



Psalms 78:2-4

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

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This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains concludes the book *The Marriage Covenant*. It also contains two additional articles.

The sections below titled *Food for Thought* and *Scripture Memory* continue a theme that I have been writing about on the front page of the last few issues of this newsletter. God is humble, and He desires humility in all of His children.

Some years back I discovered the origin of the expression, "He is the spittin image of his father." As a young man I wondered what spittin had to do with the image of my father, or any other father.

What I learned is that this expression is a corruption of the original saying, "He is the SPIRIT and IMAGE of his father."

Our heavenly Father desires that His sons share His Spirit and His image. Paul lists some of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the following Scripture.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...

This is by no means an exhaustive list of God's characteristics. We find other traits of God's Spirit throughout the Bible. Following is one

example.

II Corinthians 10:1

I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...

Meekness is another word for humility. Our Father is humble, and He desires all His children to share His Spirit and His Image.

In this aspect of your life do you look like your heavenly Father? Would people describe you as "gentle and meek." These are not signs of weakness. It takes a spiritually powerful man to rule over the flesh. King Solomon said, "Greater is the man who can rule his soul, than the man who can capture a city."

Food for Thought

"The deeper we are willing to enter into the death of self, the more shall we know of the mighty power of God, and the perfect blessedness of a perfect trust."

Andrew Murray

"He that is down needs fear no fall. He that is low, no pride; He that is humble, ever shall have God to be his Guide."

John Bunyan

Scripture Memory

Luke 9:23-24

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

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Foundation Stone Seven - Glorious Union

What if it were the Father's plan to so fill mankind with His own holy, omnipotent and omniscient presence that it became impossible to tell where He ended and where we began? Suppose that in a moment of time we became so infused with the divine

The glory of Christ while He was on this earth was veiled.

life that it was like a high voltage electric current filled us with the same power that fuels a trillion stars. Try to envision for a moment that the vitality you now experience as

the life of God glows within you was suddenly fanned into the brilliance of a million suns shining in their strength. Imagine suddenly, in an instant, having your mental capacity expanded to understand all mysteries and to contain all knowledge in such a way that even Solomon's experience would be eclipsed as but the smallest foreshadowing of things to come.

Such an experience is not hyperbole, nor vain imagination. In truth, these words do not come near describing that which the Father has planned for His sons and daughters. Consider the following testimony of Scriptures.

I John 3:2

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when [Christ] appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

Romans 8:29

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren...

I Corinthians 15:49

And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Philippians 3:20-21

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Yahshua Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory...

From the very beginning of creation Yahweh set a plan in motion to create beings after His image, and in His likeness. It was four thousand years before the first man appeared who would fulfill this prophetic declaration of the Father. The first Adam could not say, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." It was not until Christ walked this earth that a man appeared who could make this statement.

Yet the glory of Christ while He was on this earth was veiled. There were moments when it was glimpsed, as was revealed on the mount of transfiguration.

Matthew 17:1-2

And six days later Yahshua took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

Christ walked in the power of God, but it too was hidden under the appearance of earthly flesh, waiting to break out to the astonishment of those around.

Luke 7:12-16

Now as He approached the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep." And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" And

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the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And Yahshua gave him back to his mother. And fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and, "God has visited His people!"

What astonishment must have gripped this people. The Scriptures describe their reaction as fear. How could such a thing be comprehended? One who appears as an ordinary, impotent man, suddenly manifests the power of resurrection life. How can a man speak a word and the dead be raised? The people said truly, "God has visited His people."

Even though the power Christ manifested caused great fear among the people, it was merely a token of the power at His command. There was a far greater glory and power that belonged to Him. For a season He laid it aside, but when He departed this world at His ascension to the heavens He took it up again.

Philippians 2:5-11

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Yahshua, who, although ***He existed in the form of God***, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but ***emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men***. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ***Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Yahshua every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Yahshua Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

The apostle John walked with the Son of God when Yahshua bore the image of man. John loved Christ, being the most intimate with him, yet He never imagined the greatness of the glory that once belonged to his beloved Master, and which would be

His again.

While exiled on the isle of Patmos John had a revelation of the resurrected Christ. He describes Him as follows:

Revelation 1:12-17

And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man.

The revelation of the glorified Christ was so great that all strength left John's body. He was overcome by the magnificence of Christ's appearing. John fell down as if dead, his sinful flesh being unable to arise in the presence of such holiness, power, and glory.

Yet, the awesome truth, incredible in its comprehension, is that this same glorious appearance is to be shared with the victorious saints of God. This is what John wrote in his first epistle. "We shall be like Him!" This is what Paul testifies in the following words:

*The people said truly,
"God has visited His
people."*

Romans 8:18-19

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory

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that is to be revealed in us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

Paul writes also of the **power** we are to experience in the coming ages. Paul walked in moments of great power, where astounding works were performed by his hands, as testified in the book of Acts.

Acts 19:11-12

And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

The apostle knew that, as awesome as such experiences were, they were only a foretaste of the powers to be experienced by the saints in the coming ages.

Hebrews 6:4-5

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, **and have tasted** the good word of God and **the powers of the age to come...**

Peter also wrote of that glory which is to come.

I Peter 4:13

To the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also **at the revelation of His glory**, you may rejoice with exultation.

And Paul again writes of this glory of Christ that the saints are to share.

II Corinthians 4:17

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison...

Colossians 3:4

When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

People of God, being revealed with Christ "in glory" is not a location, it is an experience. It is the fulfillment of that which Christ prayed in His high priestly prayer recorded by John.

John 17:22

"And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them..."

In a single moment of time mankind will be transformed, but each in his own order. The first to experience this glorious conformity to Christ will be the overcomers. Isaiah prophesies of the glory of God arising upon His people.

Isaiah 60:1-3

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but Yahweh will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you. And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

Who can comprehend what this experience will be like? Yet a greater marvel is revealed in how it will come about.

Some have imagined that they will simply receive an enduement of power, that their old body will be replaced with a new incorruptible body, an immortal tabernacle not made with hands. These things

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are true, but there is something far greater to occur. The transformation will come about through the process of entering into a fullness of union with Christ.

John 17:20-22

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; **that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us**, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...**

Right now we have been given a measure of the Spirit of Christ, but we are to receive the Spirit beyond measure.

Ephesians 1:13-14

You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

When a man gives a woman an engagement ring, he is setting his seal upon her. He is giving her a token of some value as a pledge of greater things to come. Though they are engaged, the hour is to arrive when the man will give himself fully to the woman. The two will become one flesh. The members of his body will become her members, and vice versa. Everything he possesses will belong to the woman.

(This reveals the error of those men and women who enter into pre-nuptial agreements. They are refusing to give themselves fully and without any reservations to the one to whom they are entering into a marriage covenant.)

Christ has given His betrothed a pledge in the form

of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This present limited experience of the Spirit, as precious as it is, will one day give way to the glorious fullness of union with Christ. The Spirit will be given without measure.

If we would understand the holiness of sexual intercourse, we must perceive how God has designed the physical union of the man and the woman to serve as a parable of the spiritual union between Christ and His people. Repeatedly, the Scriptures reveal that these two forms of union are given as types and shadows of one another.

I Corinthians 6:16-17

Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

Ephesians 5:31-32

For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Every detail of the physical union of the man and woman is given as a parable of the spiritual union that is to be experienced by the Bride of Christ. God designed the physical union so that it is accompanied by tremendous physical sensations of pleasure and joy. This is a foreshadowing of that glorious spiritual union to be experienced in Christ.

The Spirit will be given without measure.

Psalms 16:11

In Your presence is fulness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

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In the act of sexual union the man and woman are brought face to face. The King James Bible often speaks of sexual union as “the man KNEW his wife.” We see the same language employed when describing the fullness of spiritual union that is yet to appear between Christ and His church.

I Corinthians 13:12-13

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then **face to face**; now **I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.**

In the act of physical intercourse the man enters the woman. This is with purpose and design, for Christ is to enter His people and fill them. The result will be a rapturous bliss of which the physical union provides only a small foretaste. Paul never writes with such rapture and prophetic joy as he does when he describes the glorious union of Christ and His church.

Can anything be more righteous than the spiritual union of Christ and His people?

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; **so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and **to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.**

Undoubtedly, some will take offense at comparing the physical union of the man and woman to the spiritual union of Christ and His people. Yet, Yahweh clearly intended one to stand as a symbol and

revelation of the other. Our problem is that we live in a perverse society that has transformed that which was designed to be holy into a promiscuous, adulterous, fornicating, cesspool of indecency.

I would raise the vision of the people of God to see the holiness with which Yahweh has adorned the physical union of a man and his wife. Can anything be more righteous than the spiritual union of Christ and His people? Should we not then guard with jealousy that physical union that is given as a type and shadow of that which is most holy?

The apostle Paul declares that the man and woman become “one flesh,” but the one joined to Christ becomes “one spirit with Him.” I urge you to reflect upon this for a moment.

Consider that the day will come when Christ will approach His bride. He will say, “The time has come for us to become fully one in spirit. Before I have given you a pledge of this union. Now I will give Myself fully to you. All you must do is receive.” In doing so, everything that pertains to Christ will enter into His people. His omnipotent power; His omniscient mind; His fathomless glory; His indestructible life; all that He possesses will in a moment be infused into His people. The experience will be indescribable joy.

The apostle Paul declares, “We shall know fully, even as we have been fully known.” There will be no more veil. Is this not the message of the virgin’s veil. She has seen things as through a veil, but the veil will be removed. The veil is symbolically removed by the Bridegroom during the wedding ceremony. It is removed in substance when the hymen is torn and the man enters into his virgin bride. We too will have the veil that has covered our eyes removed when we experience a complete spiritual union with Christ. We will see as He sees. We will know as He knows. We will be one.

Can you not sense the deficiency of your current union with Christ? We struggle to know His

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thoughts. We see through a veil darkly. We wrestle with perplexity and confusion. We desire to have power to open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears. We yearn to raise those who are spiritually dead. We experience that which Paul described in the following words:

Romans 8:22-23

For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

We presently have “the firstfruits of the Spirit.” We do not have the fulness of the harvest. We have the pledge of that which is to come, but we have yet to enter into its abundance.

This precious pledge we have received is further constrained by this sinful flesh. Oh, to be delivered from this body of death. We are like a chick struggling to emerge from the shell. We are like the newly formed butterfly seeking to break free of the cocoon. We can taste the things to come, and we yearn to enter into the fulness, but the struggle continues. We are not yet free.

An hour is coming when Christ will complete the work He has begun. At His next appearing He will finish the salvation He started. He will deliver His overcomers from all that is hindering them and holding them back.

Hebrews 9:28

Even so it is that Christ, having been offered to take upon Himself and bear as a burden the sins of many once and once for all, will appear a second time, not to carry any burden of sin nor to deal with sin, but to bring **to full salvation** those who are [eagerly, constantly, and patiently] waiting for and expecting Him. [Amplified Bible]

This will be the moment of our ecstatic and glorious union. It is no wonder that those who stand with Christ on Mount Zion will sing a new song (Revelation 14:3). The praise will not be able to be contained. The glories of the Son of God, revealed IN HIS PEOPLE must be given voice.

Let us now make this very practical. This teaching series is presented to promote understanding of God’s mind as it pertains to sexual purity, the marital union, divorce and remarriage.

Seeing that we have been betrothed to Christ, and have received His pledge, should we not be looking forward with great anticipation to that full spiritual union that lies ahead? We should be like a virgin betrothed, waiting expectantly for the appearing of her bridegroom.

Will the one who has been sealed with the Holy Spirit and who is promised to freely receive everything that belongs to Christ, then pursue other lovers while they await the return of the Bridegroom? Can we not all put aside the pursuit of all that competes for our affection for this brief season of our lives? Can we not hold in our hearts a passion and desire for Christ, during this season in which He has gone away to prepare a habitation for us in which we might dwell together as one? It is this fervent love and longing for Christ that Yahshua speaks of to the church of Ephesus.

He will deliver His overcomers from all that is hindering them...

Revelation 2:4

“But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.”

Will not Christ reject all those who have been betrothed to Him as a pure virgin, when He discovers their lack of chastity? The wait for His appearing may be long; the days may seem wearisome, and

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the trials unending; yet, should not the delay make the anticipation of His appearing all the more precious in our sight?

We must guard against weariness. Let us stir ourselves up by reminding ourselves of that glorious union that has been promised to all who look with longing to His appearing.

People of God, if we are espoused to Christ, we must live in expectancy of His return for His Bride. What would a man think of his virgin to whom he has given his pledge, if in his departure she began

A glorious union is set before those who have made themselves ready.

acting promiscuously, giving herself to many other lovers, unwilling to wait for the moment of pleasure when her Bridegroom should appear?

Would not that man be righteously indignant? Would he not give to her a writing of divorce and declare to her, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." Truly, she will not be known to Him, nor He to her, for she played the harlot.

Many in the church today are living in an unchaste manner. They say they belong to Christ. They may even make a spectacle of showing off the evidence of their betrothal by flashing around the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but their hearts are lusting after many other things. They love the world and the things in it. Such ones may expect that Christ will sweep them off their feet and carry them away to heaven, but they are deceived. Their portion will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. They will be assigned a portion with the unbelievers. The door will be shut before them, and they will be unable to enter into the marriage feast. They will not know the full and glorious union of the Son of God that could have been their portion.

This spiritual adultery is paralleled in the physical lives of God's people. The church today is rife with fornication, with adultery, with divorce and remarriage. Multitudes are acting out physically the con-

dition of the church spiritually. They are unchaste.

God intended the marriage union to symbolize the union of Christ and His Bride. How many have turned that symbol of holiness into something unholy?

If you have sinned in this matter, do not hesitate to repent before God. Seek Him with the deepest fear and humility lest you discover at His appearing that He has not come for you.

There is a promised holy and glorious union that will be consummated at the next appearance of Christ. Let the Bride make herself ready. Do not delay, Soon a voice will be heard from the heavenly realms.

Revelation 21:3-4

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ***"Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."***

A glorious union is set before those who have made themselves ready. John sums up the matter well:

I John 3:3

And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

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The Crucible of God

Joseph Herrin (revised 1-20-2001)

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship (masterpiece) . . .”

The heat is always the first thing that apprentices and master journeymen alike notice as they cross the threshold into the foundry. It is not a normal heat such as one encounters on a hot summer day. This heat is born of a multitude of individual furnaces, each one stoked and fanned to its appropriate intensity according to the need of the metal being formed, refined, and hardened.

The heat comes from all directions. As you walk among the workmen and their anvils, tools, and furnaces you instinctively turn away from the blast of the fires that are raging. Some are hotter than others and these are given a wide berth. They are only to be approached with reason, and then only after you are properly attired.

There is a sober spirit that permeates the foundry. All the laborers are there with purpose, aware of the awesome nature of their work. They are not cold or impassive, rather they are zealous, but theirs is a controlled and directed zeal that allows for no distraction.

The apprentice this day is assigned to work with a master journeyman of long experience. His assignment is an honor. An excellent spirit has been found in this young workman and now his skills are to be honed as he observes and assists this particular metalsmith.

The metalsmith has a coveted reputation. He has produced masterpieces that are renowned and are spoken of with tones of awe and wonder. The apprentices speak of his work in hushed voices as if they feel to speak loudly would desecrate the sanctity of what is being discussed.

The apprentice arrives early. He has been taught how to lay out the tools and utensils of his trade and he desires to have all in order before his instructor arrives. He has already prepared his heart and mind for this day. He has only one thought, he desires to glean as much wisdom as possible from this opportunity. He will study every move that this master artisan makes. He will record indelibly every word of advice that drops from his lips.

The master arrives. He quickly surveys the work area and sees that all has been prepared. He gives no word of thanks, for this was to be expected. He has personally asked for this young man, with the keen eye and determined attitude, to work with him. He has watched him for some time and has seen promise in him. He is one that instruction will not be wasted on, nor will he need to be placated by flattery. He has seen in this one a desire to be skilled in his labor, and the quality of the work, not the praises of men, are what bring him satisfaction. II Timothy 2:2 will be fulfilled in this one.

The master picks up the work piece from the table where he laid it after his last session with it. He holds it carefully. It is more than raw material, it has the promise of greatness in it. It is a masterpiece in process. It will require consummate skill and patience to allow all the beauty to come forth without damaging any of its possibilities. This is the challenge of the craftsman.

He carries it over to the apprentice and bids him to look at it. “Do you see the potential of this piece?” he enquires. “Look deep within it to see the purity of metal that is yet obscured by occlusions. This is one of the finest specimens to ever come from our Lord’s mines. The metal within is so pure as to be translucent. It is like water, a most rare find.”

“In keeping with the tradition of all masterpieces, this one has been given a name. It is called ‘The Bride.’”

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He continued, “The name represents the purity of the metal locked within. It speaks of the high calling that exists for this piece once it has been cleansed, purified, and refined. It is our job to release it of the slag and impurities that cling to it so that it may one day soon be shaped into a vessel of honor for the Great Master’s house.” II Timothy 2:20,21

The apprentice carefully views the piece from all angles, holding it to the light to gaze through the outer film to view the treasure within. The master artisan notices the young man gasp as he catches sight of what lies within. The student’s knuckles whiten as he tightens his grip on the piece, suddenly aware of the priceless nature of what he holds. In awe, he hands it back to the skillful hands of the journeyman.

“Because of the potential of this piece, we must labor with the greatest of wisdom and patience to bring forth it’s beauty. We must subject it to things that would be wasted on a more ordinary piece. We must separate and remove all that does not belong until only the purified and precious metal remains.” Thus begins the craftsman’s instruction.

Having said this, the artisan gently lays the work piece down on the table and walks over to the furnace. He begins to place fuel into the furnace, but not carelessly as one stoking the boilers of a locomotive. Each piece of fuel is measured and placed with precision into the furnace.

“I have already determined the critical temperature range for this piece,” he says. “We will begin at the lower end of the range and then increase the temperature while we observe the chemistry and reactions of the piece.”

The apprentice is amazed at how hot the journeyman makes the blaze. At first he is worried that some mistake has been made. He has never heated any metal he has previously worked on to such a high temperature, and here is a piece of such ex-

quisite potential that he expects it to withstand much less than the coarse metals that have been fashioned into instruments of common use.

The artisan, anticipating his thoughts says, “The pieces that appear the most delicate and precious often require a much hotter fire to bring them to a point of refining than the common metals. This piece is not to end up in the undercarriage of some vehicle. It is to be set on display in a great house to be shown to many. Therefore, all impurity must be removed. For more base uses, the impurities could be left in and not inhibit the metal’s performance. However, in this one, the usage requires that nothing remain to obscure its appearance.”

The apprentice buttons up his leather collar to protect himself from the searing heat. The journeyman then asks him to lay the metal in the furnace. The apprentice, still half expects the metal to shatter or melt into a deformed heap. Instead, it begins to glow.

The journeyman slowly increases the heat while he observes the metal. Too hot and the metal will become pocked or shatter. Not enough heat and the impurities cannot be loosed.

As they both watch, the pure metal within becomes brighter. Suddenly, a piece of slag on the surface melts, losing its attachment to the piece and falls down into the fire of the furnace.

After a few more minutes at this temperature the journeyman quickly removes the metal and deftly lays it on the anvil. With tremendous strokes of the hammer that startle the apprentice, he repeatedly strikes a rough appendage until it breaks off.

When it has cooled off, he hands it to the apprentice for examination. Where the rough piece had been there is now smooth metal and the purity of the inner work can be seen. The apprentice is filled with renewed awe at the beauty within the piece. At the same time, he is troubled that it has to be

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treated so roughly.

The master craftsman speaks, “It may seem savage to so harshly handle a piece that is destined to be a remarkable masterpiece, but beauty and fragility are not necessarily synonymous. By repeatedly heating the metal to such extreme temperatures it becomes tempered and strengthened. As the impurities are removed a greater cohesiveness results. The work becomes not only more beautiful, but immensely strong.”

The apprentice gives an understanding nod. “This is certainly a fortunate thing. The most lovely of objects become the most enduring.”

The master nods his assent to the student’s insightful remark. “Repeated subjection to the heat of the furnace will produce nothing but good, so long as the heat is applied at the right temperature and for the correct duration. Many a promising piece has been marred by not leaving it in the furnace long enough. Sympathy does not produce masterpieces. It will instead lead to inferior workmanship.”

“But aren’t we to love that which we work on?” asks the apprentice.

“Indeed!” the craftsman continued. “We must have a great passion for our work. Passion seeks the very best for its subject, not the easiest road. This piece that has been named ‘The Bride’ is a tremendous find and has the highest of potential, but it will never know its potential if it is coddled and withheld from the trials of the furnace and the anvil. Because I am passionate for it, I lovingly subject it to such torturous treatment. I desire to see the full glory of ‘The Bride’ revealed.”

“That will be all for today,” said the artisan.

“We will let ‘The Bride’ rest for now. Tomorrow we will try the metal further and see yet more of its glory come forth.”

The apprentice nodded. Tomorrow would be a great day indeed.

The Crucible of God

Titled by Joseph Herrin

When God wants to drill a man
And thrill a man
And skill a man
To play the noblest part;
When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall be amazed,
Watch His methods, watch His ways!
How He ruthlessly perfects
Whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him
And with mighty blows converts him
Into trial shapes of clay which
Only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying
And he lifts beseeching hands!
How He bends but never breaks
When his good He undertakes;
How He uses whom He chooses,
And with every purpose fuses him;
By every act induces him
To try his splendor out –
God knows what He’s about.

Angela Morgan (Adapted)

The Marriage Covenant

Yahweh, His Breath and His Word

Joseph Herrin (6-18-03)

What I am going to share here has come as a Rhema word from God. I did not figure this out with my rational abilities, for in truth I have been completely stumped as I have tried to understand the Trinity. I could not conceive in my limited mind how God could be both three persons and one person. Like all things that are truly profound, we receive them as a free gift as Yahweh gives us understanding. We are told to ask, seek and knock when we lack understanding, and it will be given to us, and in doing this I have done nothing more than any other saint could, and should, do. I take no credit for anything shared herein, though I consider it to be a tremendous revelation. The revelation is not from man, but from God. I am merely a scribe recording what I have been received.

As this matter of the nature of God was on my mind, Yahweh led me to understanding by showing me a physical example that all of us are very familiar with. We are told in Genesis chapter one that man has been created in the image and likeness of God, and knowing this, we can conclude that if we understand man, we will know something about God. My journey into understanding began when someone wrote to me and asked "Where would you look to find man's spirit."

I had already done some study of the matter of man being comprised of spirit, soul and body, and the Scriptures do declare that man does consist of these three parts.

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 the Messiah.

I learned an interesting thing as I studied the Hebrew and Greek words for soul and spirit. Both

words are derived from words that mean "breath", "a current of air", or "exhalation". Most saints are very familiar with Yahshua's discourse with Nicodemus. During this conversation we have recorded the following words of Christ.

John 3:8

"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**."

Because we are reading this in English, rather than in Greek, we miss a very important point. The word that we read here as "wind", and the word we read as "Spirit" are not two separate words in the Greek, but they are the same word "pneuma". This entire matter of understanding the role of Father, Son and Spirit would be much clearer if the Bible translators had rendered this word pneuma as "breath" or "wind" in every instance. Instead of the Holy Spirit, we would be speaking of the "Holy Breath". We would know then that the Holy Spirit is the Breath, or Exhalation of the Father whom we know as Yahweh. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Breath. A Scripture that reveals this in a very poignant way is the following.

John 20:21-22

So Yahshua said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, **He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."**

Another passage is as follows:

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like **a violent rushing wind**, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested

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on each one of them. ***And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit*** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

It is apparent from these verses and many others that the Spirit is synonymous with wind and breath. The Spirit is the Exhalation of Yahweh. The passage in John above could be written, "He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Breath." Similarly, the passage from Acts could read, "And they were all filled with the Holy Wind." The words "breath" and "wind" are used to describe similar things in the English language. For example we might say, "There was not a breath of wind stirring."

Understanding the relationship between Spirit and breath was building block number one in coming to understand the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit. The next building block came as I tried to answer the question regarding where man would look for his spirit.

We know that a spirit is invisible to the natural senses. We cannot take a picture of a man's spirit. Not even an x-ray will show the spirit of man. Our spirit was formed in the image of the invisible God, and our spirit is likewise invisible. Yet we talk about seeing the spirit of another person very often. We might say, "He has a kind spirit", or "She has a bitter spirit". A commonly heard expression is "He is the spirit and image of his father" (Some areas have corrupted this expression and lost its true sense as they say "He is the spittin image of his father." "Spittin" is a slang corruption of "spirit and".)

If we do not see another person's spirit, then how do we recognize their spirit? It is our words that express what is inside of us. Yahshua said:

Mark 7:20-23

And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of

the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

The things that are in man's spirit will come out of his mouth. By listening to another person's speech we can discern their spirit. We can easily tell if a father and a son have the same spirit by listening to their words. Are they both hateful? Are they both compassionate? Whatever is in their spirit will be revealed in their speech.

Now a light began to come on inside when I was led to consider how man forms words. We speak as our breath is exhaled and passes over our vocal cords. We only speak as we exhale, and we do not speak while inhaling. This is no accident. It is by Divine design. Yahweh is teaching us something about Himself in this simple example of the speech of man. We cannot see man's spirit until his spirit is exhaled and forms words. A man's spirit is revealed in his words.

In the same way, we cannot see God who is Spirit until He breathes out a Word.

I Timothy 6:15-16

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, ***whom no man has seen or can see.***

John 1:18

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared (revealed, expressed) Him.

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Yahweh is Spirit, and as Spirit He is invisible to the physical senses of man. Yahweh would remain invisible to man had He not spoken a Word, and this Word is His Son.

John 1:1, 2, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Even as man's spirit is seen through his words, so Yahweh who is Spirit can only be seen through His Word, which is Yahshua the Son. In Yahshua Yahweh has fully expressed Himself. To see the Son is to see the invisible Father.

John 14:8-9

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Yahshua said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how can you say, "Show us the Father'?"

As we look at Yahweh's design of man, and the production of speech, we learn a great truth about the Father, Son and Spirit. The spirit of man is invisible, but it is who the man essentially is. The character of man is bound up in his spirit. His thoughts are formed in his spirit. Yet neither the character nor the thoughts of a man are evident until they are given expression. The chief way that God has designed man to express himself is through speech, and our speech is generated as we exhale the breath that is within us and this breath is given shape as it passes over our vocal cords.

What a picture this is of the Trinity. Yahweh is also invisible, for He is Spirit. His character and His thoughts remain invisible until they are given expression. His expression is His Son, who is called

"the Word of God", and this Word was formed as the Spirit, or Divine Breath of God moved.

Luke 1:35

The angel answered and said to [Mary], "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God."

John 1:32-34

John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

In these two verses an important truth is revealed. It required two distinct acts of the Spirit to fully form the Word of God. Yahshua could not begin His ministry of "declaring" the Father until the Spirit moved upon Him a second time. He was not yet the full expression of Yahweh until the Spirit descended upon Him and remained. In the same way, man requires two touches from God's Spirit (the Divine Breath) to begin manifesting the character and thoughts of God to the world. We see these two touches from God in the following verses.

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.**

John 20:21-22

So Yahshua said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, **He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."**

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Twice the breath of God had to move upon man to make him into God's new creation. With the first breath man became a living soul. With the second breath he became a life giving spirit.

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.

As Yahweh breathes an image is formed, in the same way that we breathe and we form words that create an image of our spirit. We have born the image of the earthly, yet we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. At God's first breath man became a living soul, a natural being that is earthly. At His second breath man became a life giving spirit, and the image of the heavenly being began to take shape in us. This process of being formed into the heavenly image is a process that will continue until Christ be fully formed in us.

II Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Returning to our focus on the Father, Son and Spirit, we are now prepared to answer the question, "Is God one God, or is He three?" We can also answer the question, "Is Yahshua God, or was He a created being?" Again, the answer can be found as we look at man who was created in the image and likeness of God. As a man I consist of spirit, soul and body. Does this make me three men, or am I one man? I am one man, though I exist in various states and have distinct parts. The Scriptures de-

clare that Yahweh is one God.

I Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Yahshua...

Deuteronomy 6:4

"Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one!"

We do not serve three Gods, we serve one God whose name is Yahweh. Yahweh has Breath which He sends forth to accomplish His will, and it is this Breath that we call the Holy Spirit who is pictured as a "rushing mighty wind", and also as "a gentle stirring". To aid our understanding, however, we would do better to think of the Father as Spirit, for this is what He is, and to think of the Holy Spirit as His Divine Breath sent forth to accomplish His will.

John 4:24

"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

As we have seen, the word pneuma means breath, or wind. This Breath in turn forms the expression of Yahweh, which we know as Yahshua, the Word of God. When Yahweh forms a word and sends it forth, it is to accomplish His purposes, and His Word will accomplish all that it has been sent forth to do.

Isaiah 55:11

So will My Word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Yahshua is this Word that Isaiah has written about. He testified that He did not come of His own initiative, but the Father sent Him (John 8:42). He came

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to do the will of the Father, and He succeeded fully in accomplishing all that which He was sent forth to accomplish. As we have observed, our words reveal our spirit, and Yahweh's Word reveals Him. For this reason Yahshua, the Word of God came, to disclose the Father. Because Yahshua is the Word of God that fully discloses Yahweh who is Spirit, there is no difference between them. They are One and the same. They are not two Gods, but One and the same God.

Yahshua is not some created being in the same way that man has been created. He is the very expression of Yahweh. My words express my spirit. They are not separate from me, though I form them. Instead they reveal who I really am. In the same way Yahshua, the Word, expresses who Yahweh is. In the Scriptures we see that no distinction is made between them. As Yahshua stated, "Before Abraham was, I AM", and "If you have seen Me you have seen the Father." Let us look at some other Scriptures that reveal their intrinsic union.

Yahweh and Christ both called "the First and the Last":

Isaiah 44:6

"Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts: ***I am the first and I am the last***, and there is no God besides Me.

Isaiah 48:12

"Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, ***I am the first, I am also the last.***"

Apocalypse 1:17

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; ***I am the first and the last.***"

Apocalypse 2:8

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this...

Apocalypse 22:13

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, ***the first and the last***, the beginning and the end."

Yahweh and Christ both called "the Rock":

Isaiah 44:8

"Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, or is there any other ***Rock?*** I know of none."

I Corinthians 10:4

And all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and ***the rock was Christ.***

Yahweh and Christ are both called "I AM":

Exodus 3:14

God said to Moses, "***I AM WHO I AM***"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, "***I AM*** has sent me to you."

Matthew 18:20

"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, ***I AM*** there in their midst."

Matthew 28:20

Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, ***I AM*** with you always, even to the end of the age."

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John 8:58

Yahshua said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I AM.**"

Both are called "The Almighty":

Genesis 17:1

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, "**I am God Almighty**; walk before Me, and be blameless.

Genesis 35:11

God also said to him, "**I am God Almighty**; be fruitful and multiply..."

Genesis 49:25

From the God of your father who helps you, and by the **Almighty** who blesses you...

Apocalypse 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, **the Almighty.**"

Apocalypse 4:7-8

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, **the Almighty**, who was and who is and who is to come."

Apocalypse 11:17

"We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, **the Almighty**, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign."

Apocalypse 19:14-15

And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, **the Almighty.**

Apocalypse 21:22

And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, **the Almighty**, and the Lamb, are its temple.

Both the Father and the Son bear the name "Yahweh":

Joel 2:32

"And it will come about that **whoever calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved.**"

Romans 10:12-13

For "**Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.**"

(We know it was the practice of the Jews to replace the sacred name Yahweh with the title Adonai which means "Lord". Paul was quoting from Joel as he was referring to Christ. Compare this also with the following verse which says there is salvation in no other name. Joel says that those who call on the name "Yahweh" will be saved, and there is no other name. The Father and Son bore the same name.)

Acts 4:12

"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."

This substitution of names is seen in other places as well:

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Psalms 118:26

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Yahweh...

John 12:12-13

On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that ***Yahshua*** was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! ***Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord***, even the King of Israel."

These Scriptures, and many others, reveal that there is no distinction between the Father and the Son. Even as a thought, and the word that expresses the thought, are one and the same, so the Father who is Spirit, and the Son Who is the Expression of the Father are One and the same. The Son arises out of the Father even as a word arises out of the spirit of man, and so perfect is the Son in His expression of the spirit of Yahweh that to see Him is to see the Father.

Yahweh then is One God, and He has three aspects. Yahweh the Father is an invisible Spirit, completely hidden from man. No man at any time has seen Him, and this includes Moses and the patriarchs.

I Timothy 6:15-16

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, ***whom no man has seen or can see.***

Yahweh has Breath, and it is this Breath that blows wherever it wills and accomplishes the purpose of the Father. This Breath produces the Word and in the Word is Yahweh seen and His attributes known. How indivisible are these three, Yahweh, His Breath, and His Word. We see this Divine Trinity revealed in the words of the Psalmist.

Psalms 33:6

By the ***Word*** of ***Yahweh*** were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the ***Breath*** of his mouth.

Here again we see the Trinity:

Isaiah 40:7-8

The grass withers, the flower fades, when the ***Breath*** of ***Yahweh*** blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the ***Word*** of our God stands forever.

II Samuel 22:16

"Then the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were laid bare by the ***Rebuke*** of ***Yahweh***, at the blast of the ***Breath*** of His nostrils."

A rebuke is expressed as a word, so we see here all three aspects of Yahweh revealed. The thoughts of Yahweh are expressed as a Breath and then they take form. This is true of man as well.

Psalms 94:11

Yahweh knows the ***thoughts*** of man, that they are a mere ***breath***.

We literally breathe out our thoughts and give them form as words. In the same way Yahweh is Spirit where His thoughts are formed, they are Breathed out and become an expression. His greatest expression is His Son who is "The Word."

I Corinthians 2:11

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit (Breath) of God.

So Yahweh who is Spirit forms thoughts, His

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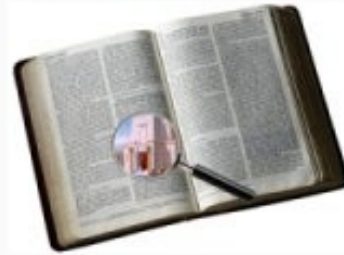
thoughts go forth as His Divine Breath, and this Breath produces an Expression of Yahweh. This is the Holy Trinity, and yet we can see that there is only One God. What a simile of the nature of God is found in the formation of speech in man. Man has a spirit and it is in his spirit that thoughts are formed. Though these thoughts be spirit, they only come forth as man physically exhales. As his breath leaves his body the vocal cords are activated to form distinct sounds that are recognizable as words that give substance to the thoughts that were formerly invisible.

A clear relationship exists between man's spirit, his breath and his words. One flows into another. It is not as perfect a harmony as that which exists between Yahweh, His Breath, and His Word, for He alone is holy and without any shadow or influence of corruption. These three always agree, Yahweh, His Breath, and His Word.

By looking at this simile of man's spirit, his breath and his words, we can see that the Father, Son and Divine Breath are not three different individuals dwelling together, for there is only One source and this is Yahweh. Yahweh is Spirit, and He has Breath and Expression.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

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PARABLES PRECEPT— What’s in a Name?

HELLO
my name is

Jacob

Jacob was the grandson of Abraham. Jacob is the second man of whom we read that God changed his name.

The name Jacob means “supplanter.” To supplant means “to replace, often by deceptive means; to substitute; to usurp the place of another.”

It was the right of the firstborn son to receive a special blessing and inheritance from his father. The firstborn would receive a dou-

ble portion above his other brothers. Jacob had a twin in the womb whose name was Esau. Esau was the first to be born, and by virtue of this fact should have received the rights of the firstborn. The Bible tells us that Jacob supplanted Esau, receiving both the blessing and the birthright.

This supplanting actually occurred in the womb. Rachel, the mother of the twins, felt the two boys wrestling in the womb.

Hosea 12:3

In the womb he **supplanted** his brother, and by his strength he was a prince with God.

The word translated *supplanted* is the Hebrew word yaqob, which is the same as the name Jacob. God later changed Jacob’s name to Is-

rael, which means “to prevail with God.”

Some have criticized Jacob for supplanting his brother Esau, but we read in the New Testament that it was actually God’s predetermined plan that Jacob should receive the birthright and the blessing.

Romans 9:11-12

For though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God’s purpose according to His choice might stand... it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger.”

It was the will of God for Jacob to supplant his brother Esau, to wrestle with God and man and prevail.