

BIBLE LIGHT AND TRUTH

Reflections on Scripture

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

DAWN CHRISTADELPHIANS

“SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS
RIGHTEOUSNESS” MATT 6:23

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Before we look at the actual parable its only right that we first examine what a Pharisee and a publican actually were. The Pharisee's were a sect that according to Josephus numbered more than 6000. They were bitter enemies of Jesus and were in turn severely rebuked by him for their avarice, ambition, reliance on outward works, and show of piety in order to gain popularity.

A Publican was a collector of taxes or tolls or one employed by a publican in the collection of taxes. As a class the publicans were detested by the Jews and other nations also, because of their employment and the harshness and greed with which they did their job.

In the parable, two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a publican (tax collector NKJV). We read that the Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself. This may mean he stood alone, at a distance from the publican, as despising him. Certainly he prayed only with respect to himself; he was wholly intent upon himself and the commendation of self was the subject of his prayer. He said “God I thank You that I am

not like other men; extortioners, unjust, adulterers; or even as this tax collector”; maybe pointing to him with great scorn and disdain. He then tells God how ‘good’ he is “I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”

What of the publican's prayer? Well the publican and the way in which he prayed portrays a different picture. We read in Luke 17:13 of “the publican standing afar off.” This was done to testify the sense he had of his state and condition, and of his unworthiness. That he was afar off from God, and unworthy to draw nigh unto him and deserved to be kept at a distance from him forever. So it is said of the Israelites, that they trembled at Mount Sinai, and “stood afar off”, to show their humility and that they were under the Law.

This publican “would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven: But smote upon his breast”, pointing at the fountain of his sin; expressing by this action, his sorrow, and repentance for it. And this is the publicans actual prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

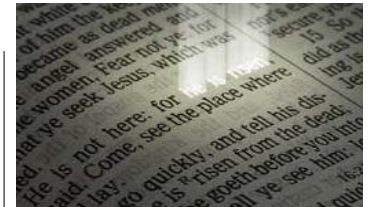
This is his prayer; a short, but a very full one. It was a con-

fession that he was a sinner deserving of the wrath of God, yet humbly trusting that He is willing to pardon iniquity, transgression, and sin. Therefore the publican was right in addressing Him by confession of sin and the petition to be “merciful” to him. It must be noted however that God forgives sin upon the basis of a reconciliation and that there is no pardoning mercy but through Christ. Thus David pleaded “for your names sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.” Psa 25:11

As we conclude this study what can we draw from it? Well, when you pray and are not sure what to say, then turn to the Lord's Prayer. This is the most powerful prayer you could ever say and sadly, I feel is not said enough.

We must strive every day to approach the Lord our God in prayer humbly: with humility, with fear, but most importantly with our hearts open and our heads bowed. We are sinners, but we are not Pharisees, we are tax collectors. We are stood afar off from all those in the world. So pray with your heart and not with ignorance.

Bro Lee Gane



Commandments of Christ

“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, casting all your care upon Him, He cares for you. Be anxious for nothing, in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” (1Pet 5:7; Phil 4:6)

A wonderful commandment to trust in Yahweh and know that in the trials and vagaries of life He cares for us. What child does not want to talk to its father and trust its father to provide for it. In like manner surely we desire to commune with our Father in Heaven who provides for all our needs. Israel faced trials in their wilderness journey to teach them to trust in Yahweh. Equally so our faith will be tested. Shall we complain as they did, or will we trust in His mercy to provide?

It is not always easy to remove anxiety for life has many cares and worries. Our attitude of mind must be that of the Lord Jesus saying “Your will be done”, submitting to Yahweh's will, whatever answer to prayer comes and expressing our thanksgiving for all that He does provide.

Ultimately our lives are not important when compared to the Kingdom to come. Jesus said “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”. If we do this, then we are promised “and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matt 6:33) AP

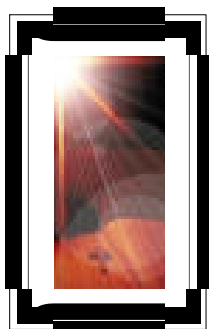
We are not part of the body of Christ....

..if our life is not devoted to the service and welfare of the body of Christ. This is the lesson of the scriptural type of the human body. Every member of the body (natural and spiritual) has a use and pur-

pose. Our ability and physical condition may make it quite small: but as long as we have life and consciousness, we must give of our best in loving service. This is the very essence of being allowed the

infinite privilege of being part of the Christ-body. It is only for the devoted. We are not part of the Body of Christ if our heart and mind and love are not centred in the body. R.G.

TO FIND A WIFE FOR ISAAC



Jesus said:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He worked in a carpentry shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher.

When the tide of popular opinion turned against him, his friends ran away.

He was turned over to his enemies.

He was tried and convicted.

He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves.

When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave.

He never wrote a book.

He never held an office.

He never owned a home.

He never went to college.

He never travelled more than 200 miles from the place where he was born.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness.

Yet all the armies that ever marched, and all the governments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, have not affected life upon this earth as powerfully as has that One Solitary Life.

(Author Unknown)

"ABRAHAM'S SERVANT TOOK TEN CAMELS"

"and departed...and went to Mesopotamia...to the city of Manor...and made his camels kneel down...by a well of water...at the time that women go out to draw water." (Genesis ch 24)

Camels can be of two kinds, the Bactrian two-humped (Asian) and the one-humped dromedary (Arabian). It seems likely that the Biblical camels were the latter, being used to hot dry sandy areas.

A camel eats vegetation, and leaves of trees, chewing the cud, and can store a large supply of food in the hump, which becomes floppy after periods of poor or scarce food. It carries water in its stomach, and can go for 3 days (25 miles a day) without refreshment. Swifter breeds can do more miles and go for a longer time between

drinks. It does not pant or sweat so does not lose moisture that way. A thirsty camel can drink several buckets of water. These habits and its swaying motion have earned it the title of "the ship of the desert", it being an ideal animal for transport. Its large footpads go well on sand, and in a sandstorm it lies down and stretches its neck along the sand, closing its nostrils and eyes.

A week-old camel is 3 feet high. It is not fully grown until it is 16 or 17 years old. It can live for 40 or 50 years. It has to be taught to kneel and rise at given signals and has to be trained to carry weights, starting at 4 years old. Eventually it can carry 400 lbs as well as a rider, but if overloaded will die under the weight. "It was the last straw that broke the camel's back" (proverb)

A camel is valuable as well as

useful. Its hair can be woven into clothes (John the Baptist wore some) and blankets: its milk is nutritious: its meat and skin are used by Arabs. Artists can obtain camel-hair brushes.

Camels were used as presents, e.g. from Pharaoh to Abraham: and from Jacob to Esau before meeting him. Job, before his suffering, had 3000 camels, and God gave him twice as many afterwards. (6000 !)

REBEKAH must have had a very generous nature to offer to draw water for the camels, and did so "until they had done drinking". The servant had travelled 500 or 600 miles from Abraham's home to Mesopotamia. He probably knew some watering holes on the way.

Camels' necks were often ornamented with gold chains and jewellery. Gideon removed some as booty (Judges 8:21,26). Sis D Oakley.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

As we look around us at a world in turmoil, we cannot fail to see the unmistakable signs of the approaching dawn. The Lord is at hand!

With this in mind the most pressing question that should exercise our thoughts is:

What will His coming mean to me?

I know the Truth and in the mercy of Yahweh have been called to be 'in Christ'. All that is needed for spiritual growth has been given to me and my cup indeed runs over with all blessings needed for life.

Many privileges are set before me and a wonderful hope lies ahead. True that hope is dimly seen now. But it will most surely come, just as surely as the sun rises each morning.

With such thoughts in mind these anxious thoughts arise:

How have I been using the riches committed into my care? Have I been using them wisely? Will my Lord be pleased with me?

When called out from this dark world was my heart wholly with the Lord or was some part still left in the world? Are my

affections set fully upon my King, or is my love divided betwixt Him and the world? The spirit word says: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

This world and all it contains is but a passing show, a mere drop in the ocean of eternity. My own life, brief as the grass of the field, springs up full of hope, but alas all dreams fade.

What then is our reasonable service? Surely the wise of heart cry out 'forsake all and follow the Lord'!

AP

Names and Titles of God 3

Name	Meaning	Example
Yahweh - Nissi	Yahweh my (or our) banner	Exodus 17:15
Yahweh - Jireh	Yahweh will see and provide	Genesis 22:14
Yahweh - Rapha or Ropheka	Yahweh that Healeth	Exodus 15:26

Other names or titles of God found in scripture are signified by an additional word added to the divine name Yahweh. Knowing what they are, can greatly enrich our understanding of God and His provision of salvation.