

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 1.9.3

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 7-8 of the book *The Divine Quest*.

God is not opposed to men and women finding deep personal fulfillment and joy. It is actually His great desire that all His children to experience such a fullness of joy that words cannot express it.

Psalms 16:11

You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

God has promised His sons and daughters a glorious inheritance, unfading and imperish-

able. He has testified the following:

I Corinthians 2:9

Just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."

It is His will, however, that before we enter into this inheritance that we first share His character and nature. This is the purpose of this life. We are to be transformed from selfish and sinful creatures to those that are selfless, and giving.

Would you be willing to go without some pleasure for a moment if you knew it was required to

receive a far greater pleasure, a pure and holy pleasure, that would last forever? This is what God is asking His sons and daughters to do.

Those who embrace the hardship, suffering and difficulties of this life, which are but for a moment, will receive something far better in return.

Romans 8:18

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

If we embrace the cross, dying to the will of our flesh and soul, God has promised that it will result in something far better in the end.

Food for Thought

"The person without self-control is easy prey to the invader. He yields himself to the first assault of his ungoverned passions, offering no resistance... Having no discipline over himself, temptation becomes the occasion of sin, and hurries him on to fearful lengths that he had not contemplated."

Charles Bridges

Scripture Memory

Proverbs 16:32

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.

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The Place of Peace

Having read the previous chapter, you may have concluded that it looks like mankind, weak as we are, must always endure fear and anxiety, for this is our lot as long as we are

There is great fear that is bound up in these fallen bodies...

clothed in this sinful, fallen flesh. It is true that there is great fear that is bound up in these fallen bodies which we inhabit, but there is a place of peace

that the saint can attain to. I have received tremendous comfort in recent days as the Spirit has been testifying through many Scriptures that it is not the will of Christ that His disciples should carry fear and anxiety in their hearts.'

The fact of the matter is that we have been commanded to not be anxious and fearful. Whenever Yahshua's disciples manifested fear He chided them and gave them a reprimand. He would look at them and say, "You men of little faith! Why did you doubt?" We know that when Yahshua said, "Do not commit adultery", that any who were to violate His command would be displeasing to Him. It is equally a transgression of the will of Christ to be filled with anxiety and fear, for He commanded them "Do not fear." Nor did He tell His disciples these things one time, but many.

As you read through the following Scripture passages, consider the attitude of Christ toward anxiety and fear in the heart of man. Did He ever express pleasure over someone who was walking in fear? Did He ever commend their anxiety as being sensible? Did He give the idea that it was right, and even responsible, to worry about the things without which man could not live? Did He ever say, "Well done. You have proven yourself a good steward by having much

care and anxiety in the performance of your duties"? Did He express an attitude that it was sinful to worry about the small things, but it was okay to be fearful about more perilous matters?

I think you will see that Yahshua treated ALL fear and anxiety the same. He never condoned it. He never sympathized with it. He never expressed satisfaction in it. Instead, He consistently said, "Do not harbor it! Get rid of it! Replace it with faith!"

Matthew 6:25-34

"For this reason I say to you, **do not be anxious about your life**, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And **who of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his life?** And **why are you anxious about clothing?** Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? **You of little faith! Do not be anxious then**, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So **do not be anxious about tomorrow**; for tomorrow will care for itself."

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Luke 12:22-32

And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, **do not be anxious about your life**, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! And **which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his life's span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why are you anxious about other matters?** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? **You men of little faith!** And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and **do not be filled with anxiety**. For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. **Do not be afraid, little flock**, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom."

Matthew 14:31

Immediately Yahshua stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "**You of little faith, why did you doubt?**"

Matthew 8:24-26

And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Yahshua Himself was asleep. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!" He said to them, "**Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?**" Then He got up and rebuked the winds

and the sea, and it became perfectly calm.

The apostles expressed the same attitude toward anxiety.

Philippians 4:6-7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yahshua.

I Peter 5:6-7

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you**.

We must come to a mindset where we treat fear and anxiety as an enemy that has taken up residence in our frame.

Whenever we find it arising we must do battle with it and cast it off. It seems that many of us have developed an attitude toward fear

where we do not view it as an evil thing. We think it is just a part of our make-up, for it is resident in us and it serves a purpose of helping to keep us safe. This is not true, however.

We must come to a mindset where we treat fear as an enemy...

Suppose we treated lust the same way, for lust is present in us, and there are some humanistic psychologists who have said that lust is a good thing for it leads to procreation and this has the positive effect of insuring the survival of the human species. We know immediately that this is nonsense, and it is both immoral and un-

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righteous. We can read the words of Christ where He said:

Matthew 5:28

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

There is little argument in the church today that lust is an evil thing and it should be resisted at all costs. What was Yahshua's advice to those who were struggling with lust?

Matthew 5:29-30

"If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell."

Some have taken these words literally, but what Yahshua is saying is that we must identify the source of lust in our members and get rid of it. We must not make peace with it. We must not tolerate its presence. We must seek its removal even though it comes at great personal cost. We must be ready to adopt radical means to see that it does not overpower us and lead us into sin.

We must not tolerate fear's presence.

This is the same attitude we should have toward fear. As rampant as lust and sexual immorality is in the present day, and even in the church, I suspect that far more wrong has been done because fear has been left to run un-

checked in the members of the body of Christ. People have abandoned their faith. They have denied Christ. They have caved into the pressure of peers who were urging them to sin. Untold millions of times the saints have failed to obey God's will for them when fear assailed them. They have seen pain and ridicule or some form of persecution before them and they have turned back from the course of faith. To do so is to miss the will of God and those who allow fear to reign unchecked in their members will suffer great loss.

Hebrews 10:38-39

But My righteous one shall live by faith; and ***if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.*** But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Revelation 21:7-8

"He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. ***But for the cowardly*** and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, ***their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.***"

Does it not speak volumes that the Scriptures place the cowardly even before murderers, immoral persons, sorcerers, idolaters and liars, as those who will have a part in the Lake of Fire? The cowardly are the first on the list. God's soul finds no pleasure in those who allow their fears to turn them back from a path of obedience. This is why we must treat fear as an enemy.

As I have been writing this book the Father has allowed me to experience a great onslaught by

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the enemy. Many fears have buffeted me and have tried to take up residence in my soul. He has led me to a very vulnerable place where if He does not come through for me, both I and my family could very well suffer. The enemy has been allowed to come attack with his lies and deceit to cause me to abandon the course of obedience laid before me. We have been given instruction as to what our response should be in such circumstances.

Ephesians 6:12-13

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. **Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.**

James 4:7

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

II Corinthians 10:3-5

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. **We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...**

We are told to resist the devil and he will flee from us. We are to resist him and stand firm. After we have warred for a while he will give way. We must stand our ground and not be moved. The battle will not last forever. When thoughts arise that are not from God, we are to

take them captive as we would a prisoner. We are not to allow fear to roam freely in our minds. We must cut it off and replace it with thoughts of faith. This is when we must return to those things we know God has spoken to us by His Spirit. We must entertain these thoughts. We must spread a banqueting table in our minds and lay out upon the table all of the things that God has spoken to us, and we must feed upon them.

I have done this time and again when the enemy would come against me and try to stir up fear in my members. I would command the fear to be gone and I would wrest my mind free of the enemy's control and turn it to the things that are in keeping with a victorious and overcoming life.

Sometimes this struggle is most severe, for the enemy seems relentless, but as we stand firm and resist him he will ALWAYS give way and we will know the victory.

We are not to allow fear to roam freely in our minds.

We have looked at the passage in Philippians where it states,

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yahshua.

Just a couple verses later Paul tells the Philippian believers:

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Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

We have been given the capability by the Spirit to direct the course of our thoughts. We can turn our mind to focus upon the things that are wholesome and which lead to life. Consider

Paul used the language of warfare when speaking about this struggle.

that when you go to work you are able to put off the cares of home and concentrate on the task at hand. When you go to school you are able to focus on

the subject you are studying. One hour we might be looking at mathematics, and we turn our minds to the study of this field. In the next hour we may be studying English composition, and we turn our minds to this direction. In the same way, we can turn our minds away from the worries, doubts and fears that the enemy presents to us, or which our flesh would lead us to dwell upon, and we can dwell upon the faithfulness of God, His unfailing love, his many kindnesses to us, and His magnificent promises.

We must have an attitude concerning our thoughts where we declare to Satan, "This is my mind, not yours. I will determine what thoughts are served up, and you are not invited to the dinner." We must then invite the Holy Spirit to come and join us and to make known to us the thoughts of God.

What I have been describing may sound a lot like warfare, and it is. Paul used the language of warfare when speaking about this struggle in Ephesians chapter 6. Our souls are the battle-

ground and we must go in and take possession of them. Many enemies have slipped in and taken up residence in the land of our souls, and just like the Israelites who went into possess the promised land, we too must go in and drive out the enemy. The land will not be handed to us on a silver platter. We must have courage and the assurance that everywhere that we set our feet has been given to us.

How much of your own soul do you want to possess? You will have to first dispossess the enemy. The Spirit has given me an insight into this matter that could bring understanding to many. All of the things written about in the Old Testament were written for the benefit of the saints today. What transpired in a physical setting concerning the patriarchs and the nation of Israel bears spiritual application for us today.

God promised to the children of Abraham a land of their own. By faith Abraham went and sojourned in the land, but he did not take possession of it. It would be more than 400 more years before Joshua (a type of Yahshua - same name) would lead the descendants of Abraham to take possession of the land. Before Joshua led the people into battle he sent spies in to look over the land. They noted the boundaries of the land, describing the mountains and valleys and streams and the abundant fruitfulness of it. It was indeed a land flowing with milk and honey.

Joshua then had the spies give the report of the land to the people, and they divided the land up into portions. They then cast lots to see which tribe of Israel would get each portion of land. God commanded them to go in and drive out ALL the inhabitants of the land and to fully possess it. This is a picture of man taking possession of his soul. We are to allow no enemies

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to remain in our land. We must drive out pride, lust, fear, and a host of other enemies. We are to let none remain.

There was only one tribe that was not given an inheritance in the land, and this was Levi. Levi's inheritance was God Himself. They were called to be priests unto Him, and they were given the ministry of the altar and the tabernacle. They had cities to live in that were located all throughout Israel, in the land given to every tribe. It was for them to dwell in every part of the land, though God alone would be their portion. All of this is highly symbolic, and David saw the truth of what it represented. In Psalms 16:5, 6 we read:

Psalms 16:5-6

Yahweh is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot.

The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.

In beautiful poetic form, David refers back to the time when Joshua sent spies into the land, and then had the tribes cast lots to see who received each portion. David states that when the time came for the lot to be thrown to determine his portion that Yahweh supported his lot. The lines that marked the boundaries of his inheritance were in the most pleasant of places. David received a beautiful heritage, for what David received was Yahweh Himself. David received the priestly inheritance. Yahweh was for him, his inheritance and his cup of blessing.

As I was meditating upon this Scripture one day, the Spirit led me to a revelation that our inheritance, which is Yahweh, has also been spied out, and there are various aspects of Yahweh of which we can go in and take possession.

The Spirit showed me that the names of Yahweh given in Scripture represent this inheritance. When Abraham took Isaac up to the mount to sacrifice him, Yahweh provided a ram in Isaac's place. Abraham called that place Yahweh Yireh, which means 'Yahweh Provides.' As saints we can know Yahweh as our provider, but just like the Israelites when they went in to possess their inheritance, we must do battle first. We must by faith possess our possessions.

It really wasn't Israel who fought the enemy. Yahweh fought for them. He promised them that no enemy would be able to stand before them. It was a very one sided battle as long as Israel walked by faith. Only when they failed in faith did they fail to drive out all the inhabitants and fully take possession of the land.

We too take possession of our inheritance by faith. Yahweh is our portion and He says we can have as much of Him as we want. Do we want to know Him as provider? Then we must enter in by faith. We must drive out the enemy. What enemy is inhabiting the land of provision. For me, it has been fear. There have been giants of fear who have taken up residence in this land that was promised to me. I must drive them out. I must battle fear and overcome. Only then will I dwell peacefully in the land of Yahweh Yireh.

*Yahweh is our portion
and He says we can have
as much of Him as we
want.*

In Exodus 15:26 we find Yahweh described as Yahweh Rapha, 'Yahweh who heals you.' If we want to go in and possess this portion of our inheritance, we must also battle by faith to enter in and drive out the inhabitants. I have described how Yahweh spoke to me and said He would heal my son of a hereditary bone disease. To receive the promise I had to exercise

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faith. The battle was the Lord's, but I had to follow where He led and do what He said. This is also what the Israelites had to do.

We should note that Yahweh did not lead the Israelites to do the same thing at every battle. To take Jericho they had to march around the city for seven days, and on the seventh day they had to march around it seven times. They did

Yahweh did not lead the Israelites to do the same thing at every battle.

all this while remaining silent. After marching around the seventh time they were to blow trumpets and shout, and the massive walls of Jericho came tum-

bling down. What an awesome scene that must have been. Like a thousand bombs going off at once, the wall was destroyed and the people were given into the hands of the Israelites.

At the battle for the next city, Ai, God gave different instructions. It was fought more along the lines of a conventional battle. God told the Israelites which tribe was to lead in battle, and where they were to position themselves. In the same way God leads us by His Spirit to go in and possess the land before us today. He told me exactly what I must do to receive the promise of healing for my son. When I did it the promise was mine. I followed in faith and obedience and He wrought a great deliverance. When He said He would be health for my entire family He also instructed me in what to do. When I did it the inheritance was mine. We planted our feet in the land of Yahweh Rapha, stood against the enemy, and the enemy had to flee.

After this the Spirit told us that He wanted us to take possession of Yahweh Yireh, Yahweh our provider. A tremendous battle of faith ensued, and it is still continuing to this day. We

are in the land. We are experiencing the provision of Yahweh on our behalf, yet not all of the inhabitants have gone peacefully. They keep making raids into the land to try to drive us back out, but as we stand in faith God will not allow us to be moved.

A couple months ago the Spirit spoke to me to go in and possess a third part of our inheritance. This part is called Yahweh Shalom, 'Yahweh our Peace.' We find this name of God recorded in the book of Judges in the story of Gideon.

Judges 6:24

Then Gideon built an altar there to Yahweh and named it Yahweh is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Yahweh Shalom is the Hebrew rendering for the name that Gideon called this place. The Spirit has been speaking to me and telling me that whereas I have gone in and taken possession of Yahweh Rapha and Yahweh Yireh for my family, I have done so with much trouble in my soul. I have not known the peace that is the inheritance of all of the saints. He desires that I might have this peace.

In the New Testament we find many of these names repeated, and we see that God is our portion and we can enter into Him and know the bounty that He has for us.

II Thessalonians 3:16

Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance.

I have not known peace in every circumstance, but this is what the apostle spoke as his desire

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for the church. It is also Yahweh's desire for us. How will I take possession of this portion of my inheritance? I must follow where He leads and let Him fight for me. My part is to exercise faith in Him, and His part is to give me the victory. What a wonderful partnership. If God be for me, who can be against me?

As I have followed the Spirit's leading in the past months He has led me into some fierce battles, fiercer than I have known before. But the prize set before me is also great. What a marvelous thing to dwell in peace. The enemy does not want to give up this ground. He has built many strong towers here. I can tear down some of the towers and have a measure of peace, but if I want to fully enter into my inheritance as the Father desires me to, then I must not fall short of tearing down all of the strongholds the enemy has built and which he occupies. If I leave any he will remain in the land and shoot arrows at me which will cause me trouble.

I have given two different analogies that may seem to conflict at this point. I have said that our soul represents the land that is filled with evil inhabitants that must be driven out, and I have said that this corresponds to the land of Israel. Yet I have also said that Yahweh is our portion and He also corresponds to the promised land that is set before us. These seem contradictory, but they are actually not.

As we look at another Old Testament type we will be able to draw these two things together. The type is that of the Temple that was defiled during the reign of wicked kings. Under Kings such as Manasseh the Temple was defiled. He built altars to false gods, and set up an Asherah pole in the Temple. He filled it with all manner of idolatry and wickedness.

Our bodies are like that Temple, and this is clearly declared by the apostles. We are called to cleanse our temples of all defilement so that the Holy Spirit can reside in holiness. The glory of the Lord will come forth more and more in these temples of clay as we remove all defilement and as we subdue and drive out all that stands in opposition to God. That which was a wasteland and a desolation becomes a land flowing with milk and honey. That which was a habitation of demons becomes a house of prayer where we commune with the Father.

As we go in to possess the land, we do not have to choose our battles. The Spirit will choose them for us. He will tell us where to go and what to do. He will tell us where to position ourselves and where to stand our ground. As we follow we will enter into the overcoming life and begin to possess our possessions. This is the portion of Zion.

As we go in to possess the land, we do not have to choose our battles.

Obadiah 17

“But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, and it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.”

This theme is carried forward into the last book of the Bible, for we see the overcomers on Mount Zion, and we see an important thing spoken of them.

Revelation 14:1-4

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads... ***These are the ones who***

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follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

The 144,000 represent the overcomers in Christ. It says particularly of them that they follow the Lamb wherever He goes. This is our

I have been inclined to seek to avoid suffering if at all possible.

calling if we are to be overcomers, firstfruits unto God. Where He leads we must follow. Though He leads through the valley of the shadow of death,

we must follow. He will be with us. He will never forsake us. We will be kept secure in Him at all times. He will take us into our inheritance, and part of this inheritance is peace.

Prayer:

Father, we have let unclean inhabitants dwell in our land for far too long. We desire to take possession of our souls and to have the temple of our bodies thoroughly cleansed. Your disappointment must be great that Your chosen people have failed to dispossess the enemies in the land. We have fallen short of doing all that You have commanded. I ask that You would release to us great grace that we might follow wherever You lead, that we would stand and fight and see the enemy flee. May we come fully into our inheritance. Lead us into battle, and settle us in a land of righteousness, peace and joy, for Your word declares that this is our portion. You are our portion, and surely our inheritance is beautiful.

Faith to Suffer

The Spirit has told me to be gentle in writing

this chapter, being very sensitive to my own weakness and frailty that has manifested when I have been brought to places of suffering for Christ. Like most other humans, I have been inclined to seek to avoid suffering if at all possible, for neither my flesh nor my soul enjoy it. I am not some type of masochist who likes to have pain inflicted upon me, and I strongly suspect that those who read this book are not either.

I have been concerned that even writing a chapter on suffering would instantly turn many people off, for most saints do not want to hear that they are called to suffer in any way, and I have been one of these saints. I have thought of writing a book on suffering, but I thought "Who would read it?" I can imagine a book titled "Called to Suffer" being posted on the Internet and being avoided like the plague. I have had to ask myself, would I want to read a book on suffering, and the answer that returns from my soul is "No!"

Yet the truth is that I read a book on suffering nearly every day of my life. That book is the Bible. The central character of the entire Bible is Yahshua the Messiah and He is called "the suffering servant". Isaiah described Him as "a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief." One Scripture passage that reveals the centrality of suffering in the life of the Messiah is the following:

Isaiah 53:3-12

He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He

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was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But Yahweh was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of Yahweh will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors.

There are many ways in which Christ suffered. He endured rejection by His own people. The reproaches that fell upon Him in His life were many. He was considered the son of an adulteress. He was accused of being demon possessed and of being a half breed, a Samaritan. His own family thought He was mad. He was accused of being a Sabbath breaker, which was an offense worthy of death. He was called a blasphemer for saying He was the Son of God. He was constantly misunderstood, and His words were twisted to be used against Him. He

had no home, beginning His life in a stable and spending the last years of His life as a vagrant and a wanderer. He was often weary and hungry, and He experienced grief when His own disciples failed to believe in Him, or to understand His words.

We see then, that even before He went to the cross, Yahshua's life was one of much grief, sorrow and suffering. Yet God had a purpose for it. We are told:

Hebrews 5:7-9

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation...

Christ both learned obedience, and was made perfect through His suffering. It is through suffering that every saint of God must also learn obedience and be made perfect (mature). There is no other way.

There is a teaching present in this hour that states that the saints do not have to suffer because Christ suffered in their place. It says that the saints need not bear the cross for Yahshua bore it for them. Though our flesh may wish that this were so, such teachings are contrary to the word of God.

Christ learned obedience, and was made perfect through His suffering.

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Matthew 16:24-25

Then Yahshua said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

Hebrews 12:5-11

"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

It is not hard to pick out many verses and passages that deal with suffering, for it is one of

Suffering is one of the main themes of Scripture.

the main themes of Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments. After Yahweh delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt, typifying salvation, He

led them into the wilderness where He tested them for forty years. Salvation for us is also an entrance into a prolonged period of testing, as Paul wrote:

Philippians 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake...

If you are ready to move on to the next chapter, I cannot blame you. I do not much care for this message of suffering either. There is much in the prosperity messages of the day that hold attraction to my soul. It would be nice to think that God saved me so that I could embark on a life of endless blessing until the day came that I am to depart this life and go to heaven. There is just one thing wrong with this message of ease, it is a fable devised to tickle the ears of those who despise the message of the cross. There is no truth in it, and those who follow messages of ease and prosperity will fail to learn obedience and they will fall short of maturity in their lives. They will remain babes in Christ, crying out for God to satisfy the demands of their flesh, and they will forfeit all the reward that belongs to the overcomer in Christ.

Yahshua said that ALL who would desire to follow Him must take up their cross daily. He did not bear the cross so that we would be relieved of this task. He was the pattern Son who showed us the way to victory. Where He walked, we are to follow. It was because of the high cost of discipleship that He said that all those who followed Him should first count the cost. If He were inviting the saints to a life of prosperity and ease there would be no cost to consider. It is because He will lead His followers down roads of suffering, heartache and pain that they must count the cost.

It requires faith to follow Christ down paths of suffering. We must reckon that a reward awaits us that far exceeds the trials we will go through. Yahshua looked to the joy that was set before Him. Isaiah wrote, "Therefore, I will allot Him

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a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong.” Paul also wrote:

Romans 8:18

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

II Corinthians 4:17

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

When we consider the things that Paul endured it seems incredible that he described them as “momentary, light affliction.” Yet the promise of God is true that an eternal weight of glory awaits the overcomers that will make all suffering seem but the most fleeting and light experience, unworthy to be compared with the prize set before us. Much could be written about the glory that awaits the saints, but consider just one verse and what it is saying.

I John 3:2

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

We will be like the Son of God in His glory! Think of this. This is not some blasphemy. This is the word of God. We are called to share the glory of Christ (John 17). Christ quoted the words of the Psalmist to the Jews:

Psalms 82:6

I said, “You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High.”

Before we can appear in glory as gods, and sons of the Most high, being like Christ, we must learn obedience, and we must be perfected (matured). Suffering is the tool to bring us to this conformity to Christ. To despise and avoid suffering is to refuse the glory which God desires to adorn us with. Not all saints will share the same inheritance. Yahshua said that when He returns He will render unto every man according to his own work (Revelation 22:12). There will be vast differences among the saints in glory. Some will have little glory for they refused the path of suffering, while some will have great glory.

Suffering is the tool to bring us to this conformity to Christ.

I Corinthians 15:41-42

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.

In the introduction to this book I wrote that the things to be explored in its pages represent a foundational truth that is deeper than the books that have preceded it. The apostle Paul wrote:

I Corinthians 13:13

But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Faith is listed among the three great graces of God. I am using the word grace here in keeping with the definition found in my 1930's Webster's Dictionary.

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Grace: any excellence, characteristic attraction, or endowment, natural or acquired.

The chief of these graces listed is love and, as we have seen, faith flows out of love for the true

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est essence of faith is a knowledge of, and confidence in, the love of Yahweh toward man. We have seen how a lack of faith has led to so many tragedies and

ills that man suffers from to this day. We have also seen that when faith is found in the hearts of men and women that God is greatly glorified.

How precious then is this faith. The eyes of Yahweh have been searching to and fro throughout the earth to find faith dwelling in the hearts of men and women. This faith is like a great treasure that is highly esteemed in the eyes of the Creator. He is ever seeking for it, and when He finds it resident in the heart of one of His children, He sets about to purify and refine it. He seeks to make that which is precious to Him shine forth with the highest luster, devoid of any clinging impurity.

This is why we read of the great men and women of faith as suffering many trials. They were roughly treated, rejected, reproached, scorned and suffered numerous indignities. They were outcasts, persecuted by brethren and disowned by family. Many suffered hunger and cold and many terrors, and not a few of them were put to death. These trials were not signs of God's displeasure, but rather they were signs of His highest favor as He sought to perfect their faith through suffering.

I Peter 1:6-7

[You should] be exceedingly glad on this account, though now for a little while you may be distressed by trials and suffer temptations, so that [the genuineness] of your faith may be tested, [your faith] which is infinitely more precious than the perishable gold which is tested and purified by fire. [This proving of your faith is intended] to redound to [your] praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed one) is revealed.

(Amplified Bible)

Peter tells us that our faith is infinitely more precious than perishable gold, though it is tested and purified by fire. The faith of the saints is not perishable. It will result in praise and glory that is unending and which will not fade away. Consider how much effort man has expended in his search for gold, this perishable metal that is precious to man. Wars have been fought over gold and entire nations have given themselves to the pursuit of it. Men have risked life and limb to recover gold that was lost in ancient shipwrecks. Men and women have cast all to the wind and embarked with great rigor and under the harshest of conditions when they have merely heard a rumor of gold.

There are many incredible tales of men who have sought for gold. Vast migrations of men have ensued when gold was discovered in some remote area. It is reported that in 1897-1898 that 20,000 to 30,000 men traversed the Chilkoot Pass on their way to the Yukon gold fields of Canada. A more remote area for prospecting can hardly be imagined. The Chilkoot Pass was itself over 500 miles from the gold fields, yet its rigors are typical of the hardships men and women endured in their search for this prized metal.

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The Chilkoot Trail stretches for 33 miles from Dyea to Lake Bennett. The Trail was rough, steep, and snow covered. The destination was Lake Bennett where the prospectors would have to build a boat to travel 550 miles down river to Dawson and the gold fields. The Canadian government knew that many hardships lay ahead for the gold seekers, and they required each person to carry a ton of goods up the pass, enough to last them approximately one year. This had the benefit of saving many lives, but it was an arduous task.

On average a man could carry about seventy pounds worth of supplies on his back, and this required that he would have to make the journey up and down the pass about thirty times. It took an average of several months for each man to carry his quota up the mountainous terrain. With all the trips back and forth along the trail, some men had to walk upwards of 2,000 miles, and half of this walk was with a heavy load on their back. All told, some gold seekers traveled nearly 5,000 miles from their homes to get to the gold fields.

The summit of the pass was reached with a final climb up 1,200 steps that were cut into the ice. These were called the “golden stairs”. The gold seeker had to leave his supplies at the top of the pass and mark his spot with a tall stake so that he could find it in the deep snow that was falling. Over seventy feet of snow was recorded in the years mentioned, and at one point the snow built up so deep along the trail that when a few warm days occurred in April a tremendous avalanche occurred that buried 63 people. As soon as the bodies were dug out and carried downhill, the trek began again.

All this time men and women were having to live in the most primitive of accommodations. They slept in tents in the frigid weather, and

lived on the most basic of diets. Once the prospectors reached the lake with their supplies they had to build a boat, which was a task most had never done before. Trees for miles around the lake were cut down, and each board had to be hand sawn using a whipsaw, a two man saw, and this was more back breaking labor. This was no small boat that had to be constructed, for it had to carry a ton of supplies, and many men worked in teams and were therefore transporting two tons of goods.

How were men able to bring themselves to endure such rigors? They had their eye on the prize set before them. They dreamed of gold and all that it could buy them. How much greater is the prize that lies ahead of the overcomer in Christ? It is of immeasurably greater value. Should we not be willing to endure some hardship as we pursue this faith which Yahweh so highly esteems? The apostle Paul stated that the glory to be revealed in the overcomer is not worthy to even be compared to the suffering that is the portion of the saints in Christ.

How were men able to bring themselves to endure such rigors?

There were those among the gold seekers who traveled the Chilkoot Pass on the way to the Yukon who became millionaires. The satisfaction that was theirs upon receiving the prize they sought was made all the sweeter as they recounted the arduous path they trod to attain it. There were also many men and women who arrived at the Pass, and upon seeing the great difficulty of it, they turned back and returned home. Those who endured had a satisfaction that could not be bought. I can imagine them telling their children and grandchildren of the struggle, the suffering, and the final victory they achieved. Yet all this was merely in pursuit

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of the gold that perishes. The overcomer in Christ has a much more illustrious, valuable and enduring prize set before them.

As much as I detest suffering in my flesh and my soul, it is a matter that I do not dare ignore. This life here on earth is fleeting, yet what we do in this mortal body will determine immense things for many long ages to come. We must grow past being so temporally minded.

Our faith, that is, our confidence in the love of God toward us, has much to do with our willingness to follow Christ down paths of suffering. We must believe that God only subjects us

We must believe that God only subjects us to that which is necessary.

to that which is necessary to help us that we might be presented before Him perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. We must be assured that all trials and

testing have a good goal in mind. God never tests us to make us fail, but rather that we might stand, and He provides tremendous grace that we might stand. The Son of God knows the difficulty of bearing the cross and drinking the cup of suffering. He therefore is perfectly equipped to stand as a High Priest on our behalf, making intercession for us, and bestowing an abundance of mercy and grace.

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Besides the Bible being a book of suffering, it is

also a book of assurance. These two things, suffering and assurance comprise the bulk of the message of Scripture. God does not just call the saints to suffer and then leave them on their own. He has given us plenteous assurance that He will be with us in everything, and that nothing can separate us from His love. The Old Testament is filled with histories of men and women who were led through trials and difficulties, and the victory that was theirs as God supported them, encouraged them, and gave them numerous confirmations of His love and presence with them.

Those who will go on to maturity and receive the reward of the overcomer are those who stand firm in their confidence of God's love for them. Those who are like the Israelites when God tested them at the Red Sea, who display no confidence in His love for them, will fail to follow Him down the paths He would lead them down. These will form gods after the fashion of the ones in Egypt; gods that will allow them to party and celebrate all the excesses of the flesh.

This is the message of the golden calf that Aaron made for the people of Israel to worship. Yahweh was too severe for them. Yahweh was hard on the flesh of the people, and they wanted a god that would not lead them to suffering, but to pleasure instead. So they fashioned this god of their own imagination and then they frolicked before it. Has not the church done the same thing today? Has not the church despised the message of the cross and the true image of Christ and formed for themselves another Christ and adopted another gospel that will allow their flesh to remain untouched, and which will allow their soul to pursue all that it desires?

Yet there is a remnant people, like unto the tribe of Levi of old, who have not joined in the

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worship of this false god. These ones will be selected as kings and priests to serve in the presence of Yahweh. These will be given access to His presence and to His most holy things. These will bear the image of Christ and share in His glory.

I do not blame anyone for not desiring to suffer. Christ Himself has sympathy for us in our trials. Yet He has testified that there is no other path to glory. The road is narrow and few there are that find it. I hope to be able to encourage my brothers and sisters in some small way to pursue the course before them. Do not shrink back, but cast yourself unreservedly into the hands of God. He is a just, merciful and loving God. In all we go through we will never be separated from His love. Is there anything more needful than the love of the One who holds our lives in His hands?

Prayer:

Father, may You have a host of glorified sons to come forth after the image of Your firstborn Son. Hold us to the course before us. You know our frame, that we are but dust. Have mercy upon us and pull us through when our strength and courage fails. Into Your hands we do commend our lives and we ask that You would deal with us as a loving Father with His willing children. Your mercies are new every morning. Lead us on the narrow path and hold tightly to our hand. Our hearts trust in You.

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PARABLES PRECEPT— The Bible



You might be surprised to find that even the names of the Old Testament books differ from the Scriptures used by the Jews and those used by Christians today.

The first five books in the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Tanakh are the same, but have different names. The names of the first five books in the Christian Bible are descriptive of

their contents, while in the Jewish Scriptures the names are derived from the opening words of each book.

Christians call the first book of the Bible *Genesis*. This is a word meaning “beginnings.” Genesis speaks of the beginnings of the creation, and the formation of man. The Jews call this book *Bereishit*, which means “in the beginning.”

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...

The second book in the Christian Bible is named *Exodus*. It is in this book that we read of Israel’s exodus from the land of Egypt, from which its name is derived. The Jews, however, call this book

Shemoth which is translated “Names.” Shemoth is the second word of this book, which in English reads as:

Exodus 1:1

Now these are the **names** of the children of Israel who came to Egypt...

The third book of the Christian Bible is *Leviticus*, a name that refers to the tribe of Levi, who were the priestly tribe of Israel. Levi is the focus of much of the book. The Jews call this book *Vayikra*, which is also taken from the first line of the book. Vayikra is translated as “and He called.”

Leviticus 1:1

And Yahweh **called** unto Moses...