

BIBLE LIGHT AND TRUTH

Reflections on Scripture

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 9

DAWN CHRISTADELPHIANS

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

“PRAY ALWAYS AND FAINT NOT”

Prayer to Yahweh is a privilege that we frail mortal beings do not deserve. Prayer is a sublime and at times deeply moving experience. Prayer is the life blood of faith. An individual who does not engage in regular prayer will not find salvation. Prayer keeps Yahweh in our remembrance for He will soon fade from the minds of those who never pray and surely we do not want Him to fade from our minds!

Paul exhorted those to whom he wrote in Philippi saying:

"In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Phil 4:6).

Further Paul writes:

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess 5:15-18).

From our limited perspective Yahweh may often appear to be remote. He reigns supreme, dwelling in the heavens in inaccessible light. He is Holy and no man may enter into His presence, for sin separates us from Him. Yet He invites us to commune with Him through prayer, for the Lord cares for and loves His children. What child does not talk to its

father? Thus it is prayer that draws us near to Yahweh and He towards us.

Yet in reality He is never far away, for as Paul said, “in Him we live and move and have our being”. Now David wrote:

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."

It was a realisation of this awe inspiring fact, which spurred on the faithful of old to victory.

Meditation upon the privilege of prayer helps us to appreciate and recognise our personal utter dependence upon Yahweh. We must appreciate Him as the supreme provider of all that is needed for life, but also humbly accept that if He wills, then He may withhold what we seek, for He knows what is best. Above all, humble meditation on the types and examples of prayer throughout scripture teaches that of ourselves we can do nothing. Prayer is only acceptable when offered through our High Priest and Mediator - the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincere prayer and thanksgiving results in Yahweh being glorified and the mind is exercised to develop those characteristics that give Him pleasure.

Yet prayer is not only for ourselves, James writes:

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16).

It is of course the one utterly righteous man, the Lord Jesus, who set a supreme example of prayer. We read in the Psalms:

"Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession."

Jesus did ask, humbly, fervently and frequently, as Paul records:

“In the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear” (Heb 5:7).

His then is the supreme example for us to follow. If only that same depth of feeling, utter trust and deep desire to commune with Yahweh was within us.

Therefore with these things in mind let us
"Pray always and not faint."



Commandments of Christ

Give Christ a higher place than father, mother, husband, wife, children, houses and lands. (Luke 14:26; Matt. 10:37)

This commandment should make us think deeply about how prominent the Lord Jesus is in our lives. Could we in all honesty say, He has the highest place, even above our families?

Maybe we can accept the need for self sacrifice, the subjecting of personal desires to the will of God. Maybe we can conceive of leaving behind possessions if need be. However, it is more difficult when it comes to putting the Lord Jesus Christ in a place much higher than those we love or who are close to us.

When Jesus was told that his mother and brothers wanted to see Him, He answered: "*Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?*" Pointing to his disciples, he said, *Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.*" (Matt 12:48-50)

It is not that we should cease caring for our families, but our allegiances must always be centered upon doing the will of God. If family ties conflict with the Commandments of Christ, then service to Him must always come first.

Jesus said: "*Greater love has no-one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.*" (John 15:13) He has shown His love for us, and asks that we love Him in return. Saying "*If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.*" (v10)

So let us daily meditate upon His life and words, that our love for Him might grow ever stronger.



Jesus said:

"I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Creation

We thank Thee for the beauty, Lord,

*Of all the world around,
The glories of the changing scenes*

Which everywhere abound.

We thank Thee for the colour, Lord,

The shades of flower and tree,

The break of morn, the golden corn,

The sunsets that we see.

We thank Thee for the grandeur, Lord,

The torrent's mighty roar,

The mountains of majestic height,

The waves upon the shore.

We thank Thee for the silence, Lord,

The stillness and the peace,

For these and all Thy gifts to man

Our praise shall never cease.

(E.V.)

SELF EXAMINATION

Question to consider:

- Do I fully realise that my service in the Truth, no matter how modest it may be, is unto God, with whom there is no favouritism?

This HYMN OF PRAISE was written by the poet John Milton who lived 1608-1674.

He was well educated in English and Latin and was a prolific writer. His father was also a writer and a composer of music.

The Authorised Version of the BIBLE appeared in 1611 and it is evident that Milton was much influenced by his reading of this readable translation.

1. Let us with a gladsome mind. Praise the LORD for He is kind

Refrain: (after every verse)
For His mercies aye endure
Ever faithful, ever sure.

2. Let us blaze His name

"WHEN PRIDE COMETH, THEN COMETH SHAME" PROV. 11:2

If we believe the Bible, that should be sufficient to rule out pride. It is a guarantee that pride inevitably will lead to shame—the very thing that pride fears most. Pride is one of the most common and active characteristics of natural man.

The Bible groups the activities of the mind of the flesh under 3 heads—lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride. The lust of the flesh is all the physical desires of the body. The lust of the eye is the desire to possess and accumulate.

All the rest is pride—the desire to nourish self-esteem and attract the notice and praise of others. It causes people to paint their faces and wear showy clothing and jewellery, and to

HYMN OF PRAISE

abroad. For of gods He is the God:

3. He with all commanding might. Ruled the new-made world with light:
4. He the golden tress-ed sun. Caused all day his course to run:
5. The horn-ed moon to shine by night. Mid her spangled sisters bright:
6. All things living He doth feed. His full hand supplies their need:
7. **Let us with a gladsome mind. Praise the LORD for He is kind:**

For His mercies aye endure Ever faithful, ever sure.

John Milton also wrote two long and highly imaginative works, for which he is famous, one being "Paradise Lost" in 1667, (about the temptation of Adam and Eve, who gave in to temptation,) and "Paradise Regained" (about the temptation of Christ, who did not give in to temptation).



The sentiments expressed in the above hymn are still true; we can still

be in awe at the wonders of creation. The heavens are still telling; look up at night and see for yourself.

Sis D. Oakley

talk about themselves and their possessions and accomplishments, and to struggle to achieve social and economic advantages in the world. The proud glory in activities that would shame and embarrass the wise. Pride wears people out, and leaves them unhappy and unsatisfied. If we lose our temper, that is pride. If we think our feelings are offended, that is pride. If a man is truly wise and humble, it will be impossible to offend or annoy him. The more you try, the sorrier he will be for you and want to help you to become wise.

The most dangerous and hopeless form of pride is when it invades the spiritual realm and disguises itself as zeal and godliness. The apos-

tle warns, "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." This is not to say that we should refrain from seeking scriptural knowledge—the whole exhortation of Proverbs is the exact opposite of that—but we must seek, not merely the bare facts of knowledge, but the basic principles of wisdom.

There is no danger of true scriptural wisdom fostering pride. The purpose of scriptural knowledge is to teach us the naked truth about ourselves. It will drive out our pride—it will expose it and make it offensive to us. This is the great difference between the healthy effect of Divine wisdom and the blighting, puffing-up effect of worldly "wisdom."

(Anon)