To commune with someone we must keep open the lines of communication. Christ speaks to us through the written word of God. He also does so by the presence of the Spirit within us. The Spirit was given to be Christ’s communicator.

John 16:13-15

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.”

I find myself speaking to Christ all throughout the day. Sometimes I get down on my knees and pray.

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At other times I find myself speaking to Him as I am going about my daily tasks. Our lives are to be filled with such communication, and please note that the word *communication* begins with the prefix “co,” which infers two parties are both speaking and listening.

The food that Yahshua gives to His children does not appeal to the flesh of man. If given a choice to watch an hour of television, or spend an hour in reading the Bible and prayer, those who are fleshly are inevitably drawn to the former activity while despising the latter. However, if a person has truly been born again of the Spirit they will find that there is something deep inside them that is drawn to these latter pursuits, and which finds them highly satisfying. Even so, the child of God must rule over the desires and passions of the flesh. They must wrest control of their body away from the flesh, and allow the spirit man to rule. The apostle Paul put it this way:

Galatians 5:16-17, 24-25

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another... Now those who belong to Christ Yahshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

You and I will only “LIVE” as we are surrendered to the Spirit of Christ. As this chapter has indicated, there are very practical things to be done to promote this spiritual life. We must rule over our appetites. We must choose to eat from Yahweh’s table, and ONLY from His table. In this way we will be assured that the old man who is enslaved to sin is diminishing, and the new creature in Christ is increasing. You are what you eat, so feed upon Christ!

*You and I will only “LIVE”
as we are surrendered to
the Spirit of Christ.*

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PARABLES PRECEPT—The Hebrew Alphabet



(Image source: Ancient Hebrew Resource Center's Website)

As mentioned in the first Precept in this series, the letter Aleph depicted above in Paleo-Hebrew is the image of an ox-head. As such it represented power and strength. It is not too surprising to find that the ancient Hebrew word which is the equivalent of the English word "God" incorporates the letter Aleph. God is powerful.

The Hebrew word for "God" is "El." We often see this word used in reference to the God of the Bible. For example, He is called El Shaddai, which means "The All

Sufficient God." He was called El Elyon, "The Most High God." El Olam means "The Everlasting God." El Roi means "The God Who Sees Me." These are just some of the ways in which Yahweh was described using this word "El."

The Hebrew word El in Paleo-Hebrew would look like the following:

א

Remember, Hebrew is read backwards from English. The first letter is the Aleph, or ox-head. The second letter is the Lamed. This was a picture of a shepherd's staff. The shep-

herd's staff was used to push or pull the sheep, to protect against predators, and to provide stability when walking.

In combining it with the Aleph, we can derive a meaning of "Strong Shepherd," "Strong Protector," or "Strong Leader." All of these are appropriate when mentioned in reference to God.

The image of the ox and shepherd's staff has been carried over into the concept of the king. The horns of the ox are seen in the spikes on a crown. The shepherd's staff is observed in the scepter of a monarch. It is a Biblical concept to think of a king, and God, as a shepherd, and relate this to the scepter.

Micah 7:14

Shepherd Your people with Your scepter, the flock of Your possession.