



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 1.6.4

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF concludes the book *Christ in You - The Hope of Glory*.

Faith in God is a very practical matter. Many people say they trust God for their eternal salvation, but they are unwilling to trust Him for the simplest matters in this life.

It is not a real, living faith that speaks only of theoretical things. True faith will always manifest in the practical matters of life.

When you have a crisis in life, where is the first place you turn? Your actions will reveal where your faith lies.

Many people having a pressing financial need will turn to the banking system to meet their

needs. They will go into debt by paying for something with a credit card, or by taking out a loan.

These people have confidence that their need can be taken care of through these means. They have faith in the bank, which their eyes can see and their hands can touch.

Fewer people turn to God when they have a financial need. Most Christians have little experience in looking to the one they call FATHER to care for them in practical daily matters.

Some simply do not believe that God cares about their needs. It would be a pretty inattentive father who did not care about the needs of his sons and daughters. God is not

inattentive. We read that He has the very hairs on our head numbered.

Some may admit that God is attentive, but don't believe He cares about their daily needs. Christ also refuted this thought when He said that God even feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the lilies of the field.

So, why do Christians not manifest faith in practical matters?

The answer will vary for each person, and each circumstance. The truth is, however, that the course we choose will reveal whether we are being led by the Spirit of Christ, or are being led by our own soul.

Food for Thought

"It is the nature of faith to believe God upon His bare word.... 'It will not be,' says sense; 'It cannot be,' says reason; 'It both can and will be,' says faith, for I have a promise."

John Trapp

Scripture Memory

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

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Christ in You - The Hope of Glory!

Heart of a Son

Malachi 4:5-6

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Yahweh. **And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and the hearts of the sons to their fathers**, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

The two verses above from the prophet Malachi are the final verses of the Old Testament. Placement is significant in Scriptures. First occurrences and last

For too long the hearts of Yahweh's children have been turned away from Him.

occurrences alike hold a particular meaning. That which is last speaks of the goal, or the end result of a matter. So it is with these words. The Old Testament concludes with that which is most upon the

heart of God, Who is the Father of mankind. His heart is turned toward His sons, and He wants His sons hearts to be turned toward Him.

Malachi prophesied that Elijah the prophet would come prior to the great and terrible day of Yahweh. Elijah's entire ministry would be focused upon restoring fathers and sons. Although there is certainly an earthly application of this verse, it also stands as a parable of the ultimate relationship between Father and sons, between Yahweh and His offspring.

For too long the hearts of Yahweh's children have been turned away from Him. Mankind has occupied himself with many vain pursuits. Even in his religious pursuits man has seldom manifested a heart after God's own. The Davids have been far outnumbered by the Sauls.

The Old Testament opens with God creating man with the express intent of providing God with sons in His own image and likeness. The Old Testament ends with the thought uppermost on Yahweh's mind. He wants His sons' hearts to be turned to-

ward Him.

Next we find the New Testament opening with the story of Yahshua, the firstborn Son of God. He was the first son born of woman and born of God. He set the pattern for the sons who would follow, for His heart was always set upon His Father. He lived to do the Father's pleasure. His very meat, that which sustained Him and gave Him life, was the opportunity to do His Father's will.

John 4:34

"My food is to do the pleasure of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

Hebrews 10:7

"Then I said, 'Behold, **I have come** - in the volume of the book it is written of Me - **to do Your pleasure, O God.**'"

Yahshua revealed the kind of heart that endears a son to the Father. Of this firstborn Son, the Father declared:

Matthew 3:17

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

This relationship of the Father's heart turned to the Son, and the Son's heart turned to the Father, both in perfect devotion to one another, is a pattern for that which Yahweh desires with all of His sons. He wants sons who live for one purpose alone: to do the pleasure of the Father who created them.

Revelation 4:11

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, **and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

Consider the implications of the following words of the apostle Paul:

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I Corinthians 7:32-35

But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, **how he may please the Lord**; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but **to promote what is seemly, and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.**

Forget for a moment that Paul is speaking of whether one should marry or not marry. The underlying theme of his words is “to promote what is seemly, and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.” The word seemly in the Greek means “well formed, attractive.” Who is the judge of what is attractive? God is the judge. What does He esteem to be attractive in His sight? It is to have sons who have an undivided devotion to their Father in heaven.

Yahweh’s sons, even in this late hour, are not undivided in their devotion. They have many other concerns in this world. This is not His desire and will. The harvest is at hand. It is time to loose oneself from all entanglements; to be free from all that competes for our devotion to Christ.

II Timothy 2:4

No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

II Corinthians 11:2-3

For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.** But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from **the**

simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

The apostle evokes an image of the saints being espoused to Christ as a pure virgin. The church is to have eyes for no other loves or lovers. Her heart should be manifesting a singleness of devotion for the One who gave all to purchase her.

This message of Yahweh desiring sons whose hearts are totally devoted to His will and pleasure is everywhere throughout Scriptures. Yet how divided have been the hearts of God’s sons. If things remain as they are Yahweh will have to come and strike the earth with a curse. To prevent this, Yahweh will send Elijah before the great and terrible day of His judgment. Elijah will turn the hearts of God’s sons back to Him. Elijah came before the firstborn Son of God was revealed to the world, and Elijah will come again before the end when the full number of the firstborn sons of God are revealed.

The Elijah ministry will be one of casting down all idolatry in the hearts of God’s saints. Even as Elijah confronted the children of God at Mount Carmel, telling them to choose who they would be devoted unto, Yahweh or Baal, he will come again and demand that the people of God choose. It is unacceptable unto Yahweh that His sons should have divided hearts. He will not allow any son to enter into the glory of the firstborn who has a divided heart.

The church is to have eyes for no other loves or lovers.

I Kings 18:21

And Elijah came near to all the people and said, **"How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If Yahweh is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him."**

Today the Holy Spirit would declare, “If Yahweh is truly your Father, then present to Him an undivided heart. Have no other ambition than to do Yahweh’s pleasure.”

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Matthew 22:37-38

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment.”

Yahweh is seeking sons with fiery hearts that yearn to do His will and bring Him pleasure. He wants

Yahshua did not come to earth to serve himself...

sons who esteem all the allure of the world as refuse; its possessions, its pastimes, its entertainment, its idols. He wants sons who will not be sucked into the pursuit of

things which will perish, but who will jealously guard against any thing that would distract them from a pure devotion to their Father.

The churches are filled today with Christians who call God “Father.” Yet these ones do not have undivided hearts of devotion toward Him. They give themselves to a life chasing after houses and lands and cars and entertainment. They spend their hours in front of the television. They go to ball games and car races and spend endless time and money shopping for things they think will bring them happiness. All the while the Father waits for them to turn their hearts toward Him.

If you would attain to the first resurrection and the glory of the firstborn sons of God, then you must have a single eye, a focus upon satisfying the heart of the Father who created you. The Spirit is present within the sons of God, crying out “Abba, Father,” yet the voice of the Spirit has been quenched and grieved as God’s children have been turned aside to other pursuits.

Yahshua is the model, the standard, and pattern for all other sons to emulate. Observe the depth of devotion to the Father in His words:

John 5:30

“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I

hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because ***I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.***”

John 8:28-29

“When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for ***I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.***”

John 14:31

“But so that the world may know that I love the Father, ***I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.***”

John 17:4

“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”

Yahshua did not come to earth to serve himself or to pander to the desires of men. He came to fully satisfy the desire of the Father. As much as Yahshua loves mankind, He does not have a man-centric viewpoint. Yahshua lives to do the will of the Father. In another place He said, “I was always beholding the Father.” In declaring this, Yahshua was letting His disciples know where He placed His focus. He was not living for man. He was not living for self. He was living for the Father.

If we would be conformed to the image of Christ then we must also adopt such a view. This is not usually how the saints are presented with the gospel. The gospel presentation today is predominantly man-centered, and in order to grow to maturity the saint must lay aside this selfish perspective and begin to seek the will of the Father above all other things.

To become God-centered in our thinking we must

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have our minds completely overturned. No longer can we judge all matters by what is in it for us. We must discern what Yahweh's desire is concerning every event. This is true of salvation and the gospel of Christ as well. Salvation is almost always viewed from a man-centered perspective, but we must realize that Yahshua went to the cross out of obedience to the Father. Although Yahshua loved mankind, He loved His Father more. The Father had a desire that He longed to see fulfilled. He had a work for His Son to accomplish, and out of love for the Father, Yahshua went to the cross. Though salvation touches man deeply, it primarily exists to fulfill a desire of the Father. Yahweh wanted sons after His own image and likeness.

If we are to "put on Christ," then we must have the same attitude that was in Christ. We must seek the pleasure of the Father above all else. As we already read in Scripture, all things were created for Yahweh's pleasure, man included. The New Testament is filled with verses that reveal the call to bring pleasure to God as the chief duty of man. This message of the sons of God having a focus on the pleasure of their Father is everywhere, but it has been obscured by poor translation of certain Greek words.

The word for pleasure in the Greek is 'thelema.' The King James Version of the Bible has translated this Greek word three different ways, as 'desire,' 'pleasure,' and 'will.' 'Pleasure' is the most appropriate rendering in the majority of occurrences. Sadly, the popular English translations have most often chosen to translate this word as 'will.' Doing so changes the entire complexion of what is being spoken. It is one thing to say man is called to do God's will. It is quite another to say He is created to do God's pleasure.

Consider the following verses and how the entire complexion of the verse is changed by translating this word correctly.

Matthew 6:9-10

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father

which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy **will** be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Now let's substitute the word pleasure:

Matthew 6:9-10

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy **pleasure** be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Is it not accurate to say that Yahweh's pleasure is done in heaven? The Son does not simply live to do the **will** of the Father, but He lives to do the **pleasure** of the Father. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father, and He ever seeks the Father's pleasure. We read where Christ said, "I always do those things that are **pleasing** to Him" (John 8:29). Yahshua was not merely a dutiful servant of the Father. He was a loving Son who longed to bring pleasure to His Father.

*We must seek the
pleasure of the Father
above all else.*

Let us look at another verse:

Matthew 12:50

For whosoever shall do the **will** of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

By using the word "will" in many of these Scriptures, we often form an image of something that is done as an act of the will alone. It is easy to form a picture of some slavish subservience that is done merely as an act of obedience. But let us view this same Scripture using the word "pleasure".

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Matthew 12:50

For whosoever shall do the **pleasure** of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

When we use the word pleasure, this verse now takes on a more emotional meaning. No longer do we picture something that is simply an act of the will, but now it is a matter of delight and privilege. When we consistently render this word “thelema” as pleasure throughout the New Testament, many

This is the role of sons, to bring pleasure to their Father.

Scriptures take on a new vitality. Now we are able to see the satisfaction of the Father in the word of God, and it becomes more apparent that man has been called to not

merely bring a dutiful obedience to God, but to provide Him great pleasure. This is the role of sons, to bring pleasure to their Father.

I am going to list more Scriptures that contain this Greek word for pleasure. As you read them consider the desire the Father has toward you as His Son. We are to live for His pleasure, for our love for Him is to be undivided.

Matthew 7:21

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the **pleasure** of My Father in heaven."

John 4:34-35

Yahshua said to them, "My food is to do the **pleasure** of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

John 5:30

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own **pleasure** but the **pleasure** of the Father who sent Me.

John 9:30-31

Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His **pleasure**, He hears him.

Acts 13:22-23

He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My **pleasure**.'

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect **pleasure** of God.

I Corinthians 1:1

Paul, called to be an apostle of Yahshua the Messiah through the **pleasure** of God...

Ephesians 1:5

Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Yahshua the Messiah to Himself, according to the delight of His **pleasure**...

Ephesians 5:17-18

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the **pleasure** of the Lord is.

Ephesians 6:5-6

Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters..., not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the **pleasure** of God from the heart...

I Thessaalonians 4:3

For this is the **pleasure** of God, your sanctification...

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Hebrews 13:21-22

Now may the God of peace... make you complete in every good work to do His **pleasure**, working in you what is **well pleasing** in His sight, through Yahshua the Messiah, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

I Peter 4:1-2

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the **pleasure** of God.

I John 2:17

And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the **pleasure** of God abides forever.

The witness of the Scriptures are clear. As sons, we are called to seek the pleasure of our Father. What are you seeking in your life. Are you living for the pursuit of your own happiness, satisfaction and pleasure?

I Timothy 5:6

She who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

Have you become entangled in the affairs of this life? Are you spending time, energy and money on things which have no bearing on your relationship to the Father and your call to accomplish the work He has appointed unto you? If so, then now is the time to disentangle yourself. Now is the time to wrest yourself free from all that has divided you from a pure devotion to your heavenly Father.

James 4:8

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

As the offspring of Yahshua, we have the opportunity to be like Him, a son devoted to the pleasure of the Father. What an awesome thought! Consider how men love to bring delight to some honored person, an employer or supervisor, some wealthy acquaintance, someone who is famous or admired. Men and women are often beside themselves with a sense of their accomplishment when they have brought delight to such a one. Some person may spend the rest of their life re-telling a story of how they were of service to the Queen of England, or how they once impressed some admired individual. But we have an opportunity to bring delight to the God of the Universe. We can bring joy to the heart of the One who spoke and the worlds were framed. Before us is set the possibility of satisfying the inner longing of the One who is the great I AM.

This is the magnificent opportunity set before the sons of God. We have been created for God's pleasure!

The Father's Work

Yahweh has designed this present world in such a way that His sons might know His ways, and walk in an understanding manner before Him. One thing that has been common to all men is having a vocation or occupation. Although there have been some very affluent and decadent societies where men have received entitlements and given themselves to a pursuit of leisure activity, such has been an exception and not the norm.

*As the offspring of
Yahshua, we have the
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Him...*

Throughout the Scriptures, and particularly in the Old Testament, we find that almost without deviation sons were trained in the same vocation as their father. This was necessary in many instances, for the sons stood to inherit all that their father possessed. If a man was the owner of flocks and herds, then it was necessary that his sons be trained in animal husbandry. This pattern is readily seen in the

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life of Jacob (Israel) and his sons.

Genesis 37:2

Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.

Genesis 37:12-14

Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "I will go." Then he said to him, "Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock; and bring word back to me."

We see in these verses that not only were Jacob's sons trained to perform the work that Jacob formerly did in his youth,

As sons of God, we are called to share in our Father's work.

but they were called to give an accounting of their performance. Jacob's sons were not faithful in their duties, and Joseph brought back an evil report of their

conduct. This caused Joseph to be hated of his brothers.

As sons of God, we are similarly called to share in our Father's work. We will also have to give an account of our performance.

II Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Much will be required of those who have been made partakers of the Spirit of Christ and who have re-

ceived the word of God.

Luke 12:48

And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

The message of having to give an account of the stewardship of the things entrusted to the sons of God is found profusely throughout the Bible. Many Christians are deceived in thinking that they are not called as ministers of the Gospel of Christ. They have been deluded by the lie of the clergy/laity doctrine. The Scriptures plainly reveal that the work of ministers is to prepare the body of Christ to do the work of God.

Ephesians 4:11-12

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ***for the equipping of the saints for the work of service...***

If you are not called to function in one of the ministries named above, then you are called to perform "the work of service." What is the work of service? It is doing whatever God has appointed as your particular work, for He has formed all of His children to fit into the body of Christ as a functioning part of the whole, each one providing what is lacking in the other members of the body.

Ephesians 4:15-16

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom ***the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.***

God did not place any of His children in the body to simply consume those things that others supply.

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There is a job assignment, a proper functioning of each individual member. Will not God be right to judge severely the vast number of idle members of the body who are paying no regard to that which they have been called to supply to the rest of the body? Please read the following parable of Yahshua carefully. He is speaking of the day of His return, and the recompense of all those who are in His household. If you are a child of God, then you are pictured somewhere in this story.

Matthew 25:13-30

“Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour [of the Lord’s return]. For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away and dug in the ground, and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. And the one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have gained five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.’ The one also who had received the two talents came up and said, ‘Master, you entrusted to me two talents; see, I have gained two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, **‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground; see, you have what is yours.’** But his master answered and said to him, **‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have**

put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’ For to everyone who has shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. **And cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**”

There are no members of God’s household who have not been entrusted with a deposit by which they can bring increase to the kingdom of God. All who have been born of the Spirit of Christ have received the Spirit of God to indwell them. They have each been allotted a measure of faith.

You should tremble at Christ’s parable.

Romans 12:3-8

God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. And since **we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us**, let each exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

You may discern that you are not gifted to the same degree as another. This may be true enough, for each is granted a measure of faith and grace. You may have the equivalent of one talent of gold, while another has five talents. You as surely have the Spirit of Christ indwelling you as every other member of the body of Christ. Will you be as the wicked servant and take this treasure and bury it in the earth of your flesh, bringing forth no return for the King? You should tremble at Christ’s parable. He

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calls such members of His household “wicked” and “lazy.” Heed the advice that Paul gave to Timothy.

I Timothy 4:14

Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you...

II Timothy 1:6

For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you...

In other words, employ that which God has given you. Stir yourself up. Arouse yourself from slumber. Do you not know that you will give an account of your stewardship of the gift of God? Do not allow yourself to be lulled to lethargy by the dullness of others. God will bring you to account for that which has been entrusted to you. Do not allow yourself to be cast into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Your Father in heaven is set about a work at this time. He is seeking to bring His sons and daughters to maturity, to the perfect image of His firstborn Son. He has called all in His family to enter into this work. Perhaps your part in this work is not a front line ministry. Will

The body suffers when a part does not perform its allotted task.

you say because you are not an eye that you are not a part of the body? All parts of the body are vital, and the body suffers when a part does not perform its allotted task.

One of the biggest killers among mankind is cancer. There are a wide variety of cancers. There is breast cancer, lung cancer, pancreatic cancer, cancer of the brain, of the lymph nodes of the prostate. There are so many types of cancer that I would weary you naming them all. Do you know what causes cancer? Cancer occurs when a cell ceases to perform the function it was intended for, and it begins to draw away the body's resources for other purposes. One cancer cell begins to replicate other cancer cells just like it. They are not performing any helpful bodily

function, but begin to disrupt the bodies proper functioning. These independent cells continue to replicate until they spread so far throughout the body that sickness and death occurs.

Cancer is a spiritual parable of what is occurring in the body of Christ. There are multitudes of God's children who are living independent of the purpose for which God created them. They demonstrate no concern for the rest of the body. They are focused only upon self. They are not submitted to the design of the One who created them. Each day they arise and go about whatever activities they have chosen for themselves. They are without concern that their independent actions are acting as a drag on the rest of the body of Christ. Perhaps they are surrounded by other Christians who are living identically, and like a cancer cell in the midst of many others, they compare themselves among themselves and judge that they must be alright for all others appear just as they do.

What will the Great Physician do when He comes and finds this sickness in the body of Christ? He will cast out these worthless members of His body into outer darkness.

As a Christian there is a specific work appointed to you. You have been given a deposit of the Spirit of Christ, a measure of faith and grace. You have been entrusted with some gift whereby you can supply what is lacking in another part. Yahshua understood from a very young age that as a son He was called to be about His Father's business.

Luke 2:49

And He said to them, How is it that you had to look for Me? ***Did you not see and know that it is necessary as a duty for Me to be in My Father's house and occupied about My Father's business?***

[Amplified Bible]

Yahshua revealed through His words that He recognized that it was His duty to be doing the work of

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His Father.

John 4:34

“My food is to do the pleasure of Him who sent Me and **to accomplish His work.**”

John 5:17-18

But He answered them, "**My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.**"

John 6:38-39

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

John 17:4

"I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do."

John 5:36

"But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for **the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish**, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

John 9:4-5

"We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work."

It is certain that our heavenly Father has a specific work for each of His sons. As disciples of Yahshua we are to be as focused upon apprehending exactly what that work is, and accomplishing that work, as was He. The Scriptures reveal that Yahweh has a very specific work for each son. None are to decide for themselves what this work will be. The Spirit of God will reveal it.

Acts 13:2

And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, **the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."**

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Yahshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

Consider the natural example of a son who is being trained by his father to perform a job with skill, integrity and mature responsibility. A young boy may enter into his father's workshop to learn the trade of cabinet making. At first he is enthused by all the equipment and the thought of creating a masterful work that others will admire. He may want to jump right in and get to work, but there is much he must learn first. There are foundational principles to be learned, such as understanding the mathematics of cabinet work. He must learn how to measure all things precisely, and to calculate angles and understand basic geometry. He must learn the proper operation of all the tools in the cabinet maker's workshop. He must understand proper safety procedures, and know how to cut and sand and shape wood without damaging it, or creating unnecessary waste.

Our heavenly Father has a specific work for each of His sons.

The young man must also learn the discipline of patience, for a professional job cannot be rushed. A piece of wood must be sanded and stained. It must be varnished and sanded again, and then more varnish applied. All things must be done at a proper time, in the right sequence, or the work will be marred. If the second coat of varnish is applied before the first has had time to dry, the finish will suffer in quality and appearance.

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A young boy will not naturally be willing to exercise the patience necessary to do a job correctly, nor does he yet have the skill which comes only from experience. Should his father let him enter the work too soon, he will produce a flawed piece of work, and will inevitably meet with disappointment. If the son doesn't share the same spirit as his father who is a master craftsman valuing quality, beauty and integrity, he will not be willing to submit to the discipline required to acquire the skill manifested by the father.

Many of God's sons today do not value things as He does. Their hearts are filled with another spirit. They are seeking pleasure and ease and comfort and

Many of God's sons today do not value things as He does...

things for self. Accomplishing the work of the Father is not something that grips their heart. Due to this, they are unwilling to submit to the preparation which is necessary

for their equipping. There is much that seems tedious, difficult, and dreary to them. They reason, why should I make my life a drudgery when others are enjoying many pleasant pursuits?

Whatever the Spirit would direct us to do now in this age is merely preparatory for the greater works to come. Do you think any who walk in careless disregard for the Father's will in this age will be automatically transformed by the process of death and resurrection and be counted among the faithful in the ages to come. I tell you they will not. Those who resist the discipline of sons now in this age, will disqualify themselves for the crown that could have been their in the age to come.

Revelation 3:11

"I am coming quickly; *hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.*"

Several decades ago Bill Britton related a vision he had that brings forth the truths in focus here, making them easily understood.

The Harness of the Lord (Bill Britton)

There is a terrific operation of the Spirit going on today to bring the Sons of God into an absolute confinement to the perfect will of God. This is the Day of His Preparation, the day in which He is preparing the channel through which He shall pour forth His Glory for all the world to see. This channel is His Body in the earth, that glorious company of people who are being conformed through much tribulation and fiery tests to the Image of the Son of God. This is His "battle axe and weapons of war" with which He shall subdue kingdoms and overcome all His enemies. This is His "mighty and strong One" to whom He shall commit the work of judging this world. This is His Overcomer, His "great army" with which He shall bring the nations into submission. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, natural weapons, but they are mighty weapons, mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. These are those who shall "be strong and do exploits."

But before God can commit this great and tremendous ministry into their hands, they must submit themselves to the discipline of the Lord, letting Him truly be the Lord of their entire lives. We have long since dealt with the question of open sin, but now God is dealing with the inward rebellion of our own wills. Some good Christians are not now being so dealt with, for they are not in this Firstfruits Company, but nevertheless there is a real dealing of God going on within those who are called into the High Calling of God. This is a very real thing, and is the work of the Refiner's Fire. To those who are going through it, some of its aspects are horrible, but very necessary, and the end result thereof is glorious as we are brought into absolute and complete submission to the will of our Lord.

It was in a minister's conference and convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma that God gave me a vision which I want to share with you concerning this harnessing of our own wills. There were more than 30 ministers present in this particular Thursday morning service, and God, the Father of spirits, was present to deal with His sons, to correct them and discipline them to absolute obedience to His will. There was such a

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stern dealing in the Spirit that no one could go to the pulpit and minister, there was a reluctance among the ministers to say anything except that which was directly ordered by the Spirit. And as those men of God sat there in the awesome presence of Almighty God, some of them having many years of ministry, some missionaries, all of them capable of getting up and preaching a powerful sermon, I was impressed by the way they responded to the discipline of the Spirit. And in the midst of this terrific dealing of God with our spirits, the Holy Ghost gave me a vision.....

I Saw the King's Carriage

On a dirt road in the middle of a wide field stood a beautiful carriage, something on the order of a stagecoach, but all edged in gold, and with beautiful carvings. It was pulled by six large chestnut horses, two in the lead, two in the middle and two in the rear. But they were not moving, they were not pulling the carriage, and I wondered why. Then I saw the driver underneath the carriage, on the ground on his back, just behind the last two horses' heels, working on something between the front wheels of the carriage. I thought, "My, he is in a dangerous place; for if one of those horses kicked or stepped back, they could kill him, or if they decided to go forward, or got frightened somehow, they would pull the carriage right over him." But he didn't seem afraid, for he knew that those horses were disciplined and would not move till he told them to move. The horses were not stamping their feet nor acting restless, and though there were bells on their feet, the bells were not tinkling. There were pom-poms on their harness over their heads, but the pom-poms were not moving. They were simply standing still and quiet, waiting for the voice of the Master.

There were Two Young Colts in the Field

As I watched the harnessed horses, I noticed two young colts coming out of the open field, and they approached the carriage and seemed to say to the horses: "Come and play with us, we have many fine games, we will race with you, come catch us....."

And with that the colts kicked up their heels, flicked their tails and raced across the open field. But when they looked back and saw the horses were not following, they were puzzled. They knew nothing of harnesses, and could not understand why the horses did not want to play. So they called to them: "Why do you not race with us? Are you tired? Are you too weak? Do you not have strength to run? You are much too solemn, you need more joy in life." But the horses answered not a word, nor did they stamp their feet or toss their heads. But they stood, quiet and still, waiting for the voice of the Master.

Again the colts called to them: "Why do you stand so in the hot sun? Come over here in the shade of this nice tree. See how green the grass is? You must be hungry, come and feed with us, it is so green and so good. You look thirsty, come drink of one of our many streams of cool clear water." But the horses answered them with not so much as a glance, but stood still, waiting for the command to go forward with the King.

Colts in the Master's Corral

And then the scene changed, and I saw lariat nooses fall around the necks of the two colts, and they were led off to the Master's corral for training and discipline. How sad they were as the lovely green fields disappeared, and they were put into the confinement of the Corral with its brown dirt and high fence. The colts ran from fence to fence, seeking freedom, but found that they were confined to this place of training. And then the Trainer began to work on them, with his Whip and His Bridle.

I saw lariat nooses fall around the necks of the two colts...

What a death for those who had been all their lives accustomed to such a freedom! They could not understand the reason for this torture, this terrible discipline. What great crime had they done to deserve this? Little did they know of the responsibility that was to be theirs when they had submitted to the discipline, learned to perfectly obey the Master, and finished their training. All they knew was that this processing was

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the most horrible thing they had ever known.

Submission and Rebellion

One of the colts rebelled under the training, and said, "This is not for me. I like my freedom, my green hills, my flowing streams of fresh water. I will not take any more of this confinement, this terrible training." So he found a way out, jumped the fence and ran happily back to the meadows of grass. And I was astonished that the Master let him go, and went not after him. But He devoted His attention to the remaining colt. This colt, though he had the same opportunity to escape, decided to submit his own will, and learn the ways of the Master. And the training got harder than ever, but he was rapidly learning more and more how to obey the slightest wish of the Master, and to respond to even the quietness of His voice. And I saw that had there been no training, no testing, there would have been neither submission nor rebellion from either of the colts. For in the field they did not have the choice to rebel or submit, they were sinless in their innocence. But when brought to the place of testing and training and discipline, then was made manifest the obedience of one and the rebellion that lay hidden in the heart of the other. And though it seemed safer not to come to the place of discipline because of the risk of being found rebellious, yet I saw that without this there could be no sharing of His glory, no Sonship.

*A greater
confinement than
ever now took place.*

Into the Harness

Finally this period of training was over. Was he now rewarded with his freedom, and sent back to the fields? Oh no. But a greater confinement than ever now took place, as a harness dropped about his shoulders. Now he found there was not even the freedom to run about the small corral, for in the harness he could only move where and when his Master spoke. And unless the Master spoke, he stood still.

The scene changed, and I saw the other colt standing on the side of a hill, nibbling at some grass. Then across the fields, down the road came the King's carriage, drawn by six horses. With amazement he saw that in the lead, on the right side, was his brother colt, now made strong and mature on the good corn in the Master's stable. He saw the lovely pom-poms shaking in the wind, noticed the glittering gold bordered harness about his brother, heard the beautiful tinkling of the bells on his feet..... and envy came into his heart. Thus he complained to himself: "Why has my brother been so honored, and I am neglected? They have not put bells on my feet, nor pom-poms on my head. The Master has not given me the wonderful responsibility of pulling His carriage, nor put about me the golden harness. Why have they chosen my brother instead of me?" And by the Spirit the answer came back to me as I watched. "Because one submitted to the will and discipline of the Master, and one rebelled, thus has one been chosen and the other set aside."

A Famine in the Land

Then I saw a great drought sweep across the countryside, and the green grass became dead, dry, brown and brittle. The little streams of water dried up, stopped flowing, and there was only a small muddy puddle here and there. I saw the little colt (I was amazed that it never seemed to grow or mature) as he ran here and there, across the fields looking for fresh streams and green pastures, finding none. Still he ran, seemingly in circles, always looking for something to feed his famished spirit. But there was a famine in the land, and the rich green pastures and flowing streams of yesterday were not to be had. And one day the colt stood on the hillside on weak and wobbly legs, wondering where to go next to find food, and how to get strength to go. It seemed like there was no use, for good food and flowing streams were a thing of the past, and all the efforts to find more only taxed his waning strength. Suddenly he saw the King's carriage coming down the road, pulled by six great horses. And he saw his brother, fat and strong, muscles rippling, sleek and beautiful with much grooming. His heart was amazed and perplexed, and he cried out: "My brother, where do you find the food to keep you strong and fat in these

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days of famine? I have run everywhere in my freedom, searching for food, and I find none. Where do you, in your awful confinement, find food in this time of drought? Tell me, please, for I must know!" And then the answer came back from a voice filled with victory and praise: "In my Master's House, there is a secret place in the confining limitations of His stables where He feeds me by His own hand, and His granaries never run empty, and His well never runs dry." And with this the Lord made me to know that in the day when people are weak and famished in their spirits in the time of spiritual famine, that those who have lost their own wills, and have come into the secret place of the most High, into the utter confinement of His perfect will, shall have plenty of the corn of Heaven, and a never ending flow of fresh streams of revelation by His Spirit. Thus the vision ended.

Interpretation of the Vision

"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." (Habakkuk 2:2) "Harness the horses: and get up, ye horsemen" (Jeremiah 46:4). I'm sure that many of you who can hear what the Spirit saith to the Church, have already seen what God was showing in the vision. But let me make it plain. Being born into the Family of God, feeding in the green pastures and drinking of the many streams of the unfolding revelation of His purposes is fine and wonderful. But it is not enough. While we were children, young, undisciplined, limited only by the outer fence of the Law that ran around the limits of the pastures, (that kept us from getting into the dark pastures of poison weeds), He was content to watch us develop and grow into young manhood, spiritually speaking. But the time came to those who fed in His pastures, and drank at His streams, when they were to be brought into discipline or "child-training" for the purpose of making them mature Sons.

Many of the children today cannot understand why some of those who have put on the harness of God cannot get excited by the many religious games and the playful antics of the immature. They wonder why the disciplined ones run not after every new revelation or feed on every opportunity to engage in seemingly "good and profitable" religious activities.

They wonder why some will not race with them in their frantic efforts to build great works and great and notable ministries. They cannot understand the simple fact that this Company of saints is waiting for the voice of the Master, and they do not hear God in all this outward activity. They will move in their time, when the Master speaks. But not before, though many temptations come from the playful colts. And the colts cannot understand why those who seemingly appear to have great abilities and strength are not putting it to good use. "Get the carriage on the road," they say, but the disciplined ones, those in God's harness, know better than to move before they hear the voice of the Master. They will move in their time, with great purpose, and great responsibility.

*They are still His people,
still feeding in His
pastures, but He has set
them aside...*

And the Lord made me to know that there were many whom He had brought into training who had rebelled against the discipline, the chastising of the Father. And they could not be trusted with the great responsibility of mature Sonship, so he let them go back to their freedom, back to their religious activities and revelations and gifts. They are still His people, still feeding in His pastures, but He has set them aside from the great purposes for the end of the age. So they revel in their freedom, feeling that they are the Chosen ones with the many streams of living water, not knowing that they have been set aside as unfit for His great work in this end of the Age.

And He showed me that though the chastising seemeth grievous for the time, and the discipline hard to endure, yet the result with all the glory of Sonship is worth it all, and the glory to follow far exceeds the suffering we endure. And though some lose even their lives in this training, yet they will share alike in the glory of His eternal purposes. So faint not, saints of God, for it is the Lord that doth bring thee into confinement, and not thine enemy. It is for thy good, and for His glory, so endure all things with praises and thanksgiving that He hath counted thee worthy to share His glory! Fear thou not the whip in His hand, for it is not to punish thee, but to correct

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and train thee, that thou mightest come into submission to His will, and be found in His likeness in that Hour. Rejoice thou in thy trials, in all thy tribulations, and glory thou in His cross, and in the confining limitations of His harness, for He hath chosen

Many have perished in sin as they leaped over the fence without His harness and His bridle.

thee, and He hath taken upon Himself the responsibility of keeping thee strong and well fed, so lean thou upon Him, and trust not in thine own ability and thine own understanding.

So shalt thou be fed, and His hand shall be upon thee, and His glory shall overshadow thee and shall flow through thee as it goes forth to cover the earth. Glory to God! Bless the Lord, He's wonderful! Let Him be Lord of your life, friends, and complain not at that which He bringeth to pass in your life.

Plenty in the Time of Famine

For in the hour when famine sweeps the land, He shall feed by His own hand those who are submitted to His perfect will, and who dwell in the secret place of the Most High. When terror stalks the land, those in His harness shall not be afraid, for they shall feel His bit and bridle and know the guidance of His Spirit. When others are weak and frail and fearful, there shall be those who shall be strong in the power of His might, and shall lack for no good thing. In the hour when the traditions of the religious systems have proven false, and their streams have dried up, then His Chosen ones shall speak forth with the true Word of the Lord. So rejoice, Sons of God, that you have been chosen by His grace for this great work in this last hour.

The fence which kept the colts in their own meadows and their own pastures mean nothing to the team in the harness, for the gates open to them, and they go forth pulling the king's carriage into many strange and wonderful places. They do not stop to eat the poison weeds of sin, for they feed only in the Master's stable. These fields they trample under their feet as they go forth on the King's business. And so to those who are brought into absolute subjection to His will, there is no Law. For they move in

the Grace of God, led only by His Spirit where all things are lawful but not all things are expedient. This is a dangerous realm for the undisciplined, and many have perished in sin as they leaped over the fence without His harness and His bridle. Some have thought of themselves as being completely harnessed and submissive to Him, only to find that in some avenue of their life there dwelled rebellion and self-will. Let us wait before Him until He puts His noose around us and draws us to His place of training. And let us learn of the dealings of God and the movings of His Spirit until at last we feel His harness drop about us, and hear His voice guiding us. Then there is safety from the traps and pitfalls of sin, and then shall we abide in His house forever!

[End Vision by Bill Britton]

Our Father has a work for each one of His sons in the age to come. We are prepared for this work as we submit that work He has entrusted to us in this present age. We must submit to the discipline necessary to perform our assigned task with a spirit of excellence and maturity. Those who choose personal liberty over the confinement of a Spirit led life will find themselves disqualified and shut out of the mighty works of God which He has prepared beforehand for His sons. Let us apply all diligence to follow hard on the heels of our Savior, not turning aside to the left or to the right. Let us heed the voice of the Spirit who declares, "This is the way. Walk in it." Then at the end of this journey we can declare with the apostle Paul:

II Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, ***I have finished the course***, I have kept the faith...

Everyone Who Has This Hope

I John 3:1

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that ***we should be called sons of God!*** Therefore ***the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.***

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Consider the magnificent message in John's words. The world did not recognize that Yahshua was the Son of God. In the same way the world does not recognize that there are sons of God walking around among mortal men in this hour. There are those who have been born of holy seed dwelling among those who have known only the birth of the corrupt seed of the first Adam. The Scriptures relate the story of Yahshua being born of a virgin as the Holy Spirit overshadowed her. Mary conceived a son of holy seed.

Luke 1:35

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason **the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.**”

The same Holy Spirit now moves upon Adamic men and causes offspring to come forth in the likeness of God. The Holy Spirit moves upon mankind and a holy seed immediately begins to grow into the same image as the firstborn Son of God.

I Peter 1:23

For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but **imperishable**, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.

I John 3:9

No one who is born of God practices sin, because **His seed abides in him**; and he cannot sin, **because he is born of God.**

The same holy seed has been placed in those born again of the Spirit that was placed in Mary. It is the seed of God. God does not have many kinds of seed. He has only one type of seed, and that is seed that contains all the genetic information to form a being fully and completely after His own image and likeness. Yahshua became the full expression of God in man. This same seed has been placed in you (if you have been born again) that you too might become the full and complete expression of God.

Ephesians 4:13

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.**

Yahweh has the heart of a father, and as a father He longs to have many sons after His own image. The destiny of these sons in the ages to come is glorious. What Yahweh has prepared for His sons is beyond our present capacity to comprehend. We shall be like the firstborn Son of God in His glory. After stating these awesome truths, John declares:

I John 3:3

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

If you truly have a vision of all that the Father has determined for His sons in the ages to come, then you will purify yourself. Does not the current impure condition of the church reveal that there is no such vision? Many are living as beasts, focused on consumption, living to satisfy their bellies. Christians are seeking things of a fallen world, a world that is passing away and whose glory is fading. They do not discern the high calling of God in Christ Yahshua. They do not see that they have an inheritance which is “imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away” (I Peter 1:4).

Low living is the fruit of low thinking.

Certainly a lack of vision impacts Christian's lives negatively today. Low living is the fruit of low thinking. King Solomon understood the relationship between vision and actions.

Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish...

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The word for perish is the Hebrew 'para' and it comes from a root word meaning 'to loosen.' It is often translated as 'uncovered,' or 'naked.' Solomon understood that when the people have no mental sight, dream, or revelation, they begin to act in a loose manner that is akin to being naked. Such imagery is repeated in the New Testament.

Revelation 3:17

"Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that ***you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked...***"

Revelation 16:15

"Behold, I am coming like a thief. ***Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.***"

When men and women do not have a vision of the hope that is set before them, when they become focused on this present

We have a future before us to walk as the sons and daughters of the almighty God!

world and the pursuit of it, then they begin to uncover themselves. They expose their flesh rather than putting it to death. Because they have no vision of the glory before

them, and they do not see that they risk forfeiting an inheritance of surpassing value, they walk carelessly and are led into many sins and numerous transgressions of the will of God.

The overcomers in Christ demonstrate a different attitude. Paul spoke to the saints in this way:

II Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, since these great promises are ours, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates and defiles body and spirit, and bring our consecration to completeness in the reverential fear of

God.

Amplified Bible

What are the great promises to which Paul is referring? The previous verse tells us.

II Corinthians 6:18

And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

Yes, we have a future before us to walk as the sons and daughters of the almighty God! We will share His glory! We will walk in great authority! We will be as gods, being the sons and daughters of Yahweh! We will have access into His presence, and we will be partakers of His most holy things! If we have a vision of what awaits us then we will "cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates and defiles body and spirit." We will seek to be completely consecrated to God.

During this brief period of our life on earth, it is not readily apparent what we shall be. Yet all throughout the Scriptures our Father has given us indications of the glorious future that lies ahead for the sons of God. We are told that "for a little while" it is man's lot to be lower than the angels.

Hebrews 2:6-7

But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that Thou rememberest him? Or the son of man, that Thou art concerned about him? ***Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels...***"

The day is coming, however, when men will judge angels.

I Corinthians 6:3

Do you not know that we shall judge angels?

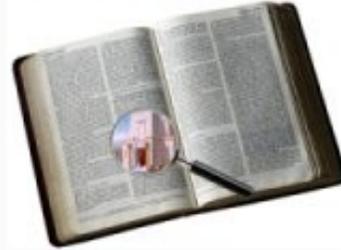
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What kind of people should we now be? Should we walk as beasts; coveting, lusting, fighting, seeking temporal pleasures and possessions? If your life is focused upon the temporal pursuits of this life, then you have far too narrow a view of your life and future destiny. Look up! Raise your eyes! Observe what great things the Father has planned for His sons! And seeing all these things, purify yourself! Walk as one who is called to the image and likeness of God with a destiny to share His glory.

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

*Walk as one who is
called to the image and
likeness of God...*

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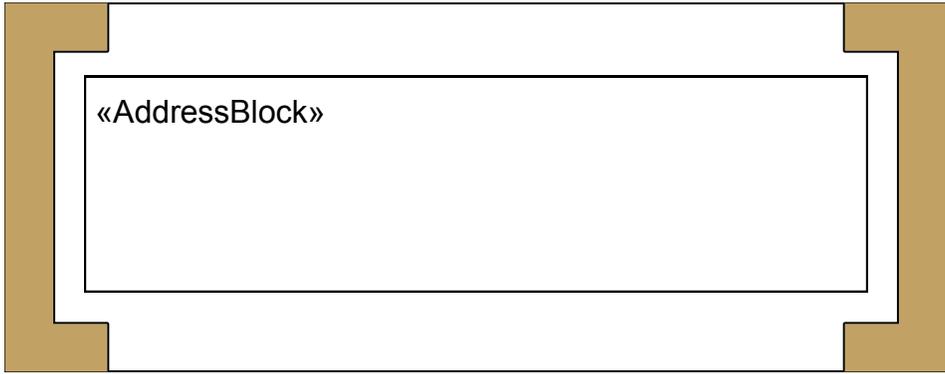
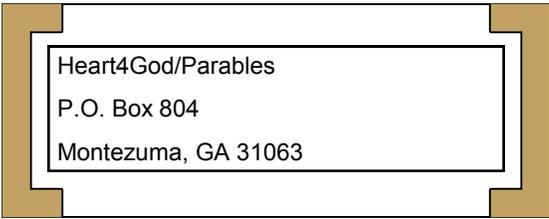
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PARABLES PRECEPT—The Hebrew Alphabet



This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF concludes our study of the ancient Hebrew aleph-beyt.

Pictured above is the most famous combination of letters found in the ancient Hebrew texts of the Bible. These four letters together are commonly referred to as “the tetragrammaton,” which means “a word of four letters.”

This combination of four letters occurs 6,828 times in the Old

Testament. Do you know what they spell? This is the name given by God to identify Himself to His people. It is often translated into English as “Yahweh.” The four letters in English would be YHWH.

Remember in our last issue we mentioned that the Hebrew aleph-beyt does not contain vowels. This has caused some confusion regarding how the name of God should be pro-

nounced. Some have rendered it as Jehovah, and there are other variations as well.

Seeing that God saw fit to inspire men to record this memorial name nearly 7,000 times in Scriptures, it is evidently something He desires His people to be familiar with.

The letters above are what we have been referring to as Middle Semitic script. The very earliest script would have rendered the name YHWH in the following way:



What message might have been intended to be spoken through this pictograph?