

PARABLES

Bringing Hidden Things to Light



Psalms 78:2-4

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

Parables Bookshelf—Series 1.1.2

Inside this issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF you will find chapters 3-5 of the book *Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ*.

Although this book is a teaching on the basics of salvation through Christ, it may still challenge many people. There are some terms that are mentioned that a great many people would have a hard time defining, such as the word “atonement.”

Perhaps you have been a Christian for a long time. Some reading this may have been raised in church. Have you ever tried to describe what it means to be “saved”?

Why did God require that sins be paid for with the blood of bulls and goats and other animals in the Old Testament? Why did the Son of God have to die

for mankind, and shed His blood in order to mankind to be saved?

Can you answer these questions, and explain the matter clearly to others?

The apostle Paul said that these topics are elementary issues. They are like a child learning his ABCs, his colors, and how to read the face of a clock.

Hebrews 6:1-2

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Do you see how many things the apostle Paul describes as elementary

teachings in these verses? These topics cannot be skipped over. We must learn them well if we are to go on to deeper things.

A child cannot be taught fractions, multiplication, and division until he has first learned his numbers.

Even so, it is very important that you master these elementary topics that are the focus of the chapters of this book. You will find in this issue the answers to the questions I asked earlier. You will learn what atonement is. You will learn why blood had to be shed for sin to be forgiven.

These things are a mystery to most people, and few Christians understand them. If you will get these basics down, you will be well suited to go on to deeper things.

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Scripture Memory

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.1.2
- *Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ*
- Chapters 3-5

Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ

Chapter 3 - Christ Repairs the Breach

The first two chapters of this book could be summed up in the statement,

“All mankind is born under the dominion of sin, and this sin has caused a separation between man and God.”

It is my hope that you might understand and acknowledge these first two foundational truths that we might proceed further to build upon them. The

next foundation stone that needs to be laid is the understanding that sin always must be atoned for. The word atone actually came into existence by combining the words ‘at’ and ‘one.’ The underlying sense of the word is to bring forth a unity between two or more parties.

Adam and Eve’s sin caused a separation to occur between God and man. It was not Yahweh’s desire that this separation should remain. Sin, however, could not simply be forgotten. Sin always bears a cost, even as breaking the law of man incurs a penalty. To comprehend the penalty of sin, we need to understand a couple things.

As was mentioned in the last chapter, sin is actually a turning away from life to embrace death. What man needs is a return to life. God has determined that mankind can only be restored to life through the sacrifice of another life. In effect, someone, or something, must surrender their life in order for the penalty of sin to be blotted out and for life to be restored to mankind.

In the Old Testament we see that it was the life of an animal that served as this atoning sacrifice to bring man back into harmony with God. Sin had

to be covered by the blood of an animal. This animal effectually surrendered its life that man might not die, but might be restored to the life of God. This substitutionary sacrifice to deliver mankind from the penalty of death was most clearly seen in the Passover lamb.

For 430 years the descendants of Abraham dwelt as slaves in the land of Egypt. They were treated harshly and ruled over by stern taskmasters who put them to forced labor. Their condition was very bitter, and their history serves as one more parable that Yahweh has provided in order to lead us to understand spiritual truth.

The descendants of Abraham, were known as God’s chosen people. They stand as a type and shadow for the children of God today. We too have been subject to slavery from the moment of our birth. We are held under bondage to sin. This servitude is extremely vexing, and no matter how much we long to break free from sin’s dominion, we find that sin, like Pharaoh, is too strong for us. Sin/Pharaoh will not willingly allow any to leave their service. Even as Moses repeatedly told Pharaoh “Let my people go,” and Pharaoh refused to do so, so too does sin decline our repeated entreaties.

The children of Israel in bondage in Egypt is a parable of mankind in bondage to the sin that rules in their flesh. Israel was unable to leave Egypt until God performed one final act against the land of Egypt. God had already sent nine plagues upon the land, bringing judgments against that which enslaved His people. But one final judgment was yet to come, and only then could Israel go free.

Yahweh spoke to Moses and told him to inform the people to prepare to leave in haste. What was about to take place would foreshadow a day when Yahweh would suddenly free mankind from slavery to sin. He instructed all Israel to take a lamb into their households on the tenth day of the first

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month. It had to be a male lamb, one year old, and it had to be without spot or blemish. After the lamb lived with them in their home for several days, they were to slay the lamb on the fourteenth day of the month, and they were to place the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel at the entryway of their home.

Yahweh said that on that night He would send forth the death angel, and the firstborn male of every family in Egypt, and the firstborn male of all cattle, would die. Only if the death angel saw the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel of the home, he would pass over that home and none would die.

Although the Israelites did not understand it at the time, what they were signifying by the blood of the lamb applied to their doorways, is that this lamb was serving as a substitutionary sacrifice for them. This lamb was giving up its life that they might live. Prophetically this looked forward to the day when Yahweh would send His Son as a Passover lamb to shed His blood and surrender His life that mankind might live.

Sin must always be atoned for by blood. As the apostle Paul declared in the book of Hebrews:

Hebrews 9:22

And with blood almost all things are purified according to the law, and apart from blood-shedding forgiveness doth not come.

[Young's Literal Translation of the Bible]

Apart from blood-shedding forgiveness does not come! What is significant about the shedding of blood? The Scriptures declare the following:

Genesis 9:4

“You shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its

blood.”

Leviticus 17:11

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.”

The life of a creature is in the blood. As we study the Hebrew word used in these verses that is translated into English as *life*, we find that it is the word *nephesh*. This word is also translated as the English word *soul*. What God is revealing to mankind is that the blood of an animal contains its soul, and the soul of the animal is given to make atonement for the soul of man. “For it is the blood by reason of the (nephesh - soul) that makes atonement.”

It is important that all mankind understand that sin is never simply forgiven and forgotten. It must always be atoned for. “Apart from blood-shedding forgiveness does not come.” This makes the consequences of our sin very serious.

Consider for a moment how attached an Israelite family would become to the year old lamb that they brought into their home at Passover. For several days they would feed this lamb by hand. The children would play with it. It might even sleep in their beds. But on the night of the Passover they had to take this little lamb and kill it. They had to take the blood of the lamb and put it upon their door so that they would be spared by the death angel.

*the blood of an animal
contains its soul...*

I recently read a true story about some men who invited a minister to join them for lunch. They decided to serve lamb from a farm as the meat for lunch. One of the men came to the minister

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around two in the afternoon, and apologized that the lunch was not ready yet. He said that he and two other men had gone out earlier that morning to kill and butcher the lamb for their lunch. However, when they saw the lamb standing there, so trusting and innocent, they all began to bawl at the thought of killing it. It took them three hours before they were able to bring themselves to slay the lamb. I am sure that they were thinking of the Son of God who went as a lamb to the slaughter and freely laid down His life for man, and this was part of the reason for their great emotion.

The soul of one creature must be surrendered in place of the soul of another.

The penalty of sin is always death. The life of some creature must atone for sin. The soul of one creature must be surrendered in

place of the soul of another. By the death of one, another receives life.

Throughout the Old Testament Yahweh declared that the blood of animals could be used to atone for the sin of mankind. Bulls, goats, sheep, and even birds were killed, and their blood offered up to God in order to make atonement. These sacrifices were never permanent, and had to be offered again and again, until a perfect sacrifice should come that could make a perfect atonement for man. Only another man could make such an atonement, and this man had to be without sin, even as the Passover lamb had to be without spot or blemish. We understand that this perfect man was Yahshua, Yah's Salvation.

Hebrews 10:1

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

Hebrews 9:13-14

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

What is declared here is that the Law delivered to the children of Israel by the hand of Moses contained only a type and shadow of the perfect atonement that God would one day provide for the sin of man. The blood of bulls and goats would serve as a substitute for the life of man until the blood of the Son of God was freely given up as a perfect and eternal sacrifice on our behalf. When the Son of God gave His life as a ransom for the life of sinful mankind, He put away for all time the penalty of death that was the consequence of sin. Never again would another animal need to shed its blood to atone for sin.

I Corinthians 5:7

For Christ our Passover... has been sacrificed.

It is necessary for all men and women who wish to overcome their addictive behavior to understand these things. BEFORE victory over sin can be attained, the penalty of sin must be atoned for. You must be brought back to union with God in order to walk victoriously over sin, and union with God is only obtained as the penalty of death is paid. Yahshua has willingly given His life as a ransom for yours. He received death that you might receive the life of God.

Matthew 20:28

"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

It is imperative that you understand that sin can

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only be overcome through the life of God. When man sinned in the Garden of Eden he became separated from the life of God. Christ came to restore the breach. He came that we might have life once more.

John 14:6

Yahshua said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

There is only one way to attain spiritual life and be able to rule over the passions and desires of the flesh. Yahshua is the way. He has shed His blood as a ransom for mankind, but we must apply the blood to the doorposts of our heart. We must by faith claim the blood of Yahshua as the atoning sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sin.

Romans 10:8-11

"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Yahshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

You must have the penalty of sin atoned for. The sin that is present in your flesh, the power of sin that holds you captive and will not let you go, must be broken and its dominion over you destroyed. This breaking of sin's dominion is accomplished by the blood of the Passover Lamb being placed upon your life.

When Christ was crucified at the order of the Jewish High Priest, the Jewish leaders did not understand that they were acting out the foreordained plan of God. What they did in ignorance, and with

evil intent, God in His love and mercy had determined should be done to break the power of sin over mankind, and call a people back into fellowship with Himself. When Pilate, the Roman government official over the territory of Jerusalem, said he found no fault in Christ, he was acting as the Old Testament inspectors who were to examine the Passover lambs and insure they were without defect, spot, or blemish. Pilate examined Christ, and said, "I find no fault in this man." When Pilate hesitated to put an innocent man to death, the jealous Jewish religious leaders induced the people to demand that Christ be slain. We read.

Matthew 27:25

And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!"

Indeed, the blood of Christ was shed for all mankind. We must individually make public confession that we receive Christ's life as a ransom for our own. If you have not done this, I urge you to do so now. Then as a public testimony of your faith in that which Christ did on your behalf, the Scriptures instruct you to be baptized.

Baptism serves as a parable of what God has done for you through His Son.

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through His Son. A person is baptized by being submerged in water and then raised back up. Waters are symbolic of death. What is pictured in baptism is the believer being joined with Christ in His death. In effect one is testifying, "When Christ died, I died, for Christ died in my place." When one comes back out of the water it is symbolic of being joined with Christ in resurrection. Christ did not remain in the grave. On the third day after His crucifixion He rose again. Baptism is a symbol of the believer rising with Christ to a new life where sin no longer reigns over them.

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Romans 6:3-6

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Yahshua have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin...

Overcoming addiction is wrapped up in this issue of no longer being slaves to sin. There is only one way to be freed from sin, and therefore freed from

God has made a way for you to come out from the captivity of sin into the freedom of life in Christ.

addiction. This is by faith in the atoning work of Christ. Do you believe that He died to pay the penalty of your sin? Do you believe that He died that you might live?

Then confess it, and be baptized in obedience to the command of Christ. Begin to testify by your words and your actions, by confession and baptism, that God has made a way for you to come out from the captivity of sin into the freedom of life in Christ.

The following Scriptures testify of the awesome work of Christ as the deliverer of man from the captivity of sin and the penalty of death.

Luke 4:18-19

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.”

Colossians 1:13-14

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

What awesome things are proclaimed in these verses. Through Christ we have been delivered from the power of darkness. We can now walk as children of light. We have been redeemed, ransomed, atoned for, by the blood of Christ. We have received the forgiveness of sins. Hallelujah! Our sins caused a separation between us and God, but Christ has repaired the breach!

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Yahshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Chapter 4 – Faith to Believe

The foundation stones we have laid so far can be summed up in the following way:

- All mankind is born under the slavery of sin.
- Sin has caused a separation between God and man, and has brought death.
- The Son of God came to repair the breach and bear upon Himself the penalty for sin that man might live.

Yahweh has done all that was necessary to restore man to life and fellowship with Himself. Sacrificing His own Son that man might live was an act of the most profound love. Yahweh could have demanded that man bear the consequences of his sin, but He is a God of mercy and tremendous compassion, as the Scriptures state.

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Psalms 145:9-10

Yahweh is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works. All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Yahweh, and Your godly ones shall bless You.

Although Yahweh has done all that is necessary to provide atonement for the sin of man, and He has made a way for men and women to come back into fellowship with Himself, there is something required on our part. We must believe that these things that have been testified thus far in this book are true. Not all men and women acknowledge that they are slaves to sin. Not all recognize that death, both physical and spiritual, is the portion of mankind due to our sin. And not all men believe and confess that Yahshua is the only way to obtain forgiveness of sin and be restored to fellowship with God.

Our part is to both believe these things and confess them. Man has ever sought another way to cover over their sin. Men have often sought to cover their sin with some work of their own. They have sought to improve themselves, and thereby make themselves acceptable unto God. This was first symbolized in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve took fig leaves and sewed them together to cover their nakedness (Genesis 3:7). Yahweh judged their covering to be deficient and unacceptable. He then provided an acceptable covering for them.

Genesis 3:21

Yahweh God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

In order to make garments of skin, an animal had to be slain and blood had to be shed. The covering of nakedness is a spiritual parable of man's shameful sin being exposed before the eyes of God, and needing a covering. When Yahweh rejected the fig leaf covering of the man and woman, and provided His own covering, it is to be

understood that all man's attempts to resolve the problem of sin fall short of God's approval. As the Scriptures testify:

Isaiah 64:6

For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Even the wind could have blown apart the covering Adam and Eve made for themselves. Their covering was as a filthy garment, for it was made by the efforts of sinful man. Sinful man cannot cover themselves with righteousness. Their best attempts, their most righteous deeds, appear spotted and stained in the eyes of a Holy God. Only God could provide an acceptable covering.

Adam and Eve were the forebears of the entire human race. They had not had any children yet when they sinned. The Scriptures declare that we were all present in Adam at that moment, for we existed in the form of his seed from which all of mankind would arise.

When God made a covering for Adam He symbolically covered all of mankind, for we were yet in Adam. By doing so Yahweh was showing that a covering would one day be provided for the sin of the entire human race.

Not all men and women acknowledge that they are slaves to sin.

I John 2:1-2

If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yahshua Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

The word *propitiation* is found four times in the New Testament. There are two different Greek

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words that are translated into the English word *propitiation*, but both Greek words come from the same root. These are the Greek words *hilasterion*, and *hilasmos*. I have often looked up the meaning of Greek and Hebrew words in the reference work *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. In this book we find the following definition for the Greek word *hilasterion*.

an atoning victim, or (specially) the lid of the Ark (in the Temple)

This same reference work reveals that this Greek word is translated in two different ways. It is translated as *propitiation*, as well as *mercy seat*. When Yahweh gave Moses instructions for constructing the Tabernacle in the wilderness, He

God was demonstrating that He has made a provision for the sin of man to be forgiven...

also gave him directions for building the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was a wooden box overlaid with gold, and it had a lid of similar construction

that rested upon the top as a covering. This lid is often called The Mercy Seat.

I believe the words *Mercy Seat* are a poor translation, being misleading to most English speaking people. There is no seat upon the top of the ark, there is only a covering, or a lid. The Hebrew word used in the Old Testament which has been translated *mercy seat*, actually indicates a cover. All things in the Tabernacle's construction are symbolic, and serve as parables for spiritual truth. The lid of the ark, which I prefer to call the Merciful Covering, is a type and symbol of that which God uses to cover the sin of man.

A certain day was set aside by Yahweh to be commemorated year by year where an animal was to be slain as a sin offering for the people. The blood of this animal was to be sprinkled by the High Priest on, and in front of, the Merciful Covering that rested upon the Ark. This day was called "The

Day of Atonement." When the blood was sprinkled on this covering over the Ark, God would see and exercise mercy for the children of Israel by forgiving their sin.

We see then that Yahweh has given us many different parables to reveal His plan of salvation. In the covering of skins that God placed upon the man and woman, in the symbolism of Passover, and in the blood placed upon the covering of the Ark, God was demonstrating that He has made a provision for the sin of man to be forgiven, and for man to be restored to fellowship.

In the New Testament we read that when Christ was crucified He ascended into heaven and placed His own blood on the lid of the Ark, whose original has always been in heaven. Moses merely made a copy of that which was in heaven.

Hebrews 9:11-12

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

God has made a perfect provision for the sins of man to be atoned for. It is our part to believe that this is so, and to confess it. This belief is referred to by the word *faith*. Before Christ came and was crucified upon the cross on the day of Passover, the people of God looked forward in faith to that which God would do. When the Israelites shed the blood of animals as a sin offering, they were looking forward in faith to that which Christ would perform.

In the days of His life, many men and women observed the Son of God, and a number of them have borne witness as being present at His cruci-

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fixion, and also having seen Him after He arose from the dead. We have their testimony recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Further witness of these things is also recorded in the book of Acts, and in the other New Testament writings.

Those who saw Christ after His resurrection had the honor of seeing with their eyes, and touching with their hands, the risen Savior.

I John 1:1-4

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us - that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Yahshua Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

These early disciples were blessed if they believed and confessed those things that Christ accomplished through His death and resurrection. Since that day a much greater number of men and women have had to manifest faith in those things that they have not personally seen.

John 20:29

Yahshua says to him, "Because you have seen me, Thomas, you have believed; blessed are those who not having seen, have believed."

The faith to believe is not something that we can manufacture, nor is it present in the heart of all men and women. The faith to believe is given to mankind as a gift from God.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

This verse testifies that faith is a gift given to mankind by God. Other verses bear witness to this truth.

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...

God grants to some the faith to believe, while others are not granted this same gift during this age. Even as God is the only One who can provide a solution to mankind's problem with sin, He is also the initiator of reconciliation between God and man. He must choose to draw men to Himself, or no man would ever come to Him. He alone chooses those to whom He will display His mercy in this age.

God grants to some the faith to believe, while others are not granted this same gift during this age.

John 6:44

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..."

Romans 9:15-18

For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy... So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ

Are you sensing the Spirit of Christ drawing you to the Father, urging you to be reconciled to God through the blood of Christ? Do you have the faith to believe that Yahshua, the Son of God, is God's provision to release you from sin's captivity and to pay the penalty of your sin? Then God has granted you a great gift, and now is the time to receive that gift.

Do not say, "I believe these things to be true, but I may wait until a later time to confess these things and begin to obey God." If you reject the gift of

If you reject the gift of faith today, Yahweh is not obligated to present it to you at a later time.

faith today, Yahweh is not obligated to present it to you at a later time. Understanding that faith is not something that you can muster up on your own, you need to

come to God while the door is open and the Spirit is drawing you.

The Scriptures declare that God will not strive with man forever. He will not perpetually convict a man or woman of their sin and their need of being saved from its power and penalty. He has warned mankind that there is a point past which He will no longer strive with us, but will give us over to a reprobate mind to do those things that are evil. Do not be as the rebellious children of Israel whom Yahweh rejected.

Acts 7:51

"You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you."

Genesis 6:3

Then Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever..."

In the gospels a parable of Yahshua is recorded where He speaks of God's attempts to bring forth

good fruit from the life of a man or woman. The message contained in the parable is that although God is patient and longsuffering, He will not grant an endless amount of time for a person to repent of their life of sin and begin to produce the fruit of righteousness. He is patient, and He earnestly desires for each of those people whom He calls to receive the blessings of life in Christ, and the inheritance belonging to the overcomers in Christ. But if a man or woman stubbornly resists the work of the Holy Spirit He will uproot them and give them over to judgment.

Luke 13:6-9

And He began telling this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it, and did not find any. And he said to the vineyard-keeper, 'Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?' And he answered and said to him, 'Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.' "

Perhaps you have been experiencing the drawing of the Spirit for some time in your life. This is evidence of God's grace being given to you. He is extending to you a precious gift, the gift of faith. If you have not taken hold of this gift and begun to use it as the Lord intends, then I urge you to do so now. Confess your faith in what God has done for you and be baptized in obedience to the command of Christ. Embark now on a path of righteousness, breaking free from the captivity of sin.

Hebrews 4:7

"Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

Today, if you hear His voice, yield to the drawing of the Spirit of Christ. Tomorrow that voice might be silent. Then it will be too late. God has pro-

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vided a covering for mankind. We cannot be restored to God through our own self-efforts. The work that Yahweh has given to us is to believe.

John 6:29

Yahshua answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

Chapter 5 – Guided by the Spirit of Christ

Having laid a firm foundation upon faith in the Son of God, we are now able to build upward from the foundation. Faith is ever required of us as we progress further on with God and embrace a victorious life of overcoming sin. God has done much more for us than simply pay the penalty of our sin, and restore us once more to fellowship with Himself. He has made a provision for us to no longer be bound to sin's captivity. He has given us all that is necessary to walk righteously before Him.

Romans 6:11-14

Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Yahshua. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you...

Once we begin to exercise faith in the things God speaks to us, we must forever continue to manifest faith. We begin by believing that we are sinners, as He has testified. We believe that apart from God we can never break free of the bonds of sin. We believe that only in Christ is their deliverance and forgiveness for sin.

These things all require faith to believe and confess. Faith then requires that we begin to act upon the things God has said are true. If we confess that Christ has set us free from sin's dominion, then we must by faith begin to walk as free men. We must not believe the lie of Satan that we are still bound to his tyranny, and that we are not truly free from sin.

Consider once more the history of Israel as they left the captivity of Egypt, for it serves as a parable from which we can learn many more things. We read that on the night of the Passover that all the firstborn males in Egypt died, but the children of God who had placed the blood of the lamb on their door were passed over. Immediately after the death angel had brought this judgment against the land of Egypt, Pharaoh summoned Moses and told him that the children of Israel were free to leave. The Israelites then left in haste, for they already had made themselves ready.

All Israel departed from the land of Egypt on the night of the first Passover. They traveled out into the wilderness, and a short time later Pharaoh regretted that he had let them go. Pharaoh then gathered his army and set out after them with the thought of bringing them back to Egypt to serve as his slaves once more.

Yahshua shed His own blood that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and the penalty of death.

Once you begin to see this historical account as a spiritual parable, and you begin to recognize what various people and things stand for, it becomes easy to discern the meaning of the parable. Pharaoh is a type of Satan and sin. Mankind has been held captive under this harsh rule. God has sent a Deliverer to free us from sin's captivity. This deliverer is His Son. Yahshua shed His own blood that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and the penalty of death. He has brought us out of our slavery with a strong hand.

Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ

Satan had no power to resist God's Deliverer. He could only let his captives go free. Satan, however, has not resigned himself to this defeat. He pursues the people of God and seeks to bring them back into slavery to sin. The apostle Paul, recognizing this, exhorts the children of God to not allow this to happen. He says, "Consider yourselves to be dead to sin... Do not let sin reign in your mortal body."

Satan can only regain dominion over the child of God if they permit it. Through fear and unbelief a

Satan had no power to resist God's Deliverer.

Christian can be persuaded to return to a life of sin. If the child of God continues to manifest faith in God, believing and confessing that they are no longer bound to

sin, then Satan will be unable to bring them back to captivity.

Satan will not allow any of his former captives to leave without some attempt to bring them back. He often launches an attack by beginning to speak words of doubt and unbelief to the newborn Christian. He will say, "You don't really believe you are free from sin's dominion, do you? Remember all the times you thought to overcome sin in the past and you failed. It will happen again. My power over you is too great."

The Christian's defense under such attacks is the shield of faith. The Christian must respond, "It is true that I tried many times to overcome sin, and I failed. But I tried to overcome in my own strength. Now I have a mighty Savior. He has been tempted in all ways as I have, yet without sin. He has exchanged His life for my own. He has atoned for my sin. He has broken the rule of sin over my life, and now I am able to walk in victory."

Faith is our shield from the enemy, and our offensive weapon against him is the sword of the Spirit,

which is the word of God. When we confess the things that God has declared to be true, we wound the enemy and he is forced to withdraw from us. Although Satan will always seek to bring the Christian back to a life of sin, he can be resisted and overcome.

James 4:7

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

God brought a final judgment against Pharaoh at the Red Sea. God parted the waters of the sea and the Israelites walked through on dry land. When Pharaoh and his armies sought to follow the children of Israel, Yahweh sent confusion among them. Their chariots and horses could not drive straight. Then God closed the waters of the sea upon them and they drowned.

What is demonstrated here is that God will fight for us. The enemy will never be able to take the Christian captive again to slavery to sin as long as they trust God and follow Him. This last phrase is critical. Our victory over sin is only assured as we continue to trust God and obey Him. Had the Israelites not trusted God, and had they proven unwilling to cross the Red Sea as directed, the enemy could have taken them back as slaves.

Once Israel had left Egypt, Yahweh began to lead them in a most remarkable way. He sent a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night to be with them and to guide them. This pillar never left them, and it stands as a symbol of the Holy Spirit that is given to the Christian to always be with them, and to guide them in the way they are to go.

Exodus 13:21-22

Yahweh was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away

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the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

We are only assured of victory over sin as we are careful to follow the Spirit wherever He would lead us. Yahweh gave the Israelites the following instructions concerning the pillar.

Numbers 9:17-23

Whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. At the command of Yahweh the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of Yahweh they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep Yahweh's charge and not set out. If sometimes the cloud remained a few days over the tabernacle, according to the command of Yahweh they remained camped. Then according to the command of Yahweh they set out. If sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning, when the cloud was lifted in the morning, they would move out; or if it remained in the daytime and at night, whenever the cloud was lifted, they would set out. Whether it was two days or a month or a year that the cloud lingered over the tabernacle, staying above it, the sons of Israel remained camped and did not set out; but when it was lifted, they did set out. At the command of Yahweh they camped, and at the command of Yahweh they set out; they kept Yahweh's charge, according to the command of Yahweh through Moses.

God has provided a very clear and detailed account of this matter for mankind. The reason for doing so is that these words serve as instruction for His children today. Yahweh wants all men to understand the vital necessity of constantly looking to Him to know what His will is. What He says, we are to do. Where He says go, we are to go. When He says "Do not go," we are to stay put.

Our very lives, safety and continued liberty are dependent upon our obedience.

You may ask, "The Israelites had the pillar of cloud and of fire to follow. What has God given me to follow?" The

Christian is given the indwelling Holy Spirit. Yahweh has promised His Holy Spirit to all who ask Him for it. He knows we need the Spirit to walk as He would have us to. We need the Holy Spirit to overcome the sin that dwells in our flesh. We need the Holy Spirit to deliver us from our adversary, Satan.

Our very lives, safety and continued liberty are dependent upon our obedience.

Consider the message of the following parable of Christ as it relates to the Christian receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:5-13

Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your heavenly Father give**

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the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Receiving the Holy Spirit is similar to becoming a partaker of the atoning work of Christ in that both require faith. We must believe what Christ said here is true. We must believe that if we ask for the Spirit that we will receive it. We must believe that "all who ask receive." If we have confidence in

He will not withhold any good thing from His children, but He wants us to ask Him for these things...

God's character, knowing that He is a loving heavenly Father, then we will not doubt that He will provide that which His children ask for, and which they des-

perately need. He will not withhold any good thing from His children, but He wants us to ask Him for these things, and He wants us to trust Him.

The Holy Spirit is sent as the Helper to the children of God. He is unlike any other helper one can imagine. This Helper will make known to us the mind of the Father. He will reveal what the Father wants us to do in every situation. He will provide the strength we need to walk in righteousness, and to fend off the attacks of the enemy. This Helper knows our weaknesses, and in every area where we are weak He is strong and will supply the strength of God on our behalf.

Romans 8:12-16

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh - for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God...

Romans 8:26-27

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

What an awesome ministry the Spirit of Christ provides to the child of God! He enables us to overcome sin. He leads us. He bears witness to us that we are God's children, and that we belong to Him. He even helps empower our prayers when we do not know how to pray.

Yahshua said that He would send the Spirit to indwell His disciples, and that the Spirit would serve as His voice within them. The Spirit would lead them as a shepherd guides the sheep.

John 10:27

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me..."

Isaiah prophesied hundreds of years before it occurred, that God would send His Spirit to man to serve as a guide in all things. This Spirit would lead us as surely as the pillar of fire and cloud led the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Isaiah 30:20-21

He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. Your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

Our victory over addictive desires, and the passions that reside in our flesh, is only guaranteed as we go where God would have us to go, and do what He would have us to be doing. As we look

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further at the example of the Israelites in the wilderness we can see that they were only assured of victory when they closely followed where God told them to go. When they departed from the direction of God they had no power to resist their enemies.

The New Testament also reveals that following the Lord wherever He would lead us is vital to those who would walk as overcomers. In the book of Revelation we find the apostle John describing a vision of a group of overcoming saints standing with Christ on Mount Zion. Of these victorious believers we read the following:

Revelation 14:4-5

These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

This is a trait of all those who would walk in victory over sin, Satan and the world. They follow Christ wherever He would lead them.

*What an awesome
ministry the Spirit of
Christ provides to the child
of God!*

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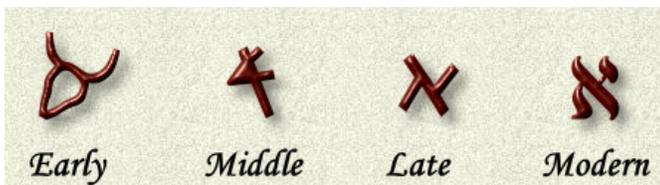
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PARABLES PRECEPT—The Hebrew Alphabet



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

The Aleph pictured above is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Our word "alphabet" is derived from the first two letters, which in Greek are Alpha and Beta. You can see the similarity in these names to the Hebrew, for the first two characters of the Hebrew "aleph-bet" are Aleph and Bet.

In the picture above are four representations of the letter Aleph. The first one, labeled "Early" is what is called Paleo-Hebrew. This is the earliest known Semitic Script. The Israelites were a Semitic people, which means they descended from the son of Noah whose name was

Shem.

The middle script shows the same letter as it evolved into a simpler form. This script was used by various Semitic

people, including the Moabites, Ammonites and Arameans. Abraham was an Aramean.

Around 1000 B.C., the Greeks adopted the Middle Semitic script, and it began its own evolution that is widely different in appearance from modern Hebrew today.

Because the descendants of Abraham were of Aramean descent, they used the Semitic script of their people.

When Judah and Jerusalem were taken captive into Babylon, their alphabet became greatly influenced by the Babylonians and underwent major changes. It became the Late Semitic script, and eventually the Modern box script

that is in use today.

Our English alphabet is traceable back to the Paleo-Hebrew. As mentioned, the Greeks adopted the Middle Semitic script, which is an adaptation of Paleo-Hebrew. The Roman Empire followed the Greek, and used the same alphabet. Our English alphabet is a Roman alphabet.

The Roman alphabet evolved over time to resemble what you are familiar with today. The graphic at the bottom shows the evolution of the Semitic Aleph into the English letter A.

Today we do not associate the letter A with the image of an ox-head, but that is what it was originally drawn to represent.

