

**SUNDAY SCHOOL BIBLE
COMMENTARY
DEC. 2015 - FEB. 2016**

IKOYI BAPTIST CHURCH

PREFACE

The greatest event this quarter is the celebration of Christmas. In many parts of the world, especially Europe and the United States of America, Christmas season starts from early November. Our theme this Winter Quarter (December 2015 - February 2016): **“Sacred Gifts and Holy Gatherings”** focuses on Bible traditions. These traditions are divinely originated and are covered mainly in the Old Testament, in particular the Books of Moses. The Old Testament books are usually referred to as the Law and Prophets (Matthew 5:17). The five books of Moses cover the Law. The Law covers basically the traditions of Israel, and not just the Ten Commandments. Traditions are a way of life of a people. Different peoples and cultures have their own traditions passed down from generation to generation to ensure continuity and conformity. Tradition covers life events like birth, marriage, death, and religious worship.

The impact of tradition dawned heavily on me recently while watching a film of a family that chose to skip the Christmas traditions of the community as they wanted to go on a boat cruise during Christmas. They went through so much persecution and humiliation, and were saved from disaster by the same community they disdained when suddenly their daughter arrived the airport with her fiancée for the usual Christmas party and festivities. It is this same community they had rubbished who did a “miracle” of incredible support and solidarity to ensure a warm home coming for their daughter. Keeping to traditions of the community ensures peaceful co-existence among the people.

What is unique about the Israeli traditions is that they are handed down to them by God, to set them apart from the pagan nations around them. They were not to have anything to do with their old traditions (of Abraham's Ur or of Egypt where they spent over 400 years) as these had pagan intonations. By the time Christ came, the Pharisees had made a huge mountain out of these traditions. The traditions cover the most joyous events in human life - birth and marriage, and the most tragic: death and burial. Worship traditions include offerings and giving to God, and the various feasts designed to give the people occasions to celebrate joyously, worship, and rest. In the new dispensation of grace under Christ, many of these traditions may have become obsolete, but the Bible is full of

guidelines on how the Christian traditions can be kept apart from the ungodly world practices. As we study these ancient Israeli traditions, it is incumbent on us to think of how we can bring Christ into all these practices today: birth, marriage, burial, worship, giving, etc.

The Bible Study Guide now has an Editorial Board to whom suggestions, questions and comments can be sent to improve the quality of this devotional. We praise the Lord for those who continue to make time available to be used of the Lord to write the Bible Study Guide [Contributors: Rev. Abayomi Lawal, Dns. Maria Oluwole , Dn. Bryant Oluwole, Dn. Sunday Taiwo, Dn. Nebolisah Arah, Dns. Bunmi Philipps, Dn. Yemi Agbelusi, Dns. Ronke Oke, Dn. Gboyega Ajao, Bro. Sola Adeoye, Dn. Wuyi Adekunle, and Segun Abimbola(Dn.)]. May God reward them all abundantly.

EDITORIAL BOARD

**Dn. Wuyi Adekunle, Dns. Maria Oluwole,
Bro. Wole Awotula, Rev. Ike Onyegbu, and Segun Abimbola(Dn.)**

MEMORY VERSES: DEC. 2015 - FEB. 2016 (NIV)

DECEMBER

December 6: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. – Exodus 20:8

December 13: Keep my commands and follow them. I am the LORD.
– Leviticus 22:31

December 20: When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. – Luke 2:22

December 27: Those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. – Matthew 23:12

JANUARY

January 3: Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years. – Genesis 29:30

January 10: My dove, my perfect one, is unique, the only daughter of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her. – Song of Songs 6:9

January 17: When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD said to him, “Go, marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the LORD.” – Hosea 1:2

January 24: What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.
– John 2:11

January 31: When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” – John 11:43

FEBRUARY

February 7: This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD – a lasting ordinance.
– Exodus 12:14

February 14: Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD. – Leviticus 23:16

February 21: In this way he will make atonement for the Most Holy Place because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been. He is to do the same for the tent of meeting, which is among them in the midst of their uncleanness. – Leviticus 16:16

February 28: Live in temporary shelters for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in such shelters so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God. – Leviticus 23:42, 43

VERY GOOD

By the end of the 6th day, God had created the heavens and the earth, day and night, the sky, the land and seas, plants and trees. He made the sun to govern the day, and the moon to govern the night. He also made the stars, separating light from darkness. Then God went on to create every type of living creatures in the sky, in the waters, and on the land according to its kind. Then God made man, male and female in His own image, and blessed them to be fruitful, to multiply, fill the earth and to subdue it.

When God looked over all that He made, He adjudged them to be good.



When the work of creating the world was completed, God rested on the seventh day and set it apart as a day of rest. God having created us in His own image expects us to work as He works, do a good job as he does, and set apart the seventh day for rest as He did. In the

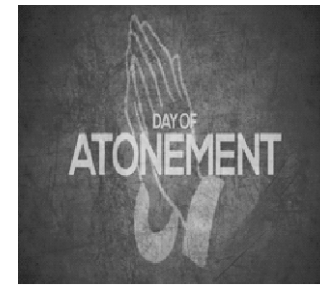
New Testament, when Peter was apprehensive of going to preach to gentiles, God assured him in a vision that all that He created is good. We should see all of God's creation in this light and treat other human beings with respect. We should learn to love people even when we hate the evil they do. Ours is to pray for them.

PRAYER: *Father, You created me in your own image. I desire to always do a very good job like You. Thank you for the ability to do so, and to rest in Jesus name. Amen.*

DAY OF ATONEMENT

Atonement is the reconciliation of sinners to GOD. The Israelites were to be cleansed on the Day of Atonement from their sins before the Lord. On this day, the Priest performed the ceremony of atonement as prescribed by statute. It is a Sabbath day, a day of fasting, and of rest, when no work whatsoever must be done.

Once a year, the priest would sacrifice animals as a sin offering to turn away the wrath of God and cleanse the people of their sin. He would first wash himself clean with water, and then wear the prescribed holy garments for the ceremony. Afterwards he would sacrifice a young bull as a sin offering for himself, and his household, and blood into The Holy Tabernacle. The Priest would take its blood to Holy Place (which he enters only once a year), the Tent of Meeting, and the altar by sprinkling. He would then put both his hands on the head of a second goat, confess the sins of the Israelites over it and send the goat away into the desert, carrying away the sins of the people for a whole year.



This was a foreshadow of what Jesus came to do; to take away the sins of the world, including yours, not for one year but once and for all. Have you accepted Him?

PRAYER: *Thank You Father for making a plan from the foundation of the earth to cleanse me of my sins and reconcile me back to you. I am grateful in Jesus name. Amen.*

FINDING IN GOD A REFUGE

God knows we need a refuge traveling through this world. He went ahead to promise right from the beginning that we can put our trust in Him as He will be our refuge as indeed He is for Israel - Deut.33:27. David knew this very well as he confessed it many times in his Psalms. He knew how to find his refuge in God as he went through shepherding sheep in the wild; facing lions and leopards; fighting and wining against the fearful giant - Goliath; waiting to be king for years on end; trying to escape being killed by the reigning king Saul; and faced treason from his own son Absalom.



Note in this Psalm how David moved from "I shall not be greatly shaken" in verse 2 to just "I shall not be shaken" in verse 6. The more we realize

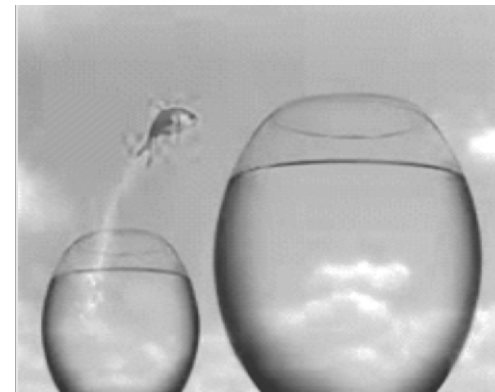
that the Almighty God is our very life, our fortress, our source, and even our reputation like David did, the greater will be the calmness in our hearts. After all, if we don't trust in God, we have only men of questionable integrity to contend with, and if all men are weighed together against God, they amount to nothing. We must not put our trust in our wealth, positions, or human abilities, but trust in God at all times, pouring out our hearts to Him in prayer always.

PRAYER: *Father, You are my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore I will not fear at all, but trust in You in Jesus name I pray, amen.*

PROMISED REST

God promised to take the Israelites to a land flowing with milk and honey, after delivering them from Egypt. When they reach the Promised Land, they would rest from their journey. However, at Meribah and at Massah, they complained against God as if they had never seen His mighty acts of deliverance. In anger God decided that they would not enter His rest, because they did not combine the

message Moses gave them with faith and so never entered the Promised Land. With the exception of the faithful Joshua and Caleb, all who left Egypt died in the wilderness.



However, the promised rest still stands as we read in our text. God has set another time, called Today, when He will

grant His children rest. Therefore when you hear the gospel, you should not harden your heart as the Israelites did in the desert. As we also have heard the gospel preached to us, just as they did; we need to believe and act on it, so that we may enter God's rest, a place where God has prepared for us who believe on Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. The promised rest is about eternal life. In Hebrews 3:19, we see that we are able to enter God's promised rest when we believe the gospel, and do what this entails: Bearing fruits (godly Character, Good works, and Witnessing).

PRAYER: *Lord, thank you for drawing my heart to you in faith so I can possess your promised rest in Jesus name I pray.*

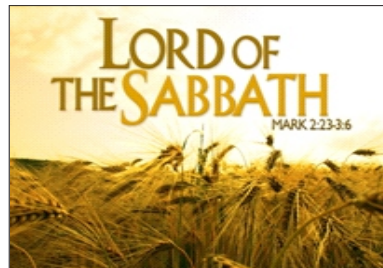
ETERNAL REST

When we go to funeral services, we hear the words "eternal, rest grant him O Lord!" How correct are these words? Is eternal rest granted after death or what? Our reading today in Rev 14:13 says those who die in Christ are blessed because they rest from their labour or have entered God's rest. Labour here can be said to mean tribulations, sickness, sorrows, pain, responsibilities, work, frustrations, etc: Challenges of life in general.

Eternal rest is granted when you receive the gift of eternal life having put your faith in Jesus as your Savior and made him your Lord. You pass out of death into life, says John 5:24. The death is the second death for those who refuse to accept Jesus as Lord while on earth: They refuse to be born-again. When you are born twice (physical and spiritual), you die only once but when you are born only once, you die twice. Eternal rest is yours because Jesus has died in your place, and has made you to escape the second death. This knowledge frees you from the fear of death and judgment so that you have your peace from now on.

The decision to believe in Jesus can only be made here on earth, before one dies, for, it is appointed for man to die once and after that judgment! If you are born-again, bear fruits for the Lord. Let your life and your lips witness about Him.

PRAYER: Thank you Jesus for the assurance of my salvation, for you are able to save to the uttermost, us who have put our trust in you. Amen



WORK, THEN REST

God is reiterating His covenant of working for six days, and then resting on the Sabbath day with the Israelites. Moses instructed them that Manna was to be collected daily: One Omer (a measure) was to be collected for each person. Despite Moses' instructions some people collected more than needed. The following day whatever was left stank, and bred worms. It was then very clear that the manna was to be collected daily. On the sixth day however, Moses gave instructions to collect double. The seventh day was the Sabbath day when they must rest. However, some did not believe: When they went out to gather the manna on the seventh day, the day they should be resting, they found none, but the ones from the previous day remained good.

God was teaching His people truths they were to live by:

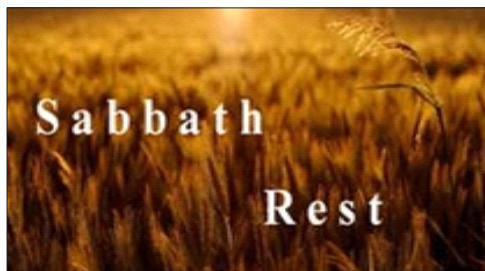
1. He is their sufficiency and they are to depend on Him daily for provision.
2. As God worked for six days in creating the world and rested; they are also to work for six days and rest on the seventh day.

Some of us are so concerned about tomorrow that we hardly take a break to rest, even on Sunday. God is reminding us: Seek first His Kingdom.



PRAYER: As I see you working, and learn to work, help me dear Lord to rest regularly, after working diligently, in Jesus name I pray. Amen.

A DAY OF REST



In the Ten Commandments received by Moses, the fourth law instructs to set the seventh day apart as holy to the Lord: They must work for six days only, but consecrate the seventh day as a day of rest and worship to God. Not only were

the Israelites to rest on the Sabbath, everybody within their gates, whether native or foreign were also bound to keep the day holy, and do no work in it whatsoever. God describes the observance of the Sabbath as a sign (covenant) between Him and the children of Israel forever. In it they were to rest and be refreshed.

Sabbath means "to rest or to cease from work". Now, to us who believe, Sabbath is every seventh day, made to coincide with the day God rested after he created the heavens and the earth in six days. The Sabbath is to be set apart for God, and should be kept as a day of rest for ever. We will be wise if we obey the God, who created us, who knows our form, and has given us the command to hallow the seventh day as a day of rest.

We rest on Sunday in commemoration of the finished work of salvation through the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, our Sunday. Do take time to worship with others.

PRAYER: *Every one of your commandments O Lord is for my good. I will keep the Sabbath day if only because you have commanded and blessed it, in Jesus day. Amen.*

LIVING SACRIFICE

In this song of praise by David, he recognises what God does when His people wait upon Him patiently for help instead of turning to idols, living or dead, moving or stationary (some people in certain parts of the world are known to



worship cows). He recounts how God pulled him out of danger and made him secure. Please go down memory lane and take a moment to do a song of praise now; in the words of the song 'Bend Low' and see the many things the Lord has done for you.

David also recognises that God does not depend on our sacrifices in whatever shape, form or magnitude. He has given us ears to hear and eyes to see His marvelous works together with His instructions for living in His manual for mankind (The Holy Bible). We are required to love the Lord, do His will and keep His teachings in our hearts. Many are the injunctions in the words of the various psalmists conveying the living sacrifices required from you and me. Psalm 119 is full of them e.g. 119: 1-5; 11; 105 etc. God appreciates obedience more than the best of sacrifices. Samuel made this clear to Saul, and to all who care to listen in 1 Samuel 15. Paul appeals to all in Romans 12: 1-2, that we make ourselves living sacrifices to God in the way we conduct our lives. The sacrificial animal under Moses is killed: Ours should be a life of sacrifice for the Lord.

PRAYER: *Father in Heaven, help me to be obedient, and in everything, a living sacrifice to You in Jesus' name. Amen.*

CONTRITE SACRIFICE



David was a very rich and powerful king and could make as much material sacrifices as could possibly be required on any occasion. He has however been made to realise that nothing can be hidden from God, and a cover up with any amount of offerings and sacrifices in cash or kind will not suffice.

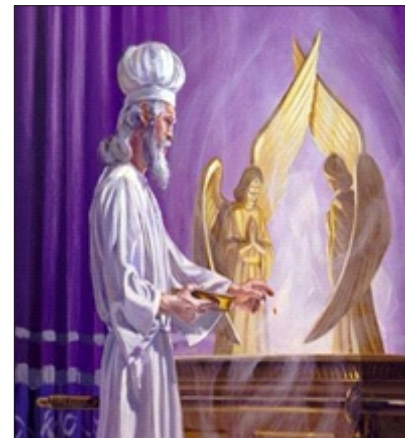
Like David said of God in V16, He does not desire sacrifices even if you are so rich that you can offer every animal in the universe. All He wants from you and me is a humble spirit and to love Him with all our heart, all our soul and all our strength, and to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matt. 22: 37-39). When the rooster crowed after Peter's third time denial of Jesus Christ, '... he went out and wept bitterly.' (Matt. 27: 69-75). God eventually built His church using Peter amongst others. Judas on the other hand, thought he could redeem himself by returning the blood money he received for betraying Jesus Christ, but he ended up in suicide. Man cannot 'compensate' God for any kind of wrongdoing. Don't wait for someone to expose you for your shady dealing(s) before submitting to your conscience and the promptings of the Holy Spirit for repentance, and to seek forgiveness.

PRAYER: *When I have done wrong, knowingly or otherwise, help me Father, to have a penitent heart that will make acceptable sacrifice to You in Jesus' name. Amen.*

LOVING SACRIFICE

Actually, this great encounter between the Scribe, who is one of the exclusive custodians of the Law, confirms the adage 'What is worth doing at all is worth doing well'. How better can anyone do anything when he has put ALL his soul, mind and strength into it. The Lord Who controls everything and is the judge of everyone reads the genuineness in everything we all do. He will not shortchange anyone from getting his full reward. So, how much do you love God? See verse 30 again.

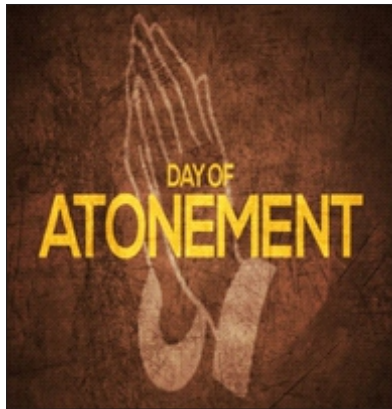
Your neighbour is anybody including those you hate to love, for one great reason or another - and there are some who actually make it so very difficult for you to just greet, let alone love and associate with them or even merely engage in casual exchange of pleasantries.



However, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself commanded us to love. As a child of God and a soldier in His army, you don't even think about it, you just do it. Soldiers are not allowed to think, they just obey the last order. If you do what Jesus says, 'you are not far from the kingdom of God'. The implication is that you are still 'work in progress' for reaching the kingdom of God. You must keep practicing loving sacrifices until you get there.

PRAYER: *Of my own, I can do nothing right Father. But with You, all things are possible. Help me to make loving sacrifices, and make them right in Jesus' name. Amen.*

COMPLETE SACRIFICE



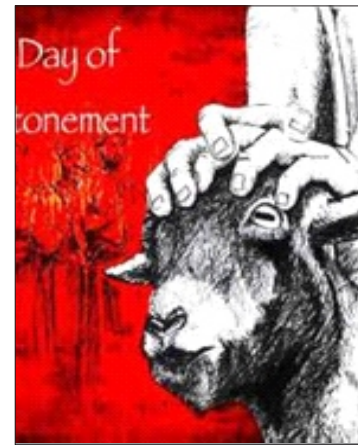
Sacrifice to God can be made without being done in a complete manner and nobody should do that because it is simply not acceptable to Him. How then do we make our sacrifices to God complete and acceptable? The very first step is a daily and continuous walk with God for a sound intimacy with Him. Paul, in this letter to the Romans, and to us today, was spelling out the way in which our sacrifices to God can be complete on a daily basis,

by a 'daily walk' with Him which makes it possible for us to chart our way through this complicated world.

We may be tempted to live according to the norms that are now pervading some parts of our world, e.g. same sex marriages, child abuses in its many forms, etc, etc. However, only one standard is acceptable to God, viz. nonconformity with the standards of this world and a daily walk with Him. There is a 'complete' way of the Lord in everything, everywhere and under every situation. The gifts that are encouraged in V6-8 are to enable us express the grace of God in us for a complete offer of sacrifice to Him as we present our skills for use in our services to Him to the glory of His holy name. Please examine your gifts and genuinely sacrifice them to God in serving Him and serving others.

PRAYER: May my sacrifice to You be 'complete' as I use all of your gracious gifts to me in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

FAITHFUL SACRIFICE



In Jesus' estimate, 'the widow's two mites' (Mark 12: 41-44) far outweigh the volumes showcased by others as they contributed into the treasury. Faithfulness and sincerity in what is being done to please the Lord is more than key to the whole exercise of sacrificing. God commands us to make faithful sacrifices but sometimes we think we have obeyed whereas we have just merely pleased ourselves and the on-looking audience, to the exclusion of God from the entire equation.

Noah, Abraham and Sarah believed what they were told by God and sacrificed the seeming realities of their very circumstances (environmental situation, their ages, the trending patterns of the times, ridicule etc), for a faithful loyalty to the directives from God. Just imagine the huge specifications and the period it took for the construction of the Noah's ark, let alone the insinuations that ensued (Gen. 6-8). Abraham was obedient to God when he was instructed to sacrifice his son 'whom he loved'. God intervened for him, and the rest is history. Faithful sacrifices bring astounding results from God if we do them His way, without hesitation and without doubt.

PRAYER: May your love O God keep me faithful in all my attempts to make sacrifices to You in Jesus' name. Amen.

PERFECT SACRIFICE

It is almost impossible to love everybody that we know, let alone those we do not, who are just fellow human beings. Suffice to give the examples of the black and white population in America and



Britain, also the aborigines in Australia - without going into details. But this is what God has called us to do as a perfect sacrifice of our love for Him. He commanded us to be perfect as He is (Matt. 5: 48).

The demonstration and sharing of love with the un-lovables of this world who set out to maim

and kill in suicide or planted bombs, by praying for their salvation without ceasing, and by continually appealing to them for reconciliation with Christ and their fellow human beings is what we are called to do as followers of Christ. In the spirit of V7 of today's passage, we will be making a perfect sacrifice to show that we love God, if we love one another. If we are unable to make this perfect sacrifice to love everyone, then, as the scripture says, we do not really love God. He showed us perfect love, whilst we were yet sinners, by making perfect sacrifice of Himself on the Cross for the remission of our sins. We are not called upon to answer for our sins, but only to accept this perfect sacrifice of His that will make us the children of God. Have you done this?

PRAYER: *Perfect sacrifice is only possible through You. Help me not only to recognise, but also appreciate this. Make me perfect as You are, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE

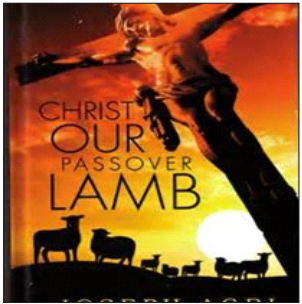
What God wants from His creation is simple, affordable and also available if we are willing to be obedient and go the extra mile with His instructions. God's standards, even though simple, are very high because there is nothing bigger than Him, or impossible for Him for that matter. How far do we go to please ourselves? Some are able to satisfy all their needs in life only to genuinely forget that it is only God that enables and makes all things possible, available and doable. Even when they want to appreciate God in 'Thanksgiving', they end up thanking themselves and their friends in huge party celebrations. They spend enormous amounts on their children's weddings, their birthdays and parents' funerals whilst bringing pitiable amounts of money to church as sacrifice. Are you guilty? What percentage of the amount spent during your last celebration went into the offertory as a sacrifice that is acceptable unto God?



God is specific on the manner of sacrifice that is acceptable to Him. We do make monetary sacrifices to Him these days in terms of our 'tithes' and 'offerings'. How do you make the money you are tithing or offering? If it is from bribery or any fraudulent deal, it is most certainly not an acceptable sacrifice to God.

PRAYER: *As I seek to offer acceptable sacrifices in cash or kind Father, help me to examine myself and what I bring properly to ensure they are acceptable in Jesus' name. Amen.*

SEPARATE FOR A PURPOSE



The Creator of the universe, created everything and everyone for a purpose. "Have reverence for God, and obey His commands, because this is all that human beings were created for." [Eccl. 12: 14b]. God created man in His own image; that makes them volitional beings. Even though He created us for a loving relationship, man still retained the privilege to love or not to love

God. Inevitably, some chose total independence following after the first Adam while others attempt total dependence on God, after the second Adam, Jesus.

Before the foundation of the earth was laid God mysteriously put us in Christ, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus Christ died for sinners once for all; the righteous for the unrighteous to reconcile us to God. Those who believe and put their trust in Him, have the authority to be called children of God.

God commands us to learn to love, obey and cling to Him to be holy for He is holy. The Bible warns that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord: Those who are in Christ are separate; we are robed with the righteousness of Christ, with no sin to account for, for Jesus the perfect Lamb of God, PAID IT ALL.

PRAYER: You took my death Lord, grant me the grace to live for you in Jesus name, amen.

GOD'S HEART AND DEDICATION

"At one time, you were far away from God. ... but now, by means of the physical death of His Son, God has made you His friends in order to bring you, holy pure and faultless into His presence." Col. 1: 21, 22. It is not God's pleasure that any one should die, but that all should come to repentance and accept His offer of life. He created man and knows how soon we forget. He knows how vulnerable you are when far away from Him.

Passover was one of the mandatory celebrations for every Jew twelve and above to attend in Jerusalem every year. Most of the people in that generation invited by King Hezekiah to come over to Jerusalem to celebrate had never observed a 'Passover'. They laughed at the messengers and remained rebellious. A few, some from the far

north, went and the people had a memorable celebration before the Lord. God seeks those who would worship him in spirit and in truth. Jerusalem was chosen by God for the Passover. He gave detailed instructions as to how it was to be done. God united the hearts of the people and they came in obedience. Obedience acknowledges God as Lord of your life. Obedience is a proof of your love and trust in your God. Jesus said, "If you love me you will obey my commandments." God seeks from you loving intimacy, obedience and trust.



PRAYER: Give me an obedient heart O Lord! You took my sin, my pain and my shame in exchange for your righteousness. Help me live for you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

DEDICATION OF SAMSON

God said to prophet Jeremiah; "I knew you before you were conceived, and appointed you to be my 'spokes- man'". In John 15: 16, God said; "you did not choose me but I chose you that you may bear fruit; fruit that will abide". All believers are separated and commissioned for kingdom purposes.

Samson was dedicated for a special assignment. He was to be a Nazarene from his mother's womb. Detailed instructions were given to be observed by the parents in upbringing the child. The



parents obeyed and God's purposes were achieved for the benefit of the whole country. "The child grew, and the Lord blessed him. The Lord's power began to strengthen him". Harboring the power of God in him, Samson moved as a one man battalion to free the Israelites from the oppression of the Philistines.

Every child is a gift from God. We underline this when we are careful to ask Him for children and the strategy to raise them. We affirm this during dedication. I asked specifically for children who would give their lives to God in their childhood. He graciously granted it.

PRAYER: *Father, You changed Manoa's situation by giving them a special child. Lord, I invite you into everything that concerns my family. Take control in Jesus name I pray. Amen.*

DEDICATION OF SAMUEL

Through ridicule and tears, Hannah asked the Lord for a son. She prayed for years and pledged him to the Lord. Even though Samuel was her only child, she made bold to fulfill her pledge. Hannah kept her word and God honoured her with more children; sons and daughters.

Hannah was careful to follow the details required for an acceptable offering and dedication. Samuel heard the voice of God in his childhood and grew up in His presence: Samuel became a great prophet in Israel. It was said of him; "His word never fell to the ground".



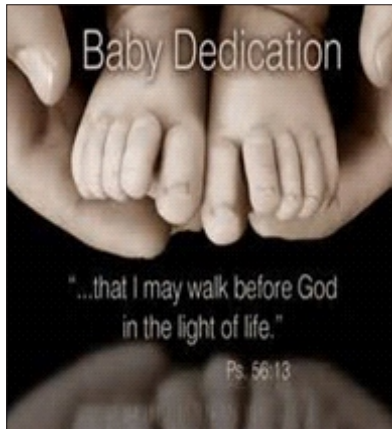
Delay is not denial: God may have a bigger, better thing for you. God is good; He loves you with a perfect love and wants the best for you always. God's design for you is to be separated from the world and dedicated to the things of the Kingdom. At every baby dedication, we should, like Hannah, pray that our children will belong to God. As parents who are dedicated and consecrated to the Lord, all we are and have are the Lord's, including our children. They must therefore be dedicated to Him.

PRAYER: *Dear Father, Thank you for your promises, that our children will belong to You and serve You. I dedicate my children and grand-children to You Lord; even those unborn In Jesus name I pray. Amen.*

DEDICATION OF DAVID

The Lord God uses the little and the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. David was the youngest in his family and overlooked. Samuel had to ask if there were no other sons. God told him he was to anoint a son of Jesse, and had rejected all seven brought before Him. Samuel asked Jesse: "Are these all your sons?" The father confessed that there was still the youngest, taking care of the sheep. Little did he know that this shepherd boy was being trained to shepherd God's Sheep [God's chosen people].

Immediately Samuel heard that, he knew that was God's anointed. Everyone waited for the big moment; David came and was anointed in the presence of his brothers. Immediately, the Bible tells us, "The Spirit of the Lord took control of David, and was with him, from that day on".



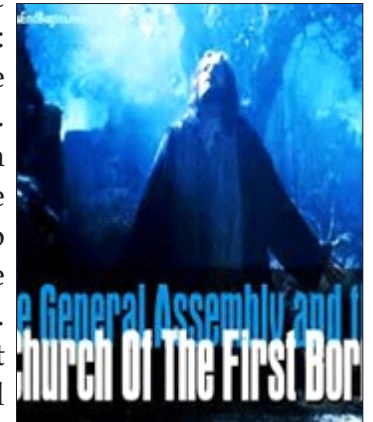
Dedication is an invitation for that Spirit of God to become the senior partner in your life. When in any congregation, do not shy away from responsibilities and the dedication anointing that goes with assumption of office. Through such dedication, God's mark is placed upon you to do exploits for Him. You also could become a terror to the kingdom of darkness.

PRAYER: *Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me! May I decrease Lord while you increase in me. Make me all you saved me to be. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

DEDICATION OF FIRSTBORN

The Lord takes delight in leading His people. He created us for friendship and fellowship. "I will instruct you" says the Lord and guide you along the pathway best for you. Here we see God giving Moses detailed instructions.

At birth, there is a pouring out of blood and water. Every female during her menstrual period is considered unclean. Issue of blood or any discharge for that matter, caused by disease or childbirth, renders the mother unclean. Any unclean person must present himself to the high priest with the recommended items for a burnt and a sin offering. In the case of childbirth, the child is dedicated on that day after which the mother is considered clean again. During her period of uncleanness whatever she touches is rendered unclean. In the Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit did not indwell His servants: They needed frequent reminders of the presence and the enabling power of God. The male child is named on the eighth day, and if a firstborn, is dedicated to the Lord. In Christ, we are all dedicated to God and must live as such. Jesus is the Firstborn, and we are all His brothers. There is no uncleanness in Christ, but let us not abuse this freedom. We should rather live holy lives, dedicated unto God.



PRAYER: *"Learn to love the Lord your God, obey and cling to Him; He is your God ...". May I learn well and remain in love with You. In Jesus' precious name I pray. Amen.*

Sun. Dec. 20, 2015

Exod. 13:13b-15; Luke 2: 22-32



PRAYER: "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see." Thank you Lord Jesus for your grace to me.

Wednesday December 23, 2015

2Corinthians 8:3-9

EXCELLENT GENEROSITY

As you consider the topic for today, you may wonder from both the recipient stand point and the donor, how can generosity be made excellent? In context of our reading today the word excellent may describe "surpassing", that which cannot be exceeded. God's greatest and indescribable generous gift is that of sending his only



Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Apostle Paul observed that the Macedonian churches suffered because of their faith, but they remained steadfast. While their material welfare apparently deteriorated, their spiritual well-being increased. Paul attributed this to the grace of God, His unmerited favor. He sent Titus to the Corinthians to give them opportunity to also excel in this grace of giving, because giving expresses love. The secret of the Macedonians' generosity is that they first gave themselves to God before they were able to give beyond themselves.

Christian giving does not depend on material circumstances so much as spiritual convictions. Christian giving flows from the heart, the spontaneous expression of love to Christ for His full and free salvation. We need to develop attitudes of generosity that give liberally to others' needs.

PRAYER: Jesus' love must be most wonderful if He could die my love to win. Oh Lord, light the flame within my heart, and I will

love Thee the more, until I see Thee as Thou art, amen.

Thursday December 24, 2015

Colossians 3:12-17

WISE GENEROSITY

Our reading today focuses on you as a believer. In the earlier part of the chapter, Paul asserted that the believer has died with Christ and his life is currently hidden with Christ in God. The believer is to consider himself dead to sin and he is to put aside abusive things and to put on the new self in Christ. As Christians, we are expected to live as God wants us to; in the way that we relate to each other, showing compassion, kindness, humility, and readiness to forgive.

If you and I had any appreciation for the depth of God's love for us and the depths from which He has saved us, we could not help but to be joyful and generous. We would give of ourselves, not because God had need of our time, talent or treasure, but because we would want to be part of that incredible life-saving grace that saved you



and me. Paul admonished that in whatever you do--whether it be to love God or love your neighbor; whether it be putting on a heart of compassion, kindness, love, or forgiving your brother and sister in Christ, do all to the glory of God. Determine in your heart to respond to others with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Remember wise generosity is rooted in God and blossoms through daily obedience to the dictates of the Holy Spirit who indwells us.

PRAYER: *"I need thee every hour, Most Holy One; O make me Thine*

indeed, Thou blessed Son". This is my song, amen.

Friday December 25, 2015

Romans 12:6-13

LOVING GENEROSITY

Today is Christmas Day. May I join the host of others in wishing you and all your loved ones a Merry Christmas? I specially rejoice with



you that you have created this time to hear and pay attention to what the Lord has to say to you today. I am sure you will have a time to reflect on the all surpassing loving generosity of our God in sending Jesus to die for our sins while we were still at enmity with Him. His generosity continues to be the most wonderful act in human realm.

What can be more generous than the gift by God of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ? God's love binds all

believers into the family of God. The portion we have just read points us to how every Christian should behave in the family of God. Love should be honest and without hypocrisy. Love should lead to kindness and humility, faithfulness in business, fervency in spiritual things. Christians should care for each other and share with each other. Christian fellowship is much more than a pat on the back and a handshake. It means sharing the burdens and the blessings of others so that we all grow together and glorify the Lord. If Christians cannot get along with one another, how can they ever face their enemies? May this Christmas Day be a time of gratitude to God and a renewal of our commitment to our loving and ever generous God and to other members of the household of faith.

PRAYER: *Thank you Oh God for the gracious gift of your Son Jesus*

Christ. May this Christmas mark the beginning of my closer walk with Jesus, amen.

Saturday December 26, 2015

Matthew 6:1-6

HUMBLE GENEROSITY

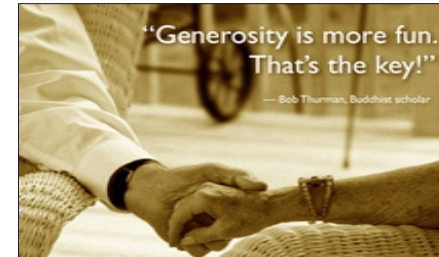
This is a season for exchange of gifts. Traditionally today is Boxing Day, a holiday set aside for family members to open up the boxes of gifts they had received over the Christmas period. Some of the gifts may reflect the personality of the giver. You probably took time to



select gifts that are appropriate to each receiver. God gave us His only Son and what He wants in exchange is eternal relationship with Him on earth and in heaven. How appropriate for us to spare some time to internalize the teaching of Jesus on generosity.

In the religion of the Pharisees, giving alms to the poor, praying, and fasting were important. Jesus did not condemn these practices, but He did caution the Pharisees to make sure that their hearts were right as they practiced them. Christ puts worship first since one's relationship with God determines his or her relationship with the world and other people. The Pharisees used almsgiving to try to gain favour with God and attention of men. If our motive is to get the praise of men, then like the Pharisees, we will call attention to what we are doing but if our motive is to serve and please God, then we will give our gifts discreetly. If we give with the wrong motive or in wrong manner, we rob ourselves of blessing and reward and rob God of glory. It is the glory and praise of God that really counts!

PRAYER: "He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all..... with the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Saviour Holy": Humility indeed. Grant me a humble heart dear Lord, in Jesus name.



Sunday Dec. 27, 2015
Matt. 23:12-12; Mark 12:38-44

GENEROUS EVEN IN POVERTY

This week we focused on GENEROSITY. Our first scripture passage deals with Jesus condemning the religious leaders who feigned piety, accepted honor from people, and stole from widows. The second passage provides the relationship. The setting of the story was within the temple complex which the Jews viewed to be the dwelling place of God. The temple was meant to be a place of justice and generosity. It was meant to welcome strangers and feed the poor. By the time Jesus was talking to his listeners, the temple was no longer fulfilling these roles. It is to this temple that the widow went and gave everything she had.

Jesus explained to His disciples that the sacrifice of the poor widow meant more to God than the extravagant, but proportionately lesser, donations of the rich. God of Love knows you and me for what we are and loves us as we cannot imagine, loves us with our sin and in our sin, in our poverty and our depraved state, loves us so deeply that, like the widow, "He gave everything." Currently the heart of the believer, as imperfect as it is, provides dwelling place for God. In response, God demands our undiluted devotion to Him. He wants us to love Him and show love to our neighbours.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, please help me reflect your love to all around me irrespective of my financial standing, in Jesus name, amen.



TRUSTWORTHY LIVES

A trust worthy life is one that can be believed or relied upon. It is a life committed to being above reproach all the time. It is a life of integrity, moral soundness, probity. It is a life lived with

uprightness.

Is this attainable? Yes, through Christ who strengthens us. A person who is trustworthy through the power of Christ is no longer acting by himself, but has submitted himself to the leading of the Holy Spirit. A trustworthy life is a picture of the heart, for from the heart germinates every utterance or action. It is from the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. He who has control of his mouth will never murder others with his mouth, like a hypocrite or flatterer does, neither is he a tale-bearer who does not discern false from true stories, going from one place to another with mischief, sowing discord among brethren. Jesus warns about the use of our tongue in Matthew 12:36 - We shall give account of every idle word we speak.

How is your life? Are you trustworthy? Can you be relied upon? Jesus, our Lord is trustworthy. You, as a "little Christ" must be. You are a mirror others look into; they want to see Him (Jesus). Let others see Jesus in you.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, help me to mirror you to the world, anytime, everywhere, all the way. Yes, I can in Jesus name who strengthens me. Amen.

Tuesday December 29, 2015

Proverb 12:19-26

HONESTY THE BEST POLICY

Honesty is related to trustworthiness.. It is indeed the best policy; it is standing and living a true life. It is a policy which the world despises, but earnestly seeks after. It is a scarce commodity, true and consistent.

A lying tongue is never consistent. Truth may be denied, but in the long run, it surely will come to light. No matter how long it takes, truth will be revealed some day. Therefore it is better to tell the truth now and face the consequences than wait for when telling the truth may be too late and lives destroyed. Mischief makers deceive

themselves and will in turn be deceived. The Lord Himself keeps the righteous, such that no evil shall befall them, no temptation will be able to overcome them; rather it will turn out for their good.

As a Christian in this world but who is not of the world, you are expected to do and live beyond the ordinary; so imbibe honesty at all times: It pays. This you cannot achieve with your own effort: stay close to the Lord, to His word, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. You will be rewarded by your heavenly Father, who sees and knows all things. Honesty attracts favour not only from God, but also from man. Be honest in all your dealings.

PRAYER: Live in me, Lord Jesus, live in me; Have Your way in my life. Help me to honestly seek to please You by being honest in all my



ways. Let your will be done in my life; standing firmly for You always, Amen

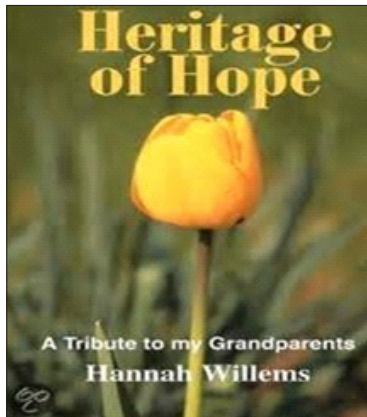
Wed. December 30, 2015

Proverbs 24:3-7, 13, 14

WISDOM MORE THAN STRENGTH

God in His wisdom created the universe and humankind. It is He who provides true wisdom for living. He stands ready to restore those who repent of their limited efforts, and yield their lives to Him. It is through God's wisdom that a family can be built and established.

Man's wisdom can only build but not establish, for such will be a rotten foundation. True living springs forth from true wisdom. Wisdom from God surpasses human understanding and strength.



We who are His own (Christians) have the privilege to ask it from Him who has it in abundance. With it, we can live a fulfilling and successful life. There is a Yoruba adage, that he who is wise will be able to dine with elders, the (knowledgeable in the land), and will surely gain more wisdom.

With wisdom from God, Abraham with just 318 from his household was able to defeat five kings, David was able to defeat the Amalekites who came in large numbers and overran Ziklag with his ragged 600 miscreants. You will prosper and be strong if you rely totally on Him who is all wise, and desire His wisdom as you would desire the sweetness of honey. It is the foundation upon which your future is guaranteed, even as you look forward to finishing this year with success.

PRAYER: Indeed, it is not by might nor by power but by Your Spirit in me, who gives me the true wisdom. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. May I never rely on the arms of men, in Jesus name. Amen

Thursday December 31, 2015

1 Timothy 1:12-17

JUDGED FAITHFULLY

With Jesus in a person's life, there comes a radical change, preparing one for service. His presence in a person's life decisively alters one's eternal destiny.

With acceptance of Jesus as Saviour, old things would pass away, and all things will become new. This precisely was Paul's experience for it is God's love and grace that embrace someone such as himself, judging him faithful, despite his past (a terrible life of persecuting Christians). As Paul advises Timothy (his godson), so it applies to you, not to give up but hold firmly to your faith in Christ Jesus. Jesus is there to strengthen you and all of us in our Christian journey.

This is the last day of year 2015; praise His holy name for sparing our lives to see this historic day. No matter the situation you find yourself, hold on to the Judge of all judges. Whatever you had hoped to achieve in the year and you could not, be assured that the faithful Judge can still do it any time from now, if He chooses. No hopeless situation with Him. He will never give up on you. He makes all things beautiful in His own time. He will see to it that you laugh again. Share the good news of salvation, the Lord is the final Judge. May you be found faithful in Him, Amen.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I am grateful to You for my salvation, and for forgiving me. Please help me to translate this gratitude into a life of



useful service in Your vineyard, even as I look forward to the coming year, with renewed vigour. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.
Friday January 1, 2016 Genesis 28:15-22

THE LORD IS PRESENT

HAPPY NEW YEAR! PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE THE LORD FOR YET ANOTHER YEAR IN HIS PRESENCE. Sing With Me: "In Your Presence That's Where I Always Want To Be, In Your Presence ...



What an appropriate topic. Yes God still makes His presence felt among us, if only we earnestly seek Him. In His presence there is fullness of joy. Halleluiah! While Jacob was fleeing from home because of the deceit which he and his mother perpetrated, God revealed Himself to him: A ladder reaching to heaven and a host of angels descending and ascending. Jacob exclaimed: "The Lord is in this place". Thus he named the place Bethel, the house of God.

Please take time to read Genesis.35:1-15: Where is that sacred place and time your Maker specially met with you, and you in turn committed yourself to Him? You made a vow to Him, like Jacob did. Have you remembered to keep the vow? Huun! Another year has rolled in. As you make new vows (promises) remember to do your part; God will surely do His part. He will supply all your needs according to His inexhaustible resources. Remember your "Bethels". Faithfully fulfill your solemn vows.

PRAYER: *Thank You Lord for yet another chance in Your presence. I cannot flee from the consequences of sin, so Lord, help me to deal decisively with the roots of every sin in my life. Forgive and restore*

me. In Jesus name I plead. Amen
Saturday January 2, 2016

Genesis 29: 9 - 14

WELCOME HOME

In his flight, Jacob experienced problems which he probably did not bargain for. However, God's favour pursued him all the way: Jacob met with God's favour with all those he met. When God makes promises, He fulfills them to the letter. Jacob's search ended when he met Rachael who informed her father. Note however the kindness Jacob showed to an unknown shepherd girl. Despite his long journey, he mustered the strength to uncover the well and water the sheep. Jacob was heartily welcomed home to his relatives.

God is concerned about your concerns. Allow Him to order your steps. Acknowledge Him in all your ways and He will direct your path - Prov.3:6. Jacob's uncle noticed that he was hard working and requested for his wages; this opened up an intimate relationship with his uncle. Jacob then demanded for Rachael as wife in exchange for seven years of service, as bride price.



When you go by God's leading, there will be blessings. Welcome to 2016. Welcome to your Father's presence. But if the Lord shall come this year, will you receive warm welcome Home? Let this guide your actions.

PRAYER: *Lord I'm so glad that I'm always welcomed into your presence. May I respond positively to life's circumstances and see Your divine purpose in every step of my life. Amen.*

Sunday January 3, 2016

Genesis 29: 15 - 30

ONE GROOM, TWO BRIDES

Jacob ran away from home in search of his uncle Laban, and experienced God in a special way at Luz which he renamed Bethel. God added other goodies unto him. Out of God's mercy, Jacob received the blessings of the Lord that make rich with no sorrow.



Divine providence truly saw Jacob through his journey. Jacob fell in love with Rachel, perhaps love at first sight. Anyway, Laban was all for it, but at the expiration of the seven years of service, Laban did not fulfill his promise but came up with various excuses. Perhaps Jacob was reaping what he had earlier on sown. Jacob never allowed this unexpected situation to control him.

He served another seven years to marry his desired wife, Rachael. He was determined, knew what he wanted, and was ready to pay the price: 'No pain, no gain'. Jacob, in his patience, got two wives and lots of riches too. Patience is hardest when we need it most, but it is a key to achieving our goals.

Part of an individual's 'pay-back' experience may be discipline which God uses on those He loves, to drive them to excel. What are you experiencing right now? Do you believe that God is still working on you to make you what you ought to be? Stay on! Don't let situations control you; control your situation with God's help.

PRAYER: *How much can I give for You, Jesus? You gave your all for me. You deserve my all. May I never be an ingrate: Help me to think and thank You always. Amen*

Mon. January 4, 2016

Proverbs 31:10,11,20,25-26

A PERFECT WOMAN

At the end of God's creation, God declared that everything was good. Then in Genesis 2:18, God saw something not good. He said "It is NOT good that man should be alone." With this background, one can see the reason why the wise man would express in Proverbs 31:10 that the pursuit of man in life cannot be complete without him finding a wife of good character.

We should be praying for our children and youths for them to marry spouses of good character. A good spouse is the one that "fears the Lord" not just one with "facial beauty."

How do our Christian women measure up in quality to this virtuous woman described here in Proverbs 31? Verse 26 says she is able to control her tongue.

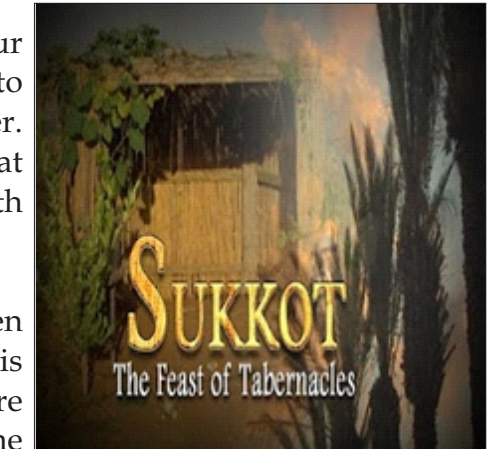
James 3 says that anyone who is able to control his tongue is a perfect person. This woman adds the greatest quality to her abilities in that she "fears the Lord." Are you a true Christian woman?

Only Jesus can make your life to be a blessing to your family, relations, neighbors, and even strangers. Let the fear of God rule your life from today. Amen.

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, you commanded that I should be perfect as my Heavenly Father is perfect. I have no power to do this on my own. Perfect my ways daily dear Holy Spirit, in Jesus name I pray, amen.*

Tuesday January 5, 2016

John 10:1-



A PERFECT SHEPHERD

Among others, three major things outstandingly show from the qualities of a perfect Shepherd:

1. He must lead the flock: He must lead the flock to walk in righteousness and not to destruction. He must lead them to God and not to worldly things.

2. He must feed the flock: Feeding and tending the flock must be his priority. Giving them green pasture to eat and still water to drink will make the flock healthy.



By this the flock will be at rest and will be productive in every way.

3. He must genuinely love the flock: His love for the flock would make him to be different from a hireling who will see danger and run for his life.

The perfect Shepherd would rather lay down his life for his sheep to see to their ultimate safety and preservation.

All these Christ Jesus did for His church, the sheep. He is our perfect Shepherd and He has entrusted this task to us, His followers especially His called ministers and leaders. We must not fail Him. Amen.

PRAYER: Dear Good Shepherd, You gave your life for me. May I also lead with love and sacrifice, those You have given me to

nurture, in your holy name, amen.
Wednesday January 6, 2016

John 10:7-15

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus Christ is the "door of the sheep." The door is the entrance through which the sheepfold can enter and find safety, shelter, food and care. Through Jesus alone can we enter into the blessings of God in salvation. Through Jesus alone the atonement for our sin was made complete. Jesus has brought to mankind the new life without which no one can see God. Any prophet in opposition to Christ's teaching is a thief and a robber and the followers of Jesus will not hear him. Only in Christ Jesus can we come to the knowledge of the truth and achieve true freedom.



The thief has come to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. False teachers are seeking their own honor and gain. They deprive their followers of liberty and happiness as they lead their followers away from God. But Jesus has come that His sheep might have life in abundance. Jesus knows who are His. We cannot play church, we must live it. We must take courage in that Jesus knows our needs, our hopes; our plans, our

temptations, our secret thoughts etc and He can take care of them all. We too must be able to say like Paul "Be followers of me as I follow Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:11) so that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, we will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away (1 Pet. 5:4).

PRAYER: Dear Door of the sheep, in this my year of God's open door, may I live exemplary life, to draw other sheep to You, amen.

Thursday January 7, 2016

John 10:20-30

THE ETERNAL SHEPHERD

It does not matter what the opinion of the world may be; what God says concerning you is what matters. Whatever you do for people may be misconstrued by their judgment. So don't be sad by their negative pronouncements nor take confidence in their positive praises. Be ruled by what God thinks or says about you and not be carried away by the praise of men.



Jesus was termed demonic by some of the crowd after healing a man born blind but some within the same crowd said demons cannot work such a miracle. What other sign will satisfy human understanding apart from what they had seen?

If any Christian should doubt the claims of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, he is not worthy to be called a believer. What the eternal Shepherd has given us is eternal life and eternal safety in the Eternal God of creation. Who is this God? The Lord God Almighty revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ. As long as God is eternal, eternal life cannot be taken away from us.

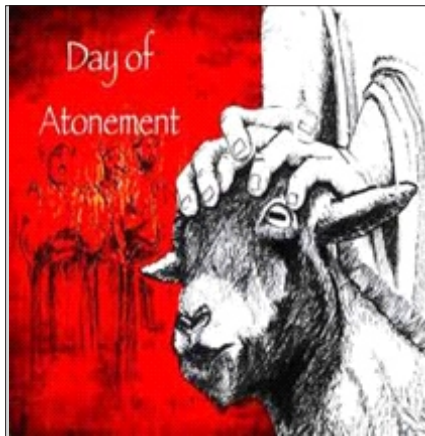
PRAYER: Eternal Shepherd, your Kingdom is from everlasting to everlasting. My greatest desire is to reign with you eternally. Help my never to do anything to miss my way in your precious name I pray, amen.

Friday January 8, 2016

Song of Solomon 4:9-15



God's creation. The church of God is the bride of Christ. Though the church is the most criticized and the most persecuted organ in the world today, yet Christ who is the Head of the church loves the



church and He is coming back to present the church as His holy bride to His Father, God (Rev. 19:7-9; 21:1-2).

According to Ephesians 5:25-27, Christ has preserved His church from this wicked and sinful world to present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any flaws but that it should be holy and without blemish. Christ has accomplished this by the

shedding of His blood at Calvary.

As believers in Jesus Christ (the bride of Christ), we wait with great anticipation for the day when we will be united with Christ (the Bridegroom). Until then we must remain faithful to Him and say with the redeemed of the Lord "Come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

PRAYER: No matter how I look, You created me and see me as beautiful. As a member of your Bride, the church, I want to do beautiful things in the life of your Bride. I receive strength and wherewithal to do this in Jesus name, amen.

Monday January 11, 2016

Psalms

51:6-12

A CLEAN AND FAITHFUL HEART

One of the attributes and nature of God is holiness. Anyone who desires to work with God and serve Him must desire this nature.

Therefore a clean and faithful heart is an appropriate response towards a holy God who cannot behold sin (verse 9).

In our reading of today, the Psalmist expresses his desire to be clean. In verse 7, David said, purge me with hyssop. Hyssop was a spring of a desert bush that was used to sprinkle blood on a leper by the priest to signify his cleansing (Lev. 14:4; Heb. 9:13, 14; 1 John 1:7). The heart of David did not only end in just being cleansed but went a step further to be washed so that he would have a heart that is as white as snow - Isaiah 1:18. This Psalm was written by King David after he had been accosted by prophet Nathan on his adultery with Bathsheba, wife of one of his officers, and causing her husband to be killed at war front. The Psalm expresses his deep **r e p e n t a n c e** and confession.



Today, we have a much more powerful blood, which is the blood of Jesus that can both cleanse and wash off all unrighteousness. Take advantage of the Blood, confess your sins and give your life to Christ if you have not done so: Enjoy the powerful cleansing power of the Blood; this will usher in a season of joy and happiness that will change your life forever - V12.

PRAYER: Father I ask that, You show me Your mercy. Let the blood of Your Son Jesus find full expression in my life today in Jesus name.

Tuesday January 12, 2016

Psalms 89:24-29

THE FAITHFUL GOD

Today's reading is recommitment of God's covenant to Israel. Affirming His promise and covenant to David, that his dynasty will reign forever, even in the face of overwhelming threat to the



Davidic throne. Probably, this setting was during the reign of Jehoiachin. The Psalm opens with the powerful song: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations". And so, Christians, what are we doing with our mouths these days: To glorify God or man,

to express outcome of a pure heart or otherwise?

God is faithful to His promises even to a thousand generations. It is beautiful and breathe taking if you take a second look at verses 24-29 and consider God's amazing promises in this scripture. Particular note of mention is verse 28 which says, "I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail" Hallelujah!

The Lord Jesus came from the lineage of David and thus fulfills the covenant of an everlasting dynasty with David. If you are in Christ you can look up to God and ask Him to activate all these wonderful promises in your life and these will be effected in Jesus name.

PRAYER: *Lord I ask, that Your faithfulness and mercy will not depart from me, just as you were with David to ensure that his throne was established: You will establish me today in all my undertakings in Jesus name. Amen!*

Wednesday January13, 2016

Psalms 119:25-32

FAITHFUL TO TRUTH

In his interrogation of Jesus, just before Jesus was crucified, Pilate said (not asked) to Jesus: "What is truth" and never waited for the answer because he probably knew the Truth but was not courageous enough to tell the truth. He simply went out to the Jews to confess that he found no guilt in Jesus. The Jews chose to murder the Truth rather than embrace it but on the third day, the Truth emerged from the grave, to give credibility to our salvation.



As we consider the topic "Faithful to Truth", we should not be unmindful of the fact that Jesus is the Truth - John 14:6. The passage of today is an expression of the psalmist, whose heart is yearning for revival: Verse 25 says, "My soul cleaves to the dust.

Revive me according to your word". The word of God is the only message that can attract true revival. With this understanding of the truth, the psalmist made a plea before God with a soul searching expectation for divine revival. That word is Jesus Christ.

In today's text also, we can see other synonyms that represent the Word of God, they are, decree V. 26; precepts V. 27; law V. 29; truth V. 30 and command V. 32. If we must experience God's move in our lives, we cannot do so outside His Word. Make it your treasure today and be faithful to the truth.

PRAYER: *Like the psalmist Lord, please give me a heart that is*

richly committed to Your Word in Jesus name. Amen.

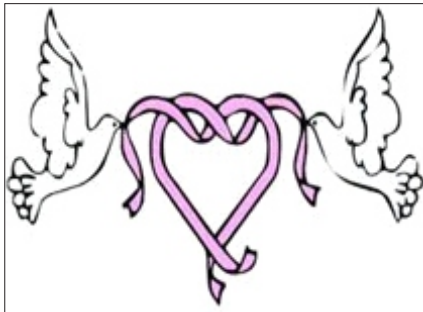
Thursday January 14, 2016

Galatians 5:16-25

FREE IN THE SPIRIT

A life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit is a life that is liberated from the influence of the flesh. To make this a possibility in our everyday Christian walk, we must learn the act of complete

obedience to the Spirit of God. On the contrary, a life of disobedience is a breeding ground for the flesh to manifest its works. Therefore in simple terms, obedience to the Holy Spirit will automatically guarantee a closed door to the flesh.



The passage contains two important lists: One from the Darkness, the

works of the flesh, and the other from the Light, the Fruit of the Spirit. The two are in continuous battle and opposition to each other. One who embraces one side cannot be comfortable with the other. How do you then walk in the Spirit in order to kill the desires of the flesh: Be filled with the Holy Spirit, and cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit.

Where do you belong? There are two classes of manifestations that our passage has highlighted. Whenever I see the works of the flesh on display, it's an indication of a life that is living in disobedience. On the other hand, a life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit will manifest the fruit of the Spirit. Here is a simple test for you today: Will you live your life today in obedience to the dictates of the Spirit or in disobedience?

PRAYER: *Help me Lord to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit always*

and grant me the heart of a willing child and an obedient heart to always say yes Lord, in Jesus name, amen.

Friday January 15, 2016

Hosea 4:1-6

UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL

Today's passage was God's charge or case against the children of Israel. There was no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. No truth in the land points to the degree of unfaithfulness in the land - V. 2. At this point Israel was living in a state of moral chaos.



Mercy became a strange virtue. Verse 2b says, "...they break all restraint and blood touches blood".

God's judgment and more of their sins were recorded in verses 3-5. Please note that the religious circle was not exempted. See the outcome of sin to a people who are specially chosen and blessed by

God! The land was in mourning for loved ones, and those who should live in peace and affluence languished away. If unfaithfulness to God is that expensive, why engage in it?

If God decides to write a case against our nation Nigeria and the church, what do you think the picture would look like? Will it not be worse than the unfaithful Israelite? The concluding verse 6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge". The knowledge here refers to the knowledge of God's laws and ways. The result of ignoring God's knowledge is a sure way to destruction. And if God were to present His case against you, how do you measure up? He comes soon: Let us be ready.

PRAYER: Lord please show us your mercy, forgive our many sins and help us as nation and church to embrace knowledge so that we would live again in Jesus name. Amen!

Saturday January 16, 2016

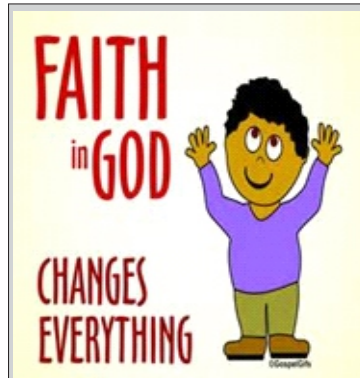
Hosea 2:18-23

FAITHFUL GOD

God is a faithful God. This is His nature and attribute. Faithfulness, is about being steadfast, being sincere, making promises and fulfilling them. Only God is capable of totally exhibiting this attribute because man's promises, no matter how sincere, are subject to circumstances beyond his control.

The unfaithful nature of the children of Israel as we saw in the devotional of yesterday did not stop God from expressing His loving kindness and mercy to them. In fact, verses 18-23 are a loving expression of God's promises to make a covenant of peace with His people. The word "betroth" emphasizes the fact that God sees them as His bride, though a prostitute with idolatry. The chapter closes with God's promise to us who were not His people, but are now His bride through the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

There is hope for you and me if we can turn from our unfaithfulness and sinful acts: God will extend His covenant of peace, faithfulness and mercy to us. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now let us reason together, says the LORD, though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they will be as wool". God's faithfulness is still speaking today to those who care to listen.



Prayer: Help me Father, not to live outside the boundary of your faithfulness and mercy in Jesus name. Amen!

Sunday January 17, 2016

Hosea 1

AN UNFAITHFUL BRIDE



Gomer was the wife of prophet Hosea. Depending on the version, Hosea 1:2 refers to her as a "harlot" (NASB), a "promiscuous woman" (NIV), and a "whore" (KJV). Hosea married her as a result of divine instruction. The Old Testament speaks frequently of Israel whoring after or playing the harlot with other gods (e.g. Deut. 31:16; Judg. 2:17). God illustrated his relationship with His people and likened it to that of the marriage of the prophet to an adulterous wife. The expectation of this union was consistent unfaithfulness. Some of Gomer's children were products of infidelity. Hosea's undying love for Gomer did not stop him from accepting her each time she went astray. The Lord viewed Israel as His wife; He viewed her worship of other gods as spiritual adultery.

The lesson for our contemporary world is that, like the Israelite, idolatry may not only include the worship of physical idols, but anything that takes the place of God in our lives; anything we idolize is indicative of the fact that God's place has been taken. Some idolize money, internet, parents, wife, children, career and even their pastors etc., the list is endless. We must take away these idols from our lives and return to God.

PRAYER: Thank you Father for your faithfulness. May I not take your undying love for me for granted: Let me totally devoted to You,

Monday January 18, 2016

THE MIGHTY DEEDS OF GOD

First, we need to remember the works of the Lord and His wonders of old. We should keep a record of answered prayers as testimony to His faithfulness.

Joshua 1:8 serves us the recipe: Meditate on the Word of God day and night, do what it says, and God will prosper your way. In verses 13-15 we are given the result of his meditation "Thy way O God is holy. What god is great like our God?" Instead of brooding over our problems we should turn our fears, doubts, unbelief to God, meditate on His word, pray and seek His face.

Journeys

Michael Haggard
illustrations

Acts

THE RESURRECTED MESSIAH

everyone speaking piously and fearlessly about the Resurrected Messiah. Peter was emboldened by the Holy Spirit and over 3,000 people came to Jesus in one day, the Day of Pentecost. So, what is the significance of the Resurrected Messiah?

Without the resurrection, our faith is in vain (I Corinthians 15:14). In fact, Christianity will be like any other religion. Resurrection sets ours apart from all other religions. Because of the Resurrection, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven and adopted us as His children. Faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to salvation. This is our ticket to Heaven.

PRAYER: Glory be to God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ, the Anointed One May we know You more and the power of the Resurrection in Jesus' name. Amen.

Wednesday January 20, 2016

John 9:1-11

THE GIFT OF SIGHT

Three truths are revealed in this encounter with Jesus:

First, the blind man lived his entire life in a state of darkness. Those who have not received Jesus as Lord and Saviour are in this same state.

Second, the blind man lived in poverty. The greatest poverty is not lack of physical possessions, but spiritual, not knowing Jesus.



Third, the blind man was reduced to begging. What a pitiful state. Outside Jesus we are spiritually bankrupt.

When Jesus passed by, the blind man's life was changed forever. He was healed of his physical handicap. He was exposed to physical light. Being able to see with physical eyes is not enough. We must come to the

place where we can see spiritual truth. The man never expected to be healed and saved when he got up that morning. He planned to live like the day before in darkness. He did not know that a man called Jesus would change the course of history for him for good.

Many are in the same boat today. If you are still in darkness, Jesus

the light of the world, can save you. Will you let Him do so today while it is day?

PRAYER: Jesus only you can draw us out of the deep and miry clay. Shine on us your saving light in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thursday January 21, 2016

Matthew 15:29-36

THE GIFT OF HEALTH

Jesus teaches several lessons in our devotion today. He is available. He sits down with those humble enough to see their need. No one is excluded. He teaches us compassion. Compassion is a commitment to do something. It is empathy not pity. Jesus meets the need of everyone both physical and spiritual. Nothing is impossible for Him. Jesus used the ordinary, insufficient and insignificant (seven loaves and a few small fishes) to do the extraordinary and huge leftovers remained.



We can trust in the power of Jesus to provide for our needs. We can look to Jesus to meet our spiritual needs. Finally we must remember to thank God for His provisions. Jesus used the bread as a symbol of relationship. "I am the Bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again" (John 6:35). We are challenged today to show compassion not pity, to use the resources God has placed in our hands and to become channels of blessing.

Jesus catered for both the spiritual and the physical health of people. Doctors care, only Jesus can heal. The gift of health which all the money in this world cannot buy, comes from Jesus. Do you need to be healthy physically, emotionally or spiritually? Ask Jesus, but know Him first.

PRAYER: O Lord, grant that we will be available and compassionate to meet the needs of others in Jesus' matchless name. Amen.

Friday January 22, 2016

Matthew 5:21-26

THE CLEAN GIFT

The Lord talks about four ways anger can manifest:

- i. It begins with unexpressed anger. This happens when we hold a grudge.
- ii. This smolders, seethes and results in hostility fueled by malice.
- iii. It graduates into calling someone "stupid", then a "fool"
- iv. and results in physical murder.



There are negative consequences of sinful anger. Anger escalates to more serious expressions that affect our health and relationships. Jesus warned that unresolved anger affects our worship negatively. Instead of allowing anger to linger we need to

embrace reconciliation. Unresolved anger leads to bitterness. The Bible says "Be angry and do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your wrath nor give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26-27).

Jesus says if you do not reconcile with man you could end up in court. It is much worse when we do not reconcile with God. Then it will be too late. We need to repent today of our sins, reconcile and make peace with Jesus Christ. We need to receive the gift of

forgiveness and receive God's clean gift.

PRAYER: Father I reject anger and bitterness in my life. I choose the clean gift of forgiveness and reconciliation in Jesus' matchless name. Amen.



Saturday January 23, 2016

L u k e 4 : 1 6 - 2 4

THE HEALING MISSION OF JESUS

Isaiah 61 was written prior to the moment when Jesus was in the synagogue. The people had returned from captivity in Babylon. They were trying to rebuild their temple but things were not going very well. The people were discouraged. They thought God had abandoned them. The people were desperate and in mourning. But Isaiah comforted them. Hear him: "God is here. He will deliver. He will save. He will make you a mighty nation".

It was then only a message of hope. People dreamed about the day that hope would be realized. So when Jesus said "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing", Jesus was confirming that hope is realized. Unfortunately when the full time came, the Jews who had hoped for centuries, missed the boat and failed to recognise the Messiah.

Jesus is God's salvation to the world. Like the worshippers in Jesus' day, we go to Church every Sunday to hear God's word. Beyond hearing we need to obey and carry the message of hope and reconciliation to the unsaved and remind them of Christ's mission. Jesus came to keep God's promise to heal, restore, comfort, free and release as a sign of God's love and favour. That promise is available

today in Jesus to those who chose to tap into it.

PRAYER: *Thank You Lord for your mercy, grace and love. Grant that I will share them with others in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.*

Sunday January 24, 2016

John 2:1-12



WATER TO WINE

Jesus chose the wedding in Cana to perform His first miracle which sanctioned the institution of marriage. With His miracle Jesus showed that there are blessings in marriage. The love and joy inherent in a wedding ceremony are characteristic of the ministry of Christ who came into the world because of His love and brings joy to all who believe.

Although Jesus was invited to the wedding, He was just a guest like others. However, when He was allowed to play a role, things changed: The new wine which could symbolize the Holy Spirit we receive when we give our life to Christ, was better than what was first served.

When we bring Jesus into our situation, the ordinary becomes extraordinary. Even though we cannot always stop problems from developing, we can overcome them with the help of Christ who dwells in us and in our marriages. Mary submitted to Jesus and so should we. God is interested in our joys and needs. Jesus always brings something new and better. Finally, Christ must be involved in our marriages for us to succeed. What are you going through in your marriage and relationships? All who desire His joy and sweetness must invite Him into their circumstances.

PRAYER: *Thank You Lord for this miracle in Galilee. May I and my family experience even greater miracles in our lives as we seek your presence daily in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.*

Monday January 25, 2016

Psalms 56

TRUST IN FACING DEATH

Trusting in God's care in the midst of trouble, distress, fear, trials and tribulations, David turned to God for mercy. He showed that we may flee to and trust in the mercy of God when surrounded on all sides by difficulties and dangers. His enemies were too hard for him. He could not rely on any arm of flesh. He knew the power of God could deliver him from all foes and cried out for God's grace and mercy.



He rested his faith on God's promises and declared his obligation to praise God for his mercies. We often could escape trouble if we cling to God's promise to be our source of power, courage and wisdom, helping us through our problems (Ps 34:18-19).

When trouble strikes, every true believer should boldly say that "God is my helper", and then should not fear but rest on God's power to deliver and save. We may say like Paul "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?" (Rom 8: 35). "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us", and we can recite after him the words in Rom. 8: 38-39: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life ... can separate us from the love of God"

PRAYER: *Grant me faith Lord that ensures that nothing shall*

separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Amen

Tuesday 26 January, 2016

Isaiah 25:6-10

LIFE ETERNAL

Here is a marvelous prophesy and declaration of the Gospel's blessings for all repentant sinners, Jews and Gentiles, at God's messianic feast celebrating the overthrow of evil and the joy of eternity with God. During the feast, God will end death forever (vs.7-8). The redeemed who participate in this feast will be those who have been living by faith (25:9).



There is the promise in this passage that the Lord will destroy the veil spread over all nations by the light of the gospel shining in the world and the power of his Spirit opening men's eyes to receive it. He will raise to spiritual life those long dead in sins. Christ will in His resurrection triumph over death. There shall be ushered in a period of perfect and endless joy. Grief, sorrow,

mourning, and weeping will all end with comfort and consolations for all who suffer for Christ. In the joys of Heaven, God shall wipe away all tears.

Finally, Christ will destroy all enemies of His church, typified by Moab as an adversary and the pulling down of Satan's stronghold. All saints are admonished to persevere, be patient for yet a little while to receive their crown of glory. How are you preparing for this crown?

PRAYER: Grant me the patience Lord to endure to when all

glorified saints will enter triumphantly with song into the joy of their God. May I not be missing in Jesus name, Amen.

Wednesday January 27, 2016

Matthew 4:12-17

DARKNESS DISPELLED

This passage is on the opening of Christ's ministry in Galilee. He brought the light of the Gospel to those who were in darkness because they were without Christ. They were sitting in this condition because they were ignorant. When the gospel comes, light comes. When light comes to any place, and when it comes to any soul, it makes day there. Light discovers and directs, it exposes and drives away darkness and so does the gospel. The gospel dispels darkness.



Jesus moved from his little hometown, Nazareth, to Capernaum which was a busy city with a larger population. The move fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2 which predicted that the Messiah will be a light to the land of Zebulun and Naphtali the region of Galilee where Capernaum was located.

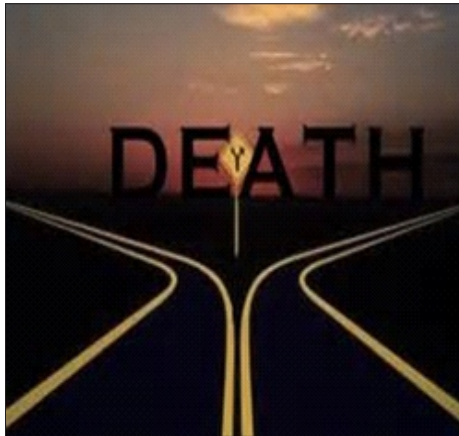
Jesus in conformity with his forerunner, John the Baptist, started his ministry with the very word used by John - "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand", turn away from sinfulness and accept the son of God as Saviour, Lord and redeemer. Today, over 2000 years after, the message is still relevant, for God is patiently waiting for all to repent and come to Him through Jesus.

PRAYER: May I dwell in the light of Christ and win the victory over the darkness forever and ever in Jesus name. Amen

Thursday January 28, 2016

John 11:1-6

FOR GOD'S GLORY



When we need extraordinary help, Jesus offers extraordinary resources beyond our wildest imagination when we ask Him for assistance. I fell ill suddenly in early September last year and for three days could not sleep. I was in pain and very worried. I remembered kneeling down by my bed and asking Jesus to grant me sleep for the night. I heard a voice telling me that Jesus was in

Jerusalem while I was praying and seeking Him from Jericho! I became very elated and reminded the voice that Christ was far away from Bethany when His friend Lazarus was dying from a sickness but He came back to heal him and finding that he was dead raised him from death. I was sure my illness was not life-threatening and that Jesus, whenever He chooses to show up will heal me.

Lazarus died so that Christ could show his power over death and bring glory to God. God can bring good out of any bad situation (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28). I waited patiently kneeling by my bed and was reminded of a pill which I ought to have taken every day as prescribed by my physician. I rushed to find the pill, swallowed it, lied on my bed and within 30-40 minutes was sound asleep. How did I think Jesus was going to answer my prayers? When trouble comes, do you turn to God through His only son, and see it as an opportunity to be closer to Him and honour Him?

PRAYER: Teach me Lord to patiently await your timing and allow each trial I face to ultimately bring glory to God. Amen

Friday January 29, 2016

John 11:17-27

I AM LIFE

Jesus is the life (John 14:6). He has power over life and death as well as power to forgive sins. He who is life can surely restore life. In order to reassure Martha, our Lord declared himself to be the resurrection and the Life (17:25). He went further to demonstrate this truth, contrary to Martha's expectation of resurrection at the last day, by immediately raising Lazarus from the dead.



Eternal Life

Only the Master of life and death could swiftly perform that miracle! We have a God who cares and always ready to respond to the needs of His children. In every sense Christ is the Resurrection; the source, the substance, the first-fruits, the cause of it. The redeemed soul lives after death in happiness; and after the resurrection, both body and soul are kept from all evil forever. When we have read or heard the word of Christ, about the great things of the other world, we should ask ourselves. Do we believe this truth?

Perhaps, the trials, tribulations, despairs and even the comforts of this present time would not make such a deep impression upon us as they do, if we believed the things of eternity as we ought.

PRAYER: When Christ our Master comes, he will gather true

believers unto Himself. Grant Oh Lord that I be faithful to You and be found in You in your precious name, Amen.

Saturday January 30, 2016

John 11:28-37

JESUS WEPT

Being found in fashion as a man, Jesus acted in the way and manner of the sons of men. It was shown by his tears (v.35). He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Our Saviour and Redeemer knew our sorrows and pains. He could relate to us in all sincerity having been in the flesh. He showed empathy and shared in the sorrows of his friends.



We have in Christ a High Priest who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. "Then

said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! " (v. 36). Christ is real. There is no other God as real as He. Which other God will weep for a man? Jesus' love is real and true. Today, He still grieves for sinners for whom He gave His life and awaits their repentance and salvation.

If you are seeking a God who cares, call on Jesus Christ. Here we see many of Jesus' emotions – compassion, indignation, sorrow and even frustration. Christ often expressed deep emotions. We must never be afraid to reveal our true feelings. The Son of man understands them. He had experienced them himself and so could help us to handle them. We must be honest to open up to Him for he cares.

PRAYER: Teach me to trust You completely Lord, so that I can

share my deepest thoughts and worries with a God who knows them all. In Jesus name I pray. Amen

Sunday January 31, 2016

John 11:38-44

ALIVE AGAIN

The title "son of man" is used forty-three times in the New Testament as a distinctive title of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament it is used only in Psalm 80:17 and Daniel 7:13 with this application. It denotes the true humanity of our Lord. He had a true human body (Hebrews 2:14; Luke 24:39) and a rational soul. He was a perfect man. It was a title frequently given to the prophet Ezekiel, probably to remind him of his human weakness. Being subject to the frailty of mankind, Christ demonstrated human feelings at the death of his friend Lazarus.



In raising Lazarus to life again He clearly showed that He is the son of God with power over life and death. In this miracle, He prayed to God to restore Lazarus so that all men may know the source of His authority and oneness with the Father. Lazarus was thoroughly restored, and returned not only to life, but to health. This became the final straw that angered the religious leaders of the day – the High priest and Pharisees who contended His son-ship and Lordship.

Jesus raised others from the dead, including Jairus' daughter (Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:41; Luke 8:40-56) and a widow's son (Luke 7:11-15). Do you suffer from unbelief? When Lazarus was ill and eventually died, his sisters called upon Jesus. What is dead in your life? Call on Jesus, and no other power, to bring it back to life.

PRAYER: Grant Lord Jesus that I may accept You as Lord over my life than be lured by pride and unbelief into sin. Amen

Monday February 1, 2016

Luke 2:41-49



YOUNG JESUS AND THE PASSEOVER

There is no doubt that every one of us must have lost or misplaced some vital item at one time or the other. One did search with anxiety, depending on how important the item

was to one's life, until it was found. Peace and joy were then restored. The experience of Mary the mother of Jesus and Joseph his earthly father was similar. When the Passover program ended in Jerusalem, they left for home alone on the assumption that Jesus must have travelled with other members of the group from Nazareth. However, after a day's journey without any news of him, they returned to Jerusalem and searched for three more days before surprisingly finding him in the temple, in the midst of the teachers. All those around were amazed at the wisdom and knowledge of this twelve-year old lad.

One vital lesson here is that we must not take decisions based on assumption on matters that are primary to our lives. Secondly, as Mary and Joseph learnt, Jesus can only be found where there is fellowship with God. Thirdly, his wisdom is unsearchable and his ways amazing. Fourthly, there is a compelling reason for all who desire eternal life to seek Jesus diligently. Where can you be found?

PRAYER: Dear Father, as I respond to your command to seek your face, please grant me the grace not to seek You in the vanity fair of life but in your sanctuary in Jesus name, Amen.

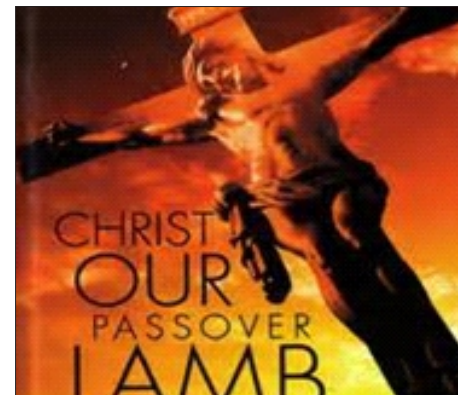
Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Matthew 26:20-30

JESUS' LAST PASSEOVER

The significance of this Passover with the disciples of Jesus does not lie exclusively on it being the last Supper with them while on earth, but on it being instituted as a covenant established to keep them in regular proclamation of his imminent atoning death.

We should also note that during the Supper, Christ identified Judas as the betrayer (who would sell him to the priestly authorities); yet Judas did not take caution and relent from this act but allowed Satan to use him for the fulfillment of that prophecy. Jesus used the occasion of this supper to institute what he called "My Body" and "My blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of



sins"; using the bread and wine. It is pertinent to note that remission of sins relates to divine separation of sin from a sinner, following confession and repentance.

Finally, Jesus made the ordinance of the Lord's Supper mandatory for all Christians after baptism as we await his coming. We have no option on this!

PRAYER: Our Father, how I appreciate You for sending your beloved Son to die on the cross for my redemption. Help me not to

take this lightly but to seek His glory daily. May I partake of the Holy Communion with total commitment to honour, serve, and proclaim His death till He comes. Amen.

Wednesday February 3, 2016

Exodus 8:20-29

PLAGUE OF FLIES

When the Lord saw the affliction and heard the cries of the suffering Hebrews and decided to deliver them from bondage, he sent a simple message to Pharaoh the king of Egypt through Moses saying, "Let My people go that they may serve Me". But stubborn Pharaoh did not heed this call, even with repeated miracles to intimidate him and his people and cow them to submission.



The miracle of today is about covering the land of Egypt with swarms of flies while Goshen where the Hebrews occupied was spared. Rather than comply and release them, Pharaoh brought unacceptable compromise to God which he had no intention to keep; but he and his people paid dearly for it.

God cannot be trifled with. When He speaks, no one can withstand Him. As loving as God is, he is also a consuming fire in dealing with the wicked who persist in their ways. The only way out for us is obedience and submission. Hebrews 12:29 reminds us that our God is a consuming fire, urging us to worship Him with reverence and godly fear.

PRAYER: I thank you Lord for being so merciful in not dealing with me according to my sins. Grant me a heart of repentance from sin and direct my heart to fearing You, in Jesus name, amen.

Thursday February 4, 2016

Exodus 10:12-20

THE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS

One of the plagues (signs) that recalcitrant Pharaoh and his people suffered for refusing to set the Hebrews free was locusts. These are very ravenous insects like big grasshoppers. When Moses stretched the rod in his hand over Egypt for the locusts, God made the east wind to blow them over the entire land that even the sky was darkened for their numbers and they ate up all green herbs and fruits in Egypt.

Pharaoh was so overwhelmed this time that he hastily called for



Moses and Aaron to appeal to God to remove the locusts and that he had realised his sin against God and Moses in withholding the Hebrews from going away. He implored Moses to intercede for him and Moses obliged. But did Pharaoh keep his word? Not on his life!

Very often, we perceive that we are suffering for our unrepented sins and we hypocritically beg for forgiveness. Our Lord searches and knows our hearts and he cannot be deceived. Repentance must be genuine always and we can be confident God will surely forgive. Let your repentance be sincere.

PRAYER: Father, I am grateful that Jesus Christ has paid for all my sins. Grant me the true heart of repentance that I may not incur your wrath by persisting in sin, Amen.

Friday February 5, 2016

Numbers 9:1-4,13

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

God gave Moses detailed instructions about the Passover to be observed in commemoration of the release from Egypt. Anyone who refuses to be part of it despite being qualified was to be cut off from his people. The Lord's Supper today represents the Passover. How often do you reject to participate in this?

Sometimes a Christian may claim that solution to his problem or guideline to what he wants to do is lacking in the Bible contrary to our confession. This obviously is a mistaken view of how the Lord works. The Bible is an inspired, inerrant, and infallible word of God. The Bible is complete in everything and God is never ambiguous. All we have to do is to dig deep and seek assistance and counseling from more mature Christians. 2 Timothy 2:15 says, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." What the Bible is calling for is diligent study of the word before applying the lessons to our lives.



God is all-wise and never leaves anything to chance. As we search the word of God diligently and trust the Holy Spirit, our ways will be clear. Jesus even gave us a model prayer that is all-inclusive for us to leverage on.

PRAYER: *Almighty God, I stand in awe of your unfathomable wisdom and the superlative details You display in your*

instructions. May I always trust you even on things I do not understand; In Jesus name I pray, amen.

Saturday February 6, 2016

Joshua 4:1-7

WHEN YOUR CHILDREN ASK

Children are always very inquisitive and will never rest until they get satisfying answers to the subjects of their curiosity. When the Hebrews crossed the Jordan River on dry ground, God in His wisdom directed Joshua to set up twelve stones in Gilgal towards the final entry to Canaan. God directed that when the children asked in future what the stones were meant for, the Hebrews should explain that they represent a memorial of the miraculous parting of the flooded Jordan by God to allow the Hebrews to cross on dry land. The main purpose God gave was, "that all the people of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever". - Joshua 4:24



In our contemporary world, information technology enables us to produce memorials in videos, photo albums, physical structures etc. All these help future generations to appreciate history and motivate them to develop ambition to excel also. But nothing will ever compare with the miraculous doings of the Lord. They

cannot be matched. Hallelujah!

Each of us should have memorial landmarks of God's miracles in our

lives so that we can glorify God and fear him always.

PRAYER: Precious Lord, I cannot thank You enough for your miraculous interventions in my life. You always do for me more than I can ever ask or think. Hallelujah amen.

Sunday February 7, 2016

E x o d u s 1 2 : 1 - 1 4



PREPARING FOR PASSOVER

The final sign to demonstrate God's power over Egypt and her gods was the death of all the first-born of Egypt while nothing touched the Israelites.

Prior to executing the judgment, God commanded Moses to institute the Passover feast. There were extensive details covering: who should eat it, the preparation, etc. There was nothing left to imagination (Exodus 11 & 12) The month was proclaimed the first month for Israel and the feast was for seven days. On the seventh

day was the slaughtering of the Passover lamb and the blood was to be smeared on their door posts for the angel of death to recognize and pass over the Israelites; and the meat was to be totally consumed. It was instituted as an annual memorial for all their generations without exception.

The reason why Christians don't keep the feast as instituted by Moses any more is that Jesus came, fulfilled the law by offering himself as our Passover lamb. With the death of Jesus on our behalf -the only begotten of God- we no longer need to slaughter any animals for cleansing from sin forever. His blood avails forever to cleanse all who repent and yield to Him.



PRAYER: Blessed Father, thank You for sending your only begotten Son to die in my place for my sins. Grant me sustaining faith to evermore serve and love You. Amen.

Monday February 8, 2016

Psalms 147:1-11

PRAISE THE LORD

This is a psalm of praise to God for His word and providence. We are His people and have a need to praise Him and give thanks to the Lord for so many reasons. He takes care of us His chosen people (v2). He gives comfort to the broken hearted as He brings them out of horrible pit, bad situations and terrible experiences by setting their feet on solid rock. God's sovereignty is expressed in the billions of stars He created and the power He exercises over them.

The Lord lifts up the meek who humble themselves before Him but humbles the proud and the wicked. He is God of sufficiency, a

father who makes provision for all, even the inferior creatures. He makes a way where there seems to be none. He creates tunnels through the seemingly insurmountable mountains of our lives. He is a God who looks after our clouds of affliction and gives us peace



that the world cannot give. He is the God of creation, He is awesomely great. He is pleased to own all the strength of grace. He is the God of grace: He comforts us because we are His children. He is to be worshipped. He is to be praised. (see Heb. 13: 15). As believers we should learn how to praise the Lord with all our hearts always for His goodness and mercy to us.

PRAYER: *Dear heavenly father, I thank You for who you are. I praise your Holy name for your provisions for me and for my sustenance in Jesus name. Amen.*

Tuesday February 9, 2016

1 Chronicles 17:16-27

THANKS BE TO GOD

Today's topic is a responding prayer of King David to God Almighty for the honour bestowed on him (David). He had purposed in his heart to build a place worthy of worship for the Lord God of Israel so that the Ark of covenant would not continue to be in a tent. Even though king David was not to put up the structure, God who sees the heart and knows the intent and purpose of every human being graciously accepted David's purpose and blessed him for this gesture.

God's promise to establish David and his family led to a solemn prayer of thanks on the part of king David. This prayer reveals some

lessons for us as believers. All we are, and all we have, come from the Lord our God. Like David, we should always purpose to give of our best to the master in terms of our time, treasure and talent. David concluded his address to God with the word of hope and faith that the one you have blessed O Lord shall be blessed forever. The Mighty God who sees the heart of man, will always reward our labour of love for His kingdom. Let others see Jesus in you and give thanks to God.

PRAYER: *Dear heavenly Father, thank You for granting me the opportunity and resources to key into projects of your kingdom. Grant me the grace to be a partaker of projects of kingdom value all the time in Jesus name. Amen.*

Wednesday February 10, 2016



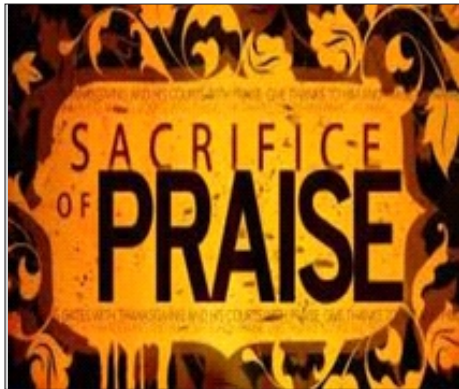
Ephesians 5:15-20

IN ALL THINGS, THANKS

This short passage of exhortation by Apostle Paul to the Christians at Ephesus can be broken down into two parts: First there is the exhortation of love, unity and concord. Christians at Ephesus were unique in that they had just been redeemed from the depraved pattern of behaviour of the Gentiles. They were told to speak the truth in love to fellow Christians. As Christians we should live in love with other believers but should be mindful to preserve the truth of the scriptures. We should grow up into Christ-like character and in all things we should be deeply rooted in Christ in terms of faith, love and total dependence on Him.

The second aspect deals with the general exhortation to be separated from the world. It requires the Ephesian Christians and us not to be

like the Gentiles (unbelievers) but to distinguish ourselves as people who have been rescued from darkness into light. We should not be drunk with wine which sears conscience and leads to



uncontrollable lust, desires and greed. Rather we should be filled with the Holy Spirit. We should therefore be circumspect, walk in wisdom and be thankful for the gift of Jesus Christ to the world by God.

PRAYER: Our heavenly Father, I thank You for the gift of Christ and His church. Grant me the grace to live for Christ and bring

others to the knowledge of your Kingdom. Amen.

Thursday February 11, 2016

Romans 7:14-25

INSPIRE OF EVERYTHING, THANKS

Today's Bible passage shows that although we are believers, we are not totally made perfect and cannot claim to have attained the ultimate goal of our Christian living. In other words, we are always work-in-progress (WIP) regarding our Christian journey in life. Paul's life reveals the conflict between the old nature (carnal man) and the new man in Christ. It also reveals the conflict between flesh and the grace of Christ. It is a life filled with conflict between the law of God and the law of sin. Even when man tries to be perfect, the human nature is ever present: (Galatians 5:17).

Apostle Paul has at least three points with which to be thankful and comfort himself. First is that his conscience witnessed for him that he has a good principle to live for and serve Christ. Secondly, Paul recognised that the fault lay in the corruptive tendencies of human nature. Lastly Paul knew that the grace of God and total

dependence on Christ for spiritual strength are enough for total release from the shackles of sin. There is therefore a great opportunity to give thanks for being in Christ. We also can comfort ourselves with the same points as we go through our journey in life and walk in accordance to God's will for us. Can you boldly claim these three points like Paul?

PRAYER: Thank You O heavenly Father for the revelation that Christ is sufficient to see me through any conflict. Grant me the grace to stay focused on Christ at all times. Amen.

Friday February 12 2016

2 Corinthians 4:7-15

INCREASING THANKS

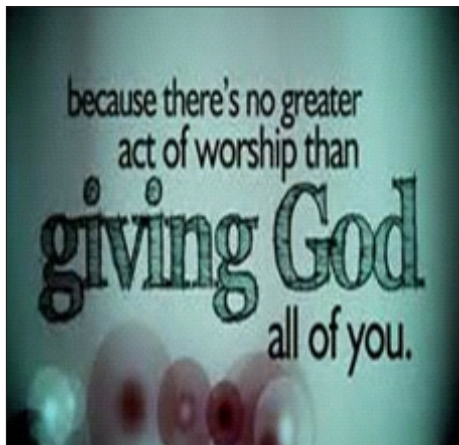
In order to grasp the full import of today's lesson it is perhaps helpful to read from the beginning of the chapter. This gives us a full picture of the constancy, sincerity and consistency of the work of Paul

and his fellow workers in spreading the gospel (vv 1-7). Our passage for today shows the difficulties and sufferings experienced by the apostles and others in the course of spreading the gospel. It also allows us to see the secret of their staying power which is based on courage and patience through the grace of God. They suffered, yes, but Jesus Christ their master suffered before them. They were cast down but not conquered. They faced death so that others might believe and live, v12. In it all apostle Paul revealed the things that kept them going:

First is faith which kept them from fainting v13. Then there is the



hope of resurrection which kept them from sinking v14 and lastly is the consideration of God's glory and the benefit of the church which kept them from being tired of preaching the gospel. These points



should equally guide us as followers of Christ as we go out to evangelise and bring others to the full knowledge of God's kingdom.

PRAYER: Dear Lord God grant me the grace to be courageous and patient as I share your word with others and bring them to the knowledge of your kingdom in Jesus name. Amen

Saturday February 13 2016

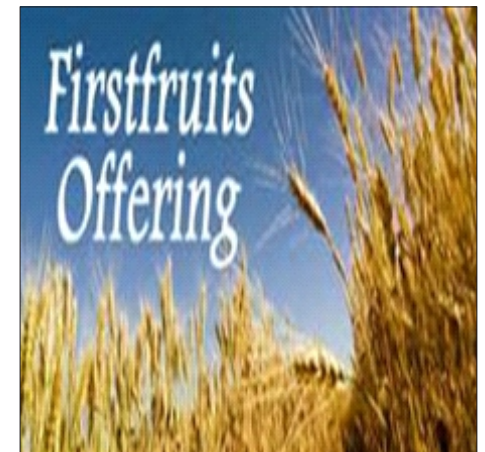
Revelation 11:15-19

IN THE END, THANKS

Our study of today deals with the vision of the sounding of the seventh and the last trumpet signifying praises and giving of thanks by the angels and the saints. The angels and the saints fell upon their faces worshipping and giving thanks in recognition of the right of God to rule and reign over the entire world forever. We also catch a glimpse of the angry resentments of the nations at the just appearance of the rule and reign (the power) of the mighty Jehovah.

Finally, we are introduced to the scene of the temple of God in Heaven signifying God's presence amongst His elect. This is a great and invaluable privilege for His people as they are made to experience lightening, voices, thundering, earthquakes and great hail! All these signify great blessings for the redeemed of the Lord as the prayers of the saints lead to great revolutions on the wicked world. These happenings are signs of cleansing as the awesomeness

of the righteous and Holy God would be experienced.



committed any sin.

Jesus indeed is the Lamb without blemish; the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. He is the perfect Atonement and He desires that you will be a partaker of His costly yet free gift by surrendering your life and all to Him.



PRAYER: Lord, thank You for paying the price for my sins and thank you for reinstating me into fellowship with the Father. Grant me the grace to cultivate a faithful lifestyle in You, amen.

Tuesday February 16, 2016
Hebrews

3:1-6

APPOINTED FOR ATONEMENT

The Atonement observance dates back to the Old Testament era. The Day of Atonement is regarded by the Jews as the most holy day. It is a day of fasting and cleansing. It was instituted after the Children of Israel were liberated from Egypt.

Of necessity, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest presents the atoning sacrifice. This role can only be performed by the high priest. No man takes upon himself the role of a high priest. He is selected and appointed – Heb. 5:1. In the same vein, Jesus was appointed as High Priest not by men but by God. Appointed not to serve in a Tabernacle made by men, but in God's house made up of Christians.

To His credit and to our justification, Jesus was faithful in His service in God's House i.e. He committed no sin. Hence He is able to

offer a perfect atoning sacrifice that takes away the sins of the world.



thanksgiving and adoration are offered to God for the perfect atonement He gave. Jesus purifies the sinner's heart and converts it into God's dwelling place. Is your heart prepared?

PRAYER: My body is the temple of God and must be kept holy. Lord, forgive my sins; may I not defile Your dwelling place with sin in Jesus name. Amen.

Friday February 19, 2016

Leviticus 8:30-36

OBEDIENCE AND ATONEMENT

Aaron and his sons in this passage are being consecrated for the Lord's service as well as being commissioned as priests for service in the Tabernacle. You will observe the strict warning from Moses as well as the obedience on the part of Moses, Aaron and his sons in doing all that the Lord commanded.

Obedience should characterise a life that is useful in the Lord's service. 99% obedience is not good enough. Moses did not at any time improvise on God's instructions. Rather he emphasized that all he had done had been commanded by the Lord in order to make atonement for Aaron and his sons; and that disobedience would result in death.

If preparation to minister before a holy God in the Old Testament time was this detailed and required strict obedience, then as priests of the new covenant your life must be characterised by obedience to the Spirit of God if your worship service is to be acceptable to Him.



The starting point of obedience is accepting Jesus as your Saviour and Lord. You can do that today so that His sacrifice will atone for your sins. If you have done so, commit to following Him to the very end.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, help me to follow Your instructions even when it does not make sense to me or I have a seemingly better idea. Let me surrender to your will at all times, amen.

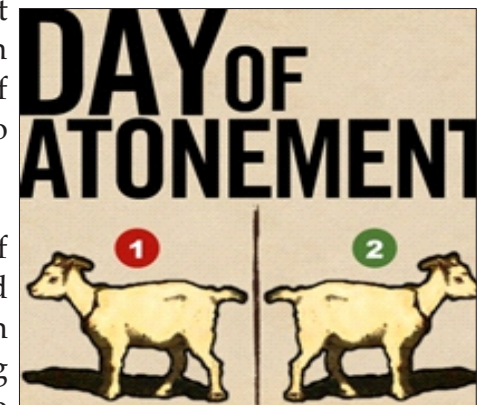
Saturday February 20, 2016

Leviticus 16:1-10

SIN OFFERING FOR ATONEMENT

The Day of Atonement is regarded as the most holy and greatest day of the year in the nation of Israel. It is the only day in which the High Priest can go into the Holy of Holies (the most Holy Place) to atone for the sins of the nation.

Before entering the Holy of Holies, certain preparations had to be in place. Otherwise the High Priest stood the risk of being struck dead. In fact, if this were to happen, no human being could go into the Holy of Holies to pick up his dead body. Rather, a rope was tied to him with which his corpse would be pulled out through the curtain. Do you trivialise sin? To a holy God, who cannot behold sin, this can be fatal. Aaron's sons (Nadab and Abihu) were destroyed because they did not carefully follow God's instructions - Lev. 10:1-2.



As you to come into His presence, either in church or in your daily

devotions, it is important to examine yourself and confess any sin, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal sins in your life. Yes we live in an era of grace and can approach God anywhere and anytime - Heb. 4:16. We must however neither forget that God remains the same holy God nor let the grace privilege we enjoy cause us to approach God thoughtlessly. Is there a deliberate preparation in your heart beyond your external dressing as you come into His presence in worship?

PRAYER: *Lord, May I never treat as ordinary Your sacrifice nor abuse the privilege of grace in Jesus name. Amen.*

Sunday February 21, 2016

Leviticus 16:11-19

A CLEAN SLATE

The Hebrew word for atone means "to cover". At the heart of atonement is the substitutionary concept. A substitute is sacrificed in place of the sinner. However, the blood of animals could not remove sins but only cover them.

Observance of the Day of Atonement involves:

1. Atonement by the High Priest - The high priest offers sacrifices to atone for his sins and that of his family.
2. Atonement for the People
- A goat is sacrificed as a sin offering for the people.
3. Atonement for the altar - The altar needs to be cleansed from the defilement of the people - v.19

This yearly observance is a foreshadow of the perfect atonement by

Christ. Jesus, the only begotten of God, is the only one to have lived without sin and hence does not require to offer any sacrifice for sin - Heb. 7:27. As the Lamb of God, He was without blemish and so perfect as a sin offering for His people. His death on the cross completely paid for and removed our sin. He gives a clean slate. As a High Priest, He is constantly interceding on behalf of His people in the most Holy Place.

PRAYER: *I thank You for making me a new creature in Christ Jesus. I live in the newness of this life today and forever. Amen.*

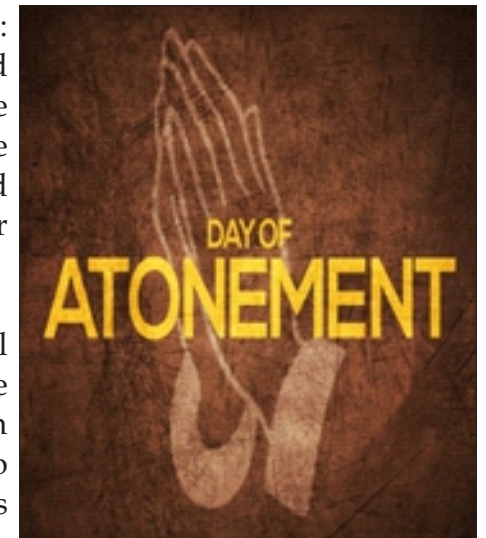
Monday February 22, 2016

Psalm 68:5-10

GOD OF THE JOURNEY

Life is a journey. In that journey are series of other journeys: physical, emotional, and spiritual. God is the creator of the journey of life, He has a unique purpose for each individual, and is involved in the series of other journeys that are part of life.

As the children of Israel embarked on their destined to be short but elongated journey from Egypt through the desert lands to the Promised Land, Moses was God's representative in their midst. They camped and rested on their journey. Each time they moved, Moses would say the prayer in verse 1 of our text: "May God arise, may His enemies be scattered". If you are a child of God through your relationship with Jesus Christ, then everyone who chooses to be your enemy becomes the enemy of God, and they



must all be scattered.

God is very much concerned about how we treat orphans and widows as we go through our journey. In fact, He is concerned about the plight of the oppressed and downtrodden. He was the God of Israel's journey, despite their rebellious heart. Have you made Him the God of your life? Jesus is the only way to Him though.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, the God of Israel's journey, be the God of my journey through life, make me conscious of your abiding presence at all times, in Jesus name, amen.



Tuesday February 23, 2016
Exodus 3:1-6

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

If in Christian Religious Study class, a student is asked when the journey of the children of Israel to the Promised Land began, such a student would be correct to quote

the death of the first-born of Egypt and the mass exodus that commenced thereafter. However, a brilliant student would trace the beginning to the planning stages and God's preparation of the suitable leader as the starting point. If the plan is solid and there is a competent leader to execute a project, the task is as good as completed.

We see here God preparing Moses for the great and tough journey ahead with the burning bush experience. Moses, a prince of Egypt, the then most powerful nation in the world, found himself tending sheep, one of the lowliest jobs of those days. In fact, the Egyptians disdained shepherds and would have no interaction with them.

This is what sin did in the life of Moses: He was shepherded for 40 good years. What detestable status have you found yourself because of sin? We have a God who is more concerned about redeeming the sinner than brooding over his sin. God saw in Moses the man to plan and execute the journey He had for His people Israel. Before you start off on that journey or venture, let God plan it for you.

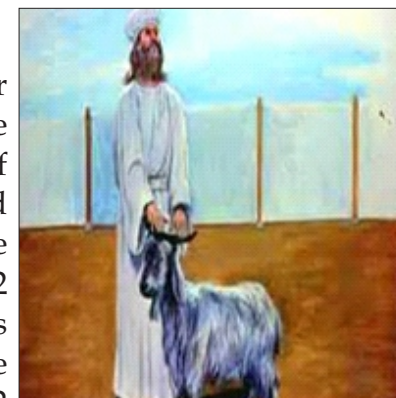
PRAYER: I surrender completely to your will, dear Lord. May You be the Foundation of every journey and task I embark upon in life, in Jesus name, amen.

Wednesday Feb. 24, 2016

Deuteronomy 1:29-33

THE JOURNEY FALTERS

About 600,000 men left Egypt under the command of Moses. Some estimates put the total number of people, female, children, slaves and the elderly at over 2 million. A large number of countries have less than 2 million people. So a whole nation was being led by one man. Not far into the journey, troubles came. Of the 12



spies sent to see the Promised Land, only two brought a good report. The ten rebels won and Moses' life was in danger. In Deuteronomy, Moses gave his valedictory address to the children of Israel. He took them through memory lane because human memory is very short. He asked them not to fear and reassured them the Lord God was going ahead of them to fight for them. Despite this assurance, the people rebelled, so many were killed of them, and the forty days journey became forty years.

Is there trouble along your journey and everything is turned against

you? Do not panic. Remember how God has led you thus far and be assured that He will never leave nor forsake you (Deut. 31:6, Hebrews 13:5), for His plan for you is good, to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). As He did for Israel, the Lord will carry you



like a child and fight your battles: Only don't ever turn back from following and serving Jesus.

PRAYER: Dear Father, when the going gets rough and darkness seem to overwhelm me, may you be my hiding place in Jesus name, amen.

Thursday Feb. 25, 2016

Deuteronomy 8:1-11

REMEMBER THE JOURNEY

You may by now be familiar with the story of a new pastor who preached a powerful sermon on love and there was a standing ovation from the congregation. The following Sunday, the turnout was larger as people expectantly waited for another powerful sermon: He preached the same sermon, less ovation this time. By the time he preached the same the third Sunday, the elders accosted him as to if he was short of sermons. He told them he would only preach a new sermon after he had observed the people doing what he taught them.

Moses reiterated all he had taught the children of Israel through his close to forty years leadership and reminded them of great things and care the Lord had provided for them. He then painted a vivid and powerful picture of the new territory they were going to possess. This looks very much like the image of Nigeria: pools and springs of water, all sorts of fruit trees, honey, soils and rocks rich in minerals. He then urged them to praise the Lord when they have

eaten and are full. History tells us they forgot the Lord after settling down and enjoying the abundance of the Land.

How true of us in our prosperous country. God has blessed us so much but we have frittered it all away. We need to repent and return to the Lord, as a nation, and individually.

PRAYER: When the journey becomes discouraging, quicken my memory dear Lord Jesus to remember your goodness to me, and be strengthened in You, amen.

Friday February 26, 2016

John 3:14-21

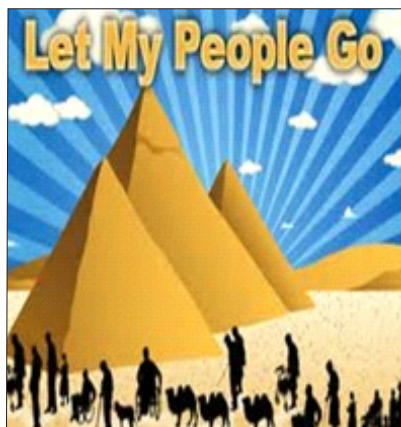
JESUS AND THE JOURNEY

The whole Bible is a story of salvation for mankind, from the perfect relationship between man and God in the Garden of Eden, to the fall of man through disobedience and different efforts to restore man into fellowship with God, from Noah's ark to the specially chosen race of Israel. Nothing sufficed to bring man back to God until the perfect sacrifice came in Jesus Christ who was sent by God as the perfect and sinless Lamb. He willingly suffered and died the cruel death on the Cross to save mankind. In John 14:6, He declared Himself as the only way to God the Father.



Jesus wants to be part of your journey. He invited all who are weak and heavy-laden to come unto Him in order to receive rest (Matt.11:28). Those who hold the view that God is so merciful that

He would not throw into Hell fire so many millions who “call” upon Him through other media other than Jesus should carefully read John 3:18 - Whoever does not believe in Jesus does not have to wait for Judgment Day: he is condemned to Hell already. This issue of what happens at the end of our journey on earth is a serious matter that needs being resolved immediately. If you have not invited Jesus to lead your journey, do so now by giving your life to Him.



PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, each time you entered the boat of your disciples, the storm stopped. I invite you to be Captain of my life. Thank You and welcome dear Lord, amen.*

Saturday February 27, 2016
Acts 7:30-42a

STEPHEN AND THE JOURNEY

Stephen was one of the seven deacons chosen by the Apostles when there was complaint about food distribution between the members of the early church. However, he was not content with just serving food: He submitted himself to the Holy Spirit who gave him so much wisdom against his opponents. Through him the Lord worked miracles and wonders.

If you are led by the Holy Spirit and are excellent in what you do for the Lord, you will be persecuted. Remember Daniel? When his opponents could not find any fault in him, they attacked him from the worship of his God. The opponents of Stephen falsely accused him of speaking against Moses and God. In his defence, Stephen went through the whole journey of salvation for mankind from the call of father Abraham to the story of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph,

through to Moses and the wondering in the wilderness, ending with the murder of Jesus Christ.

Stephen came to limelight as a deacon, a servant to serve food. He ended his journey gloriously as the first martyr. Whatever you are going through, always remember the ultimate end of the journey: Heaven! You may be favoured not to end like Stephen, but whichever way, don't trade Heaven for anything, not even life.



PRAYER: *My God and my Father, grant me the grace to be filled with your Holy Spirit so I can live for you always as I go through my journey, in Jesus name, amen.*

Sunday February 28, 2016

Leviticus 23:33-43

HERITAGE AND HOPE

Our journey through life becomes bearable and exciting when we realise the heritage we have in Christ and the hope attached to this heritage. When we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, we become spiritual children of Abraham and the heritage of Israel becomes ours.

The Lord established three major festivals for the children of Israel. In those days, there was only one place of worship where people travelled to from all over the country to present their offerings and to worship the Lord. Rest and giving were majore elements of these festivals, apart from various sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people.

In the New Dispensation under Christ, we no longer have one place of worship: Everywhere so designated becomes a place we can assemble together to offer our gifts and worship God. Indeed, our heart is God's temple and worship must become our way of life. Celebration is key to the Israelite festivals. This is relevant to us today: Each time we gather before the Lord, there must be rejoicing.



In our individual lives, we must rejoice in the hope set before us through our salvation by Jesus Christ. Our hope is not about world material possessions, but about Eternal Life.

PRAYER: Thank you Father for my heritage in Christ. May my hope of Heaven propel me to live according to your will daily, in Jesus name,

amen.

Monday February 29, 2016

Genesis 15:1-6

FAITHFUL GOD

Faithfulness is about being steadfast, promising and fulfilling the promise. When someone owes you money, tendency is that you start planning your expenditure towards the payment. However, no matter how sincere the borrower was, things could happen to prevent him from paying on due date. Not so with God. Whatever He says He would do, assume it is done, for God is faithful to His promises. Ours is to do our part: obey.

In Genesis 12:1-3, God invited Abraham on a trip to an unspecified destination, and blessed him with the seven blessings we sing about today. Abraham obeyed and left his hometown but years later,

nothing seemed to be happening but troubles: The repatriation from Egypt, in-fighting amongst his men and Lot's, and the war with powerful kings to rescue Lot. Sarah his wife was still barren, and had long passed the age of child-bearing. Then the faithful God appeared to Abraham and re-assured him of His promises.

What are the promises of God on your life and that of your children that seem to have been forgotten? Remember, "... the vision is yet for an appointed time, ... though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come," declares the faithful God (Habak. 2:3). Wait on Him.

PRAYER: Dear faithful Father, forgive my unfaithfulness. Remove every doubt and fear from me that I may wait on You, no matter how long it takes, in Jesus name, amen.

