

# Kingdom News

The Kingdom is Yours; the power is Yours and the glory is Yours, forever.... (Matt. 6:13)

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## *Motto for the year of 2012*

You are worthy, Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:11 *KJV adapted*)

### **The Chief Cornerstone**



#### **The 5 W's of Life (*Who?*)**

Last month, we began talking about the 5 W's in life: the *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where* and *Why* (and *How*). We focused on the ultimate "WHAT" in the prior edition.

All throughout life, we're asking these questions in some form or other. Sometimes we may ask the question with our mouth. At other times we ask it with our deeds, at other times still we ask it with our thoughts. So subtle is the intimation of the questions that we often don't even know that we're asking them.

Borrowing from last month's theme...

Sometimes our actions and attitude asks "*says who?*" And without a genuine contemplation, we'll move on with our lives as if the question didn't

Chief Cornerstone

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### **The Leadership Corner** ***Leadership Living, Inc.***

#### **God is Hiding in Plain Sight**

**All scripture is KJV paraphrased.**

Have you ever watched 007-type movies? These are the kind of films where everyday citizens seem to be innocently going about their personal business. However, some of them turn out to be high level spies or secret agents.

I love these kinds of movies because it's so intriguing to find out who the secret agents are. Sometimes the hero in the movie (i.e. 007/James Bond), seems to be on his last leg. It appears that he is surrounded by the bad guys and is about to die. Then, when you least expect it, the maid or the cable guy (who just happens to be in the area fixing a wire) turns out to be a double agent. He or she jumps in and rescues Bond or somehow helps to save the day. At this point in the movie, I'm usually sitting on the edge of my seat crunching loudly on my popcorn.

It's like there is always this unseen eye watching out for the hero. No matter what predicament 007 is placed in, someone (or something) seemed to have been planted in the environment that can be used to help him at just the right time. Sometimes I think to myself, "Ok, that was just too perfect. In real life there would have been no way for 007's team (the people that work behind the scenes helping him – like "M" the code name for the head of the British Intelligence) to know James Bond would be at a particular place at a specific moment.

While I know these kinds of movies are fantasy, I believe that they have a kernel of truth to them. I believe the concept of having people and things, planted in our environment, to help us is a biblical principle. I submit to you that our God does this very thing. And, He is so much wiser than the British Intelligence agency.

The Leadership Corner

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## Boot Camp

### The Pattern Son



A Meditation –

Often we comfort ourselves in that we look at Jesus Christ as if He were some abnormality of mankind; not really human. We look upon Him as if the things that Jesus did and said, we dare not attempt.

Repeatedly our Lord says to us, "*Why have you not taken up My pattern?*" We humor ourselves that we earnestly believe we want to be the sons of God, but not quite like Jesus. He was too holy ... too perfect ... too God. The scriptures say of us: now are we classified as the sons of God. But it is not yet manifest what that sonship actually walks itself out to be, in us.<sup>(1)</sup> But how are we to get there? By what means shall we be made like Him? Shall we be like Him, after the resurrection? Must we wait until we leave here, to be made like Him? Is the Omnipotence of God, sufficient only to make and keep the man Jesus Christ in a cruel world and untoward generation? Is it somehow not sufficient to also make sons of us? He didn't have to take Jesus Christ out of the world to keep Him.

I know... I know... we don't like the entailments of these types of questions. We don't have a problem asking God for a Mercedes and a promotion (*so that we can pay for the Mercedes*). Certainly His Omnipotence can supply that, right. That's easy. But to make a wretched, miserable, blind and naked one such as myself "holy;" is too much to ask, isn't it. I mean, He did it for Paul; but that doesn't necessarily mean that He can do it for me too.

Why are we here? Because these are the questions we really need answers to, right. Whether (or not) Sunday is the Sabbath, *is negotiable*. But whether (or not) God can make a dead man live, *is not*. Whether (or not) God can make a prodigal into a son, *is not*. Whether (or not) God can take a wretch like me, and turn them into a servant; by which He makes manifest the Kingdom of Heaven in the earth, *is not negotiable*. At least, it's not negotiable for me. I'll trade everything I have for it. Of all of my life's questions, I MUST know this one thing. Can the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God; purge *my* conscience from dead works, so that I may serve the



## A Journey to Intimacy The Prodigal and the Son

I was reading one evening, and ran across something precious in Isaiah 45. Three things in particular seemed to be transacted between the Father and the Son (there is much more there, but these three stood up for me).

The Father said (not in this order):

- 1) I girded You, though You have not known Me
- 2) I have even called You by Your name: I have surnamed You, though You have not known Me
- 3) I will give You the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that You may know that I, the LORD, which call You by Your name, am the God of Israel.

As I read this, I heard the Father whisper to me something out of Luke 15. This I thought peculiar, because I did not readily see the correlation. Would you walk through it with me? Let's begin in Luke 15.

You know the story of the prodigal son. Upon the son's return home; the father gave him a *robe* and a ring. This was symbolic of being given one of the father's suits and a credit card.

**Caveat:** In this discourse, although we'll make frequent reference to the prodigal son; the implications are less on his title as "*prodigal*" and more on his title as "*son*." This particular parable makes useful references to the cultural tenets that we want to explore concerning our Lord Jesus. In Isaiah 45, the Lord says to our Lord, something most precious and eternal. The cultural context and its details, as given to us in the parable of the prodigal, serve to help illuminate.

There are numerous ways to accurately express what the suit represented. For the sake of this discussion it represents the mantle of the father



have a legitimate answer. Ultimately there are valid and crucial answers to each of these questions. And the next time you (or I) bother to ask, perhaps we should wait to hear the whole conclusion of the matter.

**Sidebar (testimony):** Within the past few weeks, I had been agitating a petition that I wanted to place before the Lord. I'd think about it and then dismiss it. There was a specific obedience or shall I say compliance that I was to perform. And I had a particular preference regarding this duty. I wanted to ask the Lord to have a circumstance turn out essentially "in favor of my preference."

Although I had been thinking it for some time, I didn't formulate the petition. A few days ago, just as I was preparing my thoughts on the matter; it seemed as if the Lord had had His fill of my meditations about this thing. And the Lord (as it were) put His hand over my mouth, before I could say a word. *Imagine this: you're walking with your small child. You both see an event occur. You know your child, and can sense a comment or response fomenting within that little head. Just in time, you reach down to cover the mouth of the child, sparing them of either embarrassment or chastening that would result for an ill-begotten comment.*

That's what happened to me. Just as the Lord *put His hand over my mouth*; He said to me, "I have a "What?" question for you, JoAnn. Before you ask Me the petition that is in your heart, answer this question. What's ... in ... it ... for ... Me?" He asked quite pointedly. I thought, "Huh?!" He didn't stutter; He asked the question again. "Before you make *your* petition to have this situation work out the way you want; I want you to consider what value *I* will derive from answering *your* prayer, on this matter. I mean, is there honor in it for *Me*? Is there glory in it for *Me*? Will *My* name be hallowed? If I work this out the way you want, JoAnn, will the results of it bring the manifestation of *My* Kingdom? Is this a *doing of My will*? Or is it just something *you*

want? Which one of us will be esteemed from this outcome?"

As I gasped for air (almost mentally hyperventilating); I was *finished*. That was the end of my "me-centric" meditations on that topic. And the prayer I actually did pray was "Yes Lord. I want exactly what *You* have designed. Forgive me for even the thought that I would ask the Sovereign Lord God to do *my* bidding. It was foolish. I don't want this to work out any other way than *You* have ordained it."

*WHO?*

Now we come to the focus of this month's edition. As I asked the Lord, how He had intended to discover this truth to us for this month. My thoughts ran in quite a different direction. The Lord said, "Research *Who*." I said in my heart, "okay" having no idea, whatsoever, exactly what the Lord had in mind. The Lord led my research this way.

The first "Who" question in scripture was asked by God. He asked Adam, "*Who* told you that you were naked?" To a Laodicean church age, who says of themselves: "*I am rich and increased with goods...*" And of whom the True and Faithful Witness says, "You don't know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked?"<sup>(1)</sup> The 21<sup>st</sup> Century version of the original question is "*Who* told you that you *were not* naked?" At least Adam knew that he was naked. We don't even know that we're naked. Jesus said to the religious leaders of that day, "If you say that you are not naked, I can't help you; I cannot clothe you. But if you recognize, like your father Adam, that you are naked; My Father will provide a covering for you."<sup>(2)</sup>

And so the question comes to Adam again, "*Who* told you that you were naked?" Now between you and me (*whispering*); God already knew "*who*" told Adam that. But He was intending more to provoke deep and solemn contemplation. Because, very likely, Adam didn't know "*who*" told him that he was naked. To this day, I wonder if Adam has ever answered that

question within himself. It is a vital question that we all must come to.

Adam may (or may not) have known "*who*" told him that he was naked. But what Adam did know was "*Who*" did not tell him." Adam also knew that he didn't get that answer from the fruit of the Tree of Life. And therein resides the crux of our problems. Someone "else" is doing the "telling," in our lives. Moses asked the right question. He said, "I can go to Pharaoh ... I can go to Israel ... But *who*, shall I tell them sent me?! *Who* is funding this expedition?" God didn't hesitate to answer his question. Our Lord said "Tell them "I AM ...." Now that was an ultimate "*WHO*" question. "*Who* sent you? ... Who gave you *your* marching orders?" I believe that it would prove wise of us to ask just that question of the thoughts and opinions that we allow to drive the course of our lives. "*Who* sent you?"

During the process of receiving this article from the Lord, I learned very quickly, that this was less a series of articles for the *reader*. And primarily a series for the *writer* or shall I say for the *scribe*. The Lord was taking me to school, in my own life. Class had begun and I was still out on the playground.

With as much transparency and discretion, I want to share another event that *brought home* to me, the gravity of this series. Somewhere during the course of this article, I had a committee meeting with the Board Chair and the Executive Director of our non-profit agency. During that meeting there was a topic on the table, about the activities of a particular program. Almost "without thinking" I began to offer, what I believed, was a solution. We tossed it around a bit in discussion. And the Director said I will take that into consideration. We moved on to the next item on the agenda. The meeting finished as usual, we adjourned and life went on. Or so I thought.

The next morning, while preparing for work; in a quite random and unprovoked way, the Lord pressed the "replay" button on that conversation in the committee meeting. He focused in, very specifically, on the portion of the conversation

that was "my contribution" of a solution. I heard my words replaying in my ear, almost...as...if...in...slow...motion. And quite distinctly, the Lord said, "*Who told you to say that? Where did you get that 'solution' from?*" I felt (I assumed) just like Adam ... or Job; when God called them on the carpet. <sup>(3)</sup> While I could not readily answer, "Who told me..." I **could** very readily answer "Who did not tell me, to say that." Although the Lord, asked me the question; He didn't wait for me to answer. I had said enough already. The Lord said (in no uncertain terms), "*I ... did ... not ... tell you to say that.*" Nothing more needed to be said. The whole reality of that event came crashing down on me. As quickly as was humanly possible, I contacted the agency's Executive Director and repented (in great detail). I said, "*I retract that suggestion, we cannot do that, because the Lord did not say it. It was not His counsel, it was mine.*" She understood exactly what I was saying; and replied. "*I'm glad you called to share that.*" Correcting that helped reestablish the tone and tempo of the whole program. The scripture teaches "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly..." <sup>(4)</sup> Sometimes that means that we are not to heed the counsel of ungodly men (persons). But, I submit, it is more the case that we are not to give credence to ungodly counsel itself (no matter where it comes from). God watches over HIS word, to perform it. He doesn't watch over our word, to perform it. For the servants of God; ALL of our counsel must be of godly origin. God will fund the projects that He ordains; everyone else is on their own.

There is another ultimate "*WHO*" question that we must ever keep before our eyes; and hide in the depths of our heart. This time Jesus asked this question. He said, "*WHO* do men say that I AM?" Strap on your seat belt. I'll ask the question again, a little differently. "Who do men say is *the* I AM?"

Say that again ... I'm sorry, I didn't hear you. Oh!! What is the difference between the two questions?!!

Well, both questions are imperatives. Although the questions are asked about the opinion of other

men; we each need to resolve them both within the depths of our heart. They will set the rudder of our life. Let's look at it from the perspective of our Lord, as the One doing the asking.

### "WHO do men say that I AM?"

A couple of thousand years ago, the answer came back: some say that You are .... Others say that You are ....<sup>(5)</sup> I have to wonder if the purpose of this question was more a frame for the next, most important question. "Who do YOU say that I AM?" Our lives are not directed by...; and our destinies are not set by *who* other men say that Jesus is. It is only determined by *who* we say that He is. Not so quickly now, the word "say" in this context is not simply representative of a vocalization, an utterance or verbal expression, of some thought or ideal. This particular word "say" is the summation of the course of our life. Another way to ask the question would be "WHO does your life say that Jesus is?" A friend? A neighbor? An accomplice? A compadre? ... A stranger?

Our problem is not that we don't "say" (*with our mouths*) that Jesus is Lord. Our problem is that we won't say (*with our lives*) that Jesus is OUR Lord. We don't have a problem saying that the Lord is "A" shepherd. We have a problem saying that He is "MY" Shepherd. Unfortunately for many of us, the words that come out of our mouths are not "worth the paper they're written on." If we took our words and tossed them into the sky, they would never land. The current would carry them from sea, to shining sea.

It is of grave consequence that we discern "WHO Jesus really is" and subsequently give ourselves to that reality.

### "Who do men say is *the* I AM?"

So if men say that Jesus is a "good teacher;" or a "lunatic;" or one of the "prophets;" or "one of the many sons of God." Then "pray tell" who is their "I AM?" Everyone has an "I AM."

Now don't be fooled by the "business suit" there

is ONLY ONE "I AM."

*There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside Thee: neither is there any rock like our God.*<sup>(6)</sup>

*You are My witnesses, says the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no savior.*<sup>(7)</sup>

But that's not the question, is it. The question on the floor is not what the "I AM" says about Himself. The question before us, is *who does our life identify as its "I AM?"* We're all going to "spend our money on *something*." We came here empty-handed and we're going to leave here empty-handed. The "telling" will be that "in that day" when God reads the receipt of our life; what will it say that we identified as the "I AM," of our life. Something (dare I say) someone, says within our hearts "I AM!" And to that thing, or that one, we pay homage. We may assay to "kiss *one* on the cheek;" while we secretly hold "*another* in our arms." We may bear the name of one man; but doing bidding of another. There's a word for that ... hmmm ... what is that word?!? It begins with an "h" and rhythms with "if you push it too hard, it will slam." It's right on the tip of my tongue. What is that word? (wink) Aahh, maybe it will come to me, but let's not tarry for it.

So our "WHO" two questions (now properly framed) are:

- 1) "WHO do we say that The I AM is?"
- 2) "Who does our life say is *its* I AM?"

Now before you close the book and turn out the lights. These two questions are not just imperatives; they are also inextricably interdependent. The second question in one sense answers the first question. And in another sense, if the answer to the second question is not acceptable to God; the answer to the first question doesn't matter.

**Repeat:** In a very intriguing way, we find that not only are all of life's "What" questions resolved in the ultimate "WHAT." But we'll find (and this, I am sure of) that the ultimate "WHAT" is really a "WHO." Indeed, all of life's W's will rightfully be, in some sense, an expression of the ultimate "WHO."

I look forward to what the Lord will disclose to us next month. <CC>

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- (1) Revelation 3:17
- (2) Genesis 3:11; John 9:39:41
- (3) Genesis 3:11; Job 38:2-3
- (4) Psalm 1:1
- (5) Mark 8:27
- (6) 1 Samuel 2:2
- (7) Isaiah 43:10-11

## What's Next ....

As the Lord pleases, it appears that next month's edition will include the likes of:

Foot Washing  
(21<sup>st</sup> century version)

A Show and Tell Life  
(to show is to tell)

They that Waitress upon  
the Lord shall ...

There are many times that we think we are on our last leg. Our situation just could not get any worse. Then, God, seemingly out of nowhere, sends an answer. Sometimes the answer was in our environment all along, or at least for a while. We just didn't realize that person or thing would be used as a tool to help us. Let me give you a concrete example in my life. Then, you can reflect on your situation to see if this principle has held true for you.

God told me at the beginning of this year that 2012 would be the year of "funding" for our small nonprofit agency. While this sounded great, we did not receive the grants that we thought we would. As a result, I was praying recently, reminding God of His promise and how I honestly hadn't seen the "funding" He had mentioned. He told me, "Joyce, the answer is directly in front of you. It's right under your nose. In fact, the answer is "touching" you.

Hopefully you can appreciate that I didn't feel any better after hearing God tell me this. If the answer is directly in front of me, why couldn't I see it? Was this a game? God went on to say that He had placed all of the pieces in my environment and they were all waiting for me. At that point, I was starting to feel a little uncomfortable because I knew I hadn't detected any additional resources in my world.

Day after day God continued to tell me the same thing. The answer is directly in front of me. It's right under my nose. And, it is touching me. This went on for about three weeks. If I might speak freely, this discussion was starting to wear my nerves thin. I just couldn't understand what He was getting at.

Then, He revealed to me what was going on. He told me I need to begin to write my next book and prepare to sell it. I didn't have a problem with writing the book. But, I wondered how I would get a picture for the cover. He then reminded me of the people right in my circle that could be in the picture. I contacted each of them, and they all agreed to do the photo-shoot. Then, I thought about having to find a photographer, but I didn't know one.

God went on to remind me of the photographer that had taken pictures at a conference we hosted a couple of months ago. I made contact with him and he agreed to do the photo-shoot for a reasonable price. The photographer also said he could design the book cover (front and back) for me. In a nutshell, I had everything I needed right at my fingertips. I just didn't recognize the pieces and how they could fit together.

In scripture, there are also a myriad of examples of how God "hid the answer in plain sight." Let's look at Sampson. When he was surrounded by Philistines at Lehi

(Judges 15:14-17), he picked up the jawbone of an ass and slew his enemies. The jawbone was there before he got there.

We could then jump over to Jesus and His disciples. When Jesus was in the desert with a multitude of people, evening had fallen and the people needed to eat. Jesus asked his disciples what was available. They had five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus used these items to feed the multitude (Mathew 14:13-20). Once again, those food items were already there.

Going back to the Old Testament, we find Abraham faced with the issue of having to sacrifice his only son Isaac. But, before he could slay his son, God showed him the ram that was caught in a nearby bush (Genesis 22:9-13) that Abraham was to use in the sacrifice instead of his son. It's powerful to think about how that ram was there right in the nick of time.

Equally as interesting as the items having been in the environment at the right time is the fact that God had to "direct" each person's attention to the items that were already there. Sampson didn't see the jawbone until God directed his attention to it. Jesus' disciples didn't consider the loaves of bread and fish until Jesus directed their attention to these items. And, Abraham didn't notice the ram caught in the bush until God pointed it out to him.

This is a pretty powerful concept. God hides answers to our situations in plain sight. When this happens, in one very real sense, God, Himself is "hiding in plain sight." How could this be true? Well, consider this. God is the ultimate answer for everything that happens in our lives. When He provides someone or something for us to utilize He is really providing Himself to us in some form or another.

Now, God is always present in our environments. The challenge is that we often can't readily "see" Him in the form we believe He needs to be in to help us. As a result, we keep asking God for answers that He has already provided.

May I toss a proposition out to each of us? I propose that instead of asking God to do something over and over again, we could change our request. Could it be that we should be asking God to reveal to us how He has hidden Himself in plain sight in our environment as the answer we truly need?

I have another example of an answer that can be right in front of our faces, but that we can't see. I was at the grocery store a few weeks ago. I was looking for the ice cream treat that I usually get. The box is supposed to be yellow with pictures of the chocolate ice cream pops on the front. I stood in front of the freezer case where they are housed for several minutes (which actually felt like an eternity), but I could not find them.

Finally, I asked God to show me where they were. He said, "They are right in front of you. The problem is that you are looking for a yellow box. Maybe something has changed."

At that moment, I asked God to direct my eyes to where they are and help me to see them. Shortly afterwards, I spotted the new blue box of ice cream pops. The company had changed the design of the box. So, I was looking at the item all along, but I couldn't see it because my mind was expecting something different than what my eyes actually could see.

Has this ever happened to you? You were looking for something to appear in a specific manner, but because it looked different than your expectations, you were missing it? It happens on a regular basis to each of us.

We pray and ask God to do something for us. He plants Himself right in front of us with the answers we need. But, we can't perceive that we already have what we've been asking for. The answer may come in several pieces, or multiple stages. It may involve specific people, or just you. Regardless of the situation, it is often the case is that God is hiding in plain view in our environments.

He sometimes waits for us to calm down and ask Him to open our eyes so that we can see Him in the situation. This prayer may be more appropriate than continuing to ask God to do something over and over again.

I encourage each of us to think about changing the way we approach God when it comes to asking for help. God told us in His word that He has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness. He went on to say that every day He loads us down with benefits. He promised that if we would follow His instructions that He would answer before we call. In effect, He would plant Himself in our environment even before we pray for Him to come to our aid.

God is hiding from us. But, He's hiding in plain view. He wants us to ask Him to remove the scales from our eyes so that we can see Him in whatever form He has decided to show up.

Be blessed! [LL]

Joyce White, LMSW

## John 1:12-14

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

<sup>13</sup> Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Living God. I MUST know this.

Our Lord fully intends that we will both say what He says and that we will do what He does. When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, eleven of them said "it is not possible for man to walk on the water." But one disciple said, "Lord (if I can do that too) bid me come." The Lord didn't make a long, ornate speech about the laws of physics and how it was not intended that a normal human being should walk on water..." The Lord simply said "come." When Jesus was breaking and multiplying fish and loaves, the first time the disciples watched Him. The next time Jesus said "Your turn, now *you* feed them." Because He wants us to do what He has done. He said "these things and greater shall you (we) do." He said this, not because he wanted to be different or better or apart from us as followers, but because He wants to show us what He is willing to do through us. But the enemy knows that He will not endow us with power where we do not believe it so. Thereby we'll see the various deceptions with which the enemy seeks to bring us into bondage.

What the enemy does know is that the manifestations of the sons of God will turn his kingdom upside down. For this purpose the sons of God are manifested, that they might destroy the works of the devil.<sup>(2)</sup> So you see why it behooves the enemy to keep us in the dark about "expressing or walking-out our son-ship."

A couple mornings ago I was having Psalm 85 for breakfast. One morning I had the King James Version (KJV) of Psalm 85. Verse 13 said, "*Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall set us in the way of His steps.*" Will you allow me to meddle with this a bit (because it meddled with me)? On the morning that I read this verse, I'm sure something of it was lost on me. The translators of the KJV, added the word "us." According to my studies, the word "us" is not in the original scriptures. Not only is the word "us" not in the original scriptures; the original script intimates something quite different. The difference is subtle, but remarkable.

Please don't be disturbed by this, the scriptures also say that "*it is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.*"<sup>(3)</sup> Be encouraged, *the secret things belong to God, but that which has been revealed, belongs to us.*<sup>(4)</sup> Sometimes the Lord delights to hide things, just beyond the fingerprints of man. So study to show yourself approved of God.<sup>(5)</sup>

Another morning I had the same for breakfast. But this time, I had the Geneva version of Psalm 85. There verse 13 says, "*Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set her steps in the way.*" I probably don't need to tell you that the term "him" in this verse is talking about the man, Jesus Christ. This is important, so hang in there. This particular morning, I was still hungry. So I had a second helping of Psalm 85; this time in the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) version. Here verse 13 says "*Justice will walk before Him and make His footsteps a path.*" Wow!!!! This verse wasn't lost on me, anymore. It resonated, like a perfectly tuned pitch. The note fell pleasantly upon me and I was caught up in its vibration ... in its rapture. Oh my Lord!!! Righteousness and justice shall walk before the man Jesus Christ and leave a pathway!!! Has He not said to us, "*I am the Way. No man comes to the Father except they follow in My footsteps.*"<sup>(6)</sup>

**Sidebar:** You may have also noticed that the first word in the sentence has been translated (from the original text) as either "*righteousness*" or "*justice*." Remember, He sometimes hides the most precious jewels, just beyond the fingerprints of man. Again don't be disturbed (by the hand of God) this was not a mistake. Because what is being said is SOOOOOO profound, that it evades expression. One word or term won't do it justice (no pun intended) ... one language won't serve.

I don't mean to get "technical" about it; but I want you to see what I saw. It casts a tremendous hue on the reality that Jesus Christ is the pattern of son-ship (our pattern). I feel like a kid trying to explain to someone that I just saw a pink elephant (for the first time), right. *That* I saw an elephant is not hard to "get." *That* it was this amazing shade of pink, is where the road turns into the forest. And the hearer is left wagging his head in disbelief. Pink elephant, notwithstanding, go with me.

Still hungry! I had a third helping of Psalm 85; this time ... from the Interlinear (i.e., Concordant) version. Verse 13, here, says "*Righteousness is 'to the face of Him.' He shall go, and He is placing a way of His feet.*" May I polish this a bit?

"Righteousness is to the face of him.... Don't laugh. Get the import of what's being conveyed, right. *Righteousness is on the side of Him, where His face is located.* Simpler still, "*righteousness is*

in front of Him." Now Psalm 23 tells us that "goodness and mercy shall follow us...." Or goodness and mercy shall be located "on the side of us that follows." That would be the hinder parts (to borrow an old term). Now let's go back to the side where the face is located. It was not uncommon to use the term "face" as indicative of the "direction one was headed." See 2 Kings 12:17 "Hazeal set his face to go up to Jerusalem." (See also Genesis 31:21; Numbers 24:1, etc.)

Oh, this gets better. So "righteousness is in front of Him." But that is not enough; the Concordant scriptures say "He shall go." This is one of the sparkles that BLESSED me. If someone (or something) is in front of you; and you are "going;" you must either follow it. Or you must ... WALK INTO ... it. Do you see it?!? ... In the original text, John 3:16 says "... whosoever, believes INTO Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Hhhmm, I wonder if "Righteousness or justice is one of the Seven Spirits of God."<sup>(7)</sup> Just curious.

When Jesus was a young man, He was the Son of God, then. But it had not yet appeared what He was to become. I submit to you that the more He walked *into* the "justice of God;" the more He walked *out* the Kingdom of God. The more He walked *into* the "righteousness of God" the more manifest was His sonship. Jesus *became* Who He was. Jesus came *into* the being of the Son of God, through the things which He suffered (allowed) to the manifestation of His obedience. He is the Pattern Son, our pattern. We are to "see Him as He is," so that we may be like Him.<sup>(8)</sup>

The scriptures are not just a series of books to be *read*  
It is a mosaic of a Life to be *led*. – JoAnn C. White

God bless you ~BC~

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**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- <sup>(1)</sup> 1 John 3:2
- <sup>(2)</sup> Romans 8:19-21; 1 John 3:8
- <sup>(3)</sup> Proverb 25:2
- <sup>(4)</sup> Deuteronomy 29:29
- <sup>(5)</sup> 2 Timothy 2:15
- <sup>(6)</sup> John 14:6
- <sup>(7)</sup> Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5
- <sup>(8)</sup> 1 John 3:2

and serves to identify the son with his father. Before the son returned home, (*to the Jewish eye*) he looked like a random, disconnected individual without proper covering, or mantle. As the "traditional" Jewish son, is only known by his father. The robe (suit) symbolized the father taking away the shame of the son, covering his nakedness. In Isaiah, the Father said to Jesus I have girded You. I have clothed You and I have covered Your shame. What shame? He was born in Nazareth. I mean, can any good thing come out of Nazareth?<sup>(1)</sup> The shame of His seemingly "illegitimate birth." As the Scribes and Pharisees say to Him, "At least we know who our father is."<sup>(2)</sup> The shame and nakedness of the Cross. Culturally, death by crucifixion was reserved for political criminals and runaway slaves. Hebrews tells us that our Lord, endured the Cross, despising the shame.<sup>(3)</sup> And so The Lord says to our Lord, "I have covered You."

In the not-too-distant East, the son (within the family structure) was (and is) regarded not as an "individual," but as an extension of his father. Especially the firstborn son, he was endowed with the birthright; he was to be a perpetuation; an immortalization, even, of the father. He naturally understood that he would grow into the father's business and into his father's image. "Men and brethren," please don't let this leave an unsavory taste in your mouth. Although they were not perfect (by any means); many of the fathers of 150 years ago, stood for something. They knew their duty as a head and as a leader. They set the tone of their house, and were the "pattern" for the family, especially for the eldest son; who would then (in some sense) be a pattern for the other siblings. The firstborn son knew his responsibility to carry out the strategic direction, set forth by the father.

In a very precious and telling way, we see the responsibility of the firstborn when we hear the young son, Jesus, ask his parents, "Wist not (translation: *weren't you aware*) that I must be about My Father's business?"<sup>(4)</sup>

**Sidebar:** It is often difficult when you walk

into the middle of a conversation. Somehow, you know that you have missed something critical to the message itself; perhaps the structure, or the underlying assumptions, or the conditions that give the message its vitality and import. Knowing those, help the hearer properly relate to what is being said.

To a 21<sup>st</sup> century, Western, irreverent (feminist even) mindset the statement of the young boy Jesus, would have felt like a "slap in the face" to a parent. But Mary was not offended. She laid those things up in her heart.<sup>(5)</sup> Mary had, within her heart, a treasure chest into which she placed all of the jewels and artifacts of the revelation (or the coming-of-age) of the Son of the Living God. Perhaps that statement, carried her almost instantaneously back to "that place" where the Angel told her "fear not ... that which is conceived within you is of the Holy Ghost."<sup>(6)</sup>

**Sidebar:** The event in the Temple (*you remember*) where Mary and Joseph had to return to Jerusalem to fetch the young man, Jesus. This event had come within a year of our Lord's *bar mitzvah*. In the Jewish culture, the *bar mitzvah* is the celebration of the initiation of a 12- or 13-year old boy into manhood. It is quite young of us in the West, and rightfully so. For we have not developed a culture that prepares our young men for manhood, at any age. Woefully, we have left our young men to the schemes of the "roaring lion" who seeks to devour them with illicit sex, drugs, alcohol, improper allegiances and liaisons. May the Lord so burden our hearts with a yearning for our children that we "make straight paths for their feet."<sup>(7)</sup> So that as they learn to walk, they are not so easily turned out of the way of holiness. Yes. I said "holiness." It is not simply a denominational classification. It is what God fully intends that we, at length, become; when we fulfill our obedience to the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

No, Jesus did not misspeak, nor was He being irreverent. At the age of 13-something Jesus knew *WHO* He was. He had already read the book of

Isaiah "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; for He has anointed Me to ...*"<sup>(8)</sup> And He knew that Isaiah was talking about Him, "... *I (AM) have even called Thee by Thy name: Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. I have surnamed Thee, though Thou hast not known Me ...*"<sup>(9)</sup> The Father had both named Jesus and surnamed Him. In one sense, "to name" is to identify "*who you are*;" whereas to surname is identify "*who you are of*." The Lord says of Jesus, "Your name is Wonderful... Counselor. Your surname is *the* Mighty God, *the* Everlasting Father and *the* Prince of Peace...." Young man (yes I'm talking to you the reader), your first name identifies *who you are* (as separate from your other siblings); your last name (or your surname) identifies "*who you are of*."

As our Lord read Isaiah, He was being introduced to Himself. Of all the cannon of scripture, Isaiah was probably the most comprehensive, prophetic resume, personal profile and consummate portfolio of the man Jesus Christ. Isaiah was also very likely an integral part of His ceremonial readings, in preparation for His *bar mitzvah*. Back to Jerusalem ... as a young man (*now properly surnamed*) His purpose, in the temple that day, was to "*be about His Father's business*." Culturally, it is just after the *bar mitzvah*, that the young man begins, very judiciously, to walk in his father's footsteps. So much so, that when the families would travel en mass from city to city; the children under 13 years of age (both male and female), would walk with the women. Whereas, the male children 13-years and up would walk with the men. They would be indoctrinated and inculcated with the articles of their manhood. It is at this age, that a young man begins to learn the family business or trade (i.e., fishing, carpentry, tent making, aerospace engineering, etc.). Although the young man Jesus knew *WHO* He was, it seemed that He did not yet know quite *HOW* the Father (Yahweh) had intended to bring Him along. This "humanity thing" was new to Him as a boy, and as the Son of God. We have no record that God had at any time prior taken upon Himself to be "born of a woman; to be subject to

the laws of humanity; to be constrained by the temporal walls of time and space; to be under the government of another human (*parents*).<sup>10</sup> He humbled Himself, He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.<sup>10</sup>

Now back to the prodigal ... the father had given the returning son a robe (or suit of clothing) which brought him (in the eyes of society) back under the mantle of the father. The son could again, take up the father's name. Then the father of the prodigal gave him a ring. In one sense, the ring was much like a credit card. The "credit card" has two strengths: *the name on the card and its buying power*. You could buy, sell and trade with it. Its buying power was backed by the strength of the name of the Father (or, in other cases, the king).

The ring was the prodigal father's signature which gave the returning son, currency in the community. In Isaiah 45 (according to the Concordant expression of the original scriptures) God is saying to Jesus "I have *entitled* You." The surname (anointing, entitlement) of God, on the man Jesus Christ gave the man Jesus currency in the community of Heaven. We see this when the seven sons of Sceva<sup>11</sup> tried to command the devils in the name of "the Jesus whom Paul preached." The devils promptly called them on it. They said, "The name *Jesus* has currency, here. Even the name *Paul* has currency, here. *YOU*, we don't know."

During my readings, of Isaiah, another thing stood out for me. Let's take the backstreet. Had you ever wondered how *you* might have responded to the enemy's wilderness temptations? You recall the one where the enemy tried to offer Jesus the "kingdoms of the world, and all of their glory."<sup>12</sup> Were you ever curious about what was going on inside of Jesus during that time? Now remember Jesus was very really a man (too). So let's not take the cheap way out and say, "Well, this temptation was easy for Jesus, because He was God." Allow me to discomfit you

a bit and say, that MOST (about 98%) of what Jesus did while here on earth; He did as a MAN. And even the things He did "*as God*" (like dying on the Cross); He did as a Divine Partnership of "God operating through His *humanity*." Now we see a bit of light shed on when Peter asked Jesus, "*Bid me to come to Thee on the water*." Jesus said "*Come*."<sup>13</sup> If Jesus had been the only One on the water, we could have written that off to His Deity. That's not possible anymore. My heart so longs to walk a much further down this road; but the Lord is pointing me back to the original topic of this article.

So why did the man Jesus Christ not jump at the opportunity to take the offer? I mean, He was, at that time, a King (without a kingdom) right. Is it because the Father had already girded up the loins of His mind: "*Butter and honey shall He eat, that He may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good*."<sup>14</sup> Is it because the Father had already promised Him: "... *I will give You the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou may know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel*."<sup>15</sup>

If I might take license here, what the enemy offered Jesus in the wilderness, was comparatively "laughable." And I mean that reverently. What, pray tell, are the "kingdoms of this world, and their glory;" as set over against "*the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places?*" Can I set these in their proper hierarchy? In a 30-story building, the "kingdoms of this world" would be on the 27<sup>th</sup> floor; whereas the "*the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places*" would be the penthouse. The enemy was offering Jesus the opportunity to be second-in-command to him. Whereas the Father had already offered the man Jesus Christ sovereignty over the enemy and everything that he stood for. Had not The Lord, just told Jesus, in Isaiah that "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."<sup>16</sup> When we come to the wilderness of life, with the promises of God ever before us; and when we esteem the words of God more than your necessary food; it is not difficult

to choose life. It is here that we learn that man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. <sup>(17)</sup>

And had not the Lord said furthermore (to us) that "To him that overcome will I grant to sit with Me in My throne ..." <sup>(18)</sup> So when the enemy gives you a panorama of "the kingdoms of this world, and their glory," respond in the words of an overcomer: "I will worship the Lord my God, and Him ONLY shall I serve." <sup>(19)</sup> -JTI-

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**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- <sup>(1)</sup> John 1:46
- <sup>(2)</sup> John 8:19, 41
- <sup>(3)</sup> Hebrews 12:2
- <sup>(4)</sup> Luke 2:49
- <sup>(5)</sup> Luke 2:19, 51
- <sup>(6)</sup> Luke 1:30-32; 2:10
- <sup>(7)</sup> Hebrews 12:13
- <sup>(8)</sup> Isaiah 61:1
- <sup>(9)</sup> Isaiah 45:4-5; 9:6
- <sup>(10)</sup> Luke 2: 51-52
- <sup>(11)</sup> Acts 19:13-16
- <sup>(12)</sup> Matthew 4:8-9
- <sup>(13)</sup> Matthew 14:28-29
- <sup>(14)</sup> Isaiah 7:15; 45:5; 1 Peter 1:13
- <sup>(15)</sup> Isaiah 45: 3
- <sup>(16)</sup> Revelation 11:15
- <sup>(17)</sup> Job 23:12; Deuteronomy 30:19
- <sup>(18)</sup> Revelation 3:21
- <sup>(19)</sup> Matthew 4:10

**Romans 8:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

<sup>13</sup> For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

<sup>14</sup> For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

usurping of our freewill. We eat what we will; we walk and talk how we will; we think and say what we will. We will abide no shackles of chastity; nor fetters of integrity; we loathe the chains of temperance and the handcuffs of obedience. Of course, we would never "say" these types of things. We draw nigh to God with our mouths, but in our hearts we are quite impudent; quite far from Him. We see this most when the "servants" of the Lord, come to make their withdrawal; when life's circumstances descend upon us, we find that our accounts are empty. No response of *love* ... no giving of *joy* ... no making of *peace* ... no show of *longsuffering* ... no *gentleness* of disposition ... none of the fragrance of the King. But it doesn't have to stay this way. =NHW=

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**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- <sup>(1)</sup> Genesis 1:29
- <sup>(2)</sup> Exodus 34:25; Leviticus 2:4-5
- <sup>(3)</sup> Exodus 34:18
- <sup>(4)</sup> Genesis 19:2-3
- <sup>(5)</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9
- <sup>(6)</sup> Mark 8:15

**Philippians 2:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

<sup>7</sup> But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

<sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

## PSALM 47

- 1** O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
- 2** For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.
- 3** He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.
- 4** He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.
- 5** God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
- 6** Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
- 7** For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.
- 8** God reigns over the heathen: God sits upon the throne of his holiness.
- 9** The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

## Are You Sure?

There is a healthy contemplation that drives us to check our commitment to our various relationships with others. While I have your attention may I ask another question? Do you ever wonder if you're really saved? I don't mean to intrude ... okay maybe I do intend to intrude. Do you contemplate your loyalty and commitment to your relationship "with Christ" very specifically? Respectfully, we are not talking here about your relationship with a religious institution. We're asking about a very up-close and personal relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ. The scriptures encourage us to periodically check our "fruit." We are admonished to work out your own soul's salvation with fear and trembling. <sup>(1)</sup>

I can just imagine Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?"

His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree."

And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?" His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves."

Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent.

Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground." <sup>(2)</sup> He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany. <sup>(3)</sup> So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

### May I make a few suggestions on ways to discover the truth? <sup>(4)</sup>

- 1. How does your covenant with Jesus Christ affect your concept of God and your attitude towards Him?**
- 2. How does your relationship with God affect your attitude towards Jesus Christ (Him as a Person and His Lordship over your life)?**
- 3. How does your covenant with God affect your attitude towards the Holy Scriptures?**
- 4. How does your relationship with Christ affect your attitude towards your "self-life" or your "flesh"?**
- 5. How does your covenant with Christ affect your relationship with and attitude towards your fellow Christians?**
- 6. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with and attitude towards the world?**
- 7. Last, but in no way least, how does your covenant with Jesus affect your attitude towards sin?**

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. <sup>(5)</sup>

### Be Sure!

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Philippians 2:12                      (2) John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7

(3) Matthew 21:17-19

(4) Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The

Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68                      (5) Hebrews 13:20-21

## 🌀 SUMMARY 🌀

### The Chief Cornerstone



As I gasped for air (almost mentally hyperventilating); I was *finished*. That was the end of my "me-centric" meditations on that topic. And the prayer I actually did pray was "Yes Lord...."

### Boot Camp



I know... I know... we don't like the entailments of these types of questions.

We don't have a problem asking God for a Mercedes and a promotion (*so that we can pay for the Mercedes*).

### Journey to Intimacy



You know the story of the prodigal son. Upon the son's return home; the father gave him a *robe* and a ring. This was symbolic of being given one of the father's suits and a credit card ....

... The devils promptly called them on it. They said, "The name *Jesus* has currency, here. Even the name *Paul* has currency, here. *YOU*, we don't know."

## 🌀 SUMMARY 🌀

### The Leadership Corner

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... This went on for about three weeks. If I might speak freely, this discussion was starting to wear my nerves thin.

I just couldn't understand what He was getting at. Then, He revealed to me ...

### Nutrition, Health & Wellness



Please allow me to share something with you. The term "*wicked*" in this parable (with reference to the husbandmen) has a most intriguing origin. It is a primitive Hebrew, or Chaldean, word. It could have been translated "*with leaven*." So allow me to introduce you to the husbandmen again. These are persons whose character has leaven, is bitter or is puffed up.

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