

BIBLE LIGHT AND TRUTH

Reflections on Scripture

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

DAWN CHRISTADELPHIANS

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

A LEGACY

36,793,000 is your legacy. How will you use it? The number represents the minutes of your life. On average 12,264,000 you will spend asleep, 9,516,000 will be spent engaged working and travelling, 6,898,500 you will spend eating and taking care of your personal needs. Do you have a hobby? Do you go visiting friends and do all the myriads of other things we find to fill our lives? On average that can take up 6,132,000 leaving 1,981,500 minutes spare for God. **5.38%** of your time for the one who is your life!

In reality maybe we give even less time for reading, prayer and study. Paul exhorts us:

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil”. (Eph 5:15-16)

How do you spend your time? If we look at the world around us there are many signs that Christ and the prophets spoke about happening before our very eyes. John Thomas, Robert Roberts and early Christadelphians would have been jumping up and down with excitement at the things they saw with the eye of faith becoming reality. These signs should stir us up to prepare for the Lord's return. Do they? It is easy to become complacent and spiritually asleep. Peter warned of the dangers of losing zeal “First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil

desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” (2Pet 3:3-4) Peter is not speaking about those in the world, but of those in the ecclesia's who will cease to look forward, feeling at spiritual ease and safety.

Watch! The time is short your precious minutes are ticking away, evaporating as precious water in a desert. “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.” (Jam 4:14) Jesus warned: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." Watching is about preparing our characters, putting faith into action, striving to emulate our Master. We face many trials in these last days, yet despite these we must prepare for Jesus warned: “those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now--and never to be equalled again. If the Lord had not cut short those days, no-one would survive”. (Mark 13:19) Yet great comfort is given for He continues “but for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.” Not 'will' but God has shortened them. We have the sublime promise and “we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” That is a wonderful privilege, called to be heirs of

immeasurably great and precious promises.

The clock of life ticks away, how do we show appreciation of our calling and spend our time? James writes “Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise” The first thought in all aspects of life, should be for God and his requirements, turning to Him in times of trouble and of joy. Now, we become like and associate with whatever we value. Are our minds with the things of this world? If so we will become like the world and squander our time. Alternatively we can redeem our time, taking to heart Paul's words: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil 4:8) The Lord Jesus is of course the ultimate example of all these things.

The cry comes “Here is the Bridegroom!” The angels come to gather the elect. Our final minutes have come, our probation is over. Our Master stands at the door, there is time no more. What will you think before the judgement seat? Of time well spent, of time redeemed, or of time wasted, opportunities lost, words unspoken, tasks undone. Are you spending your legacy wisely?

AP



Commandments of Christ

Have faith in God: cast your care upon Him: He knows your need and will provide. (Mark 11:22; Matt. 6:25; Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7).

Literally, "throw upon the Father the cares which distract us on the way". We are bidden to do so. Paul guides us: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6). Peter adds: "Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you" (1Pet. 5:7). Those words surely are very comforting.

Yet, although Yahweh knows our innermost thoughts we must seek Him through prayer, casting our burdens upon Him, for He knows our problems (and their cause) better than we do. Yahweh knows whether there is to be a solution this side of the Kingdom. The "cares" are often solved in the most unlikely of ways, often ways we would not have chosen. We pray in faith and along with our requests offer full thanksgiving to our Father for His goodness, acknowledging "Your will be done". The very unburdening of ourselves in prayer is both a balm and a great relief. The Father hears through our Master, even though we often repeat our requests.

Our very lives are not important, with the Kingdom in mind, Jesus exhorts: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matt.6.33). With that as our prime concern, all other "cares" fall into place. Think of Noah, Isaac, Moses, Esther, Ruth, Rahab, Hezekiah, David, Jeremiah, Daniel, Paul, and then think of our Master. Reflect on their cares and the help provided by a loving Father.



Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

*Summer suns are glowing
Over land and sea,
Happy Light is flowing,
Bountiful and free.
Everything rejoices
In the mellow rays,
All earth's thousand voices
Swell the psalm of praise*

*God's free mercy streameth
Over all the world,
And His banner gleameth,
Everywhere unfurled.
Broad and deep and glorious,
As the heaven above,
Shines in might victorious
His eternal love.*

*William Walsham How,
1823-97*

Banished from our speech the Lord's coming would disappear from our affections; and suddenly, when became, he would find us sleeping. To the last breath the true and faithful will fan their love by saying "The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh." R.R.

TREES

Trees were made to grow out of the ground in the creation, to be "pleasant to the sight and good for food".

Trees are silent and stately; they provide shade from the sun, and shelter from the weather; their leaves make life-giving oxygen, and food for the tree; creatures can make their homes among the branches; the roots anchor the tree and prevent soil erosion; and some provide luscious fruit essential for man's health. Their green colour is restful to the eye; their majestic beauty and perfume soothe the spirit; and only a tree can manufacture wood for construction, furniture, tools and fuel.

Their apparent stillness belies the vigorous activity going on within. The roots search ceaselessly for water and minerals which go upwards in a one way system (called xylem) to the

leaves which are wonderful chemical factories, sending food downwards in a one-way system (called phloem) to all parts. These two systems grow new, every year, round the outside of the tree, just underneath the bark, making the "rings" of the trunk, one per year.

Identification can be made by looking at a tree's leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds, bark, winter twigs, wood, and general shape, each being unique. Young trees search for light, and every twig is a miniature tree.

The BIBLE mentions these trees: almond, almug, apple ash, bay, box, cedar, chestnut, cypress, fig, fir, juniper, aloes, mulberry, myrtle, mustard, oak, oil-tree, olive, palm, pine, pomegranate, shittim, sycamore, teil, vine and willow.

Trees were sold with the field

where they were growing; Abraham bought some for a possession when he bought the cave of Machpelah.

Noah built the ark of gopherwood (probably cypress). The tabernacle was made from shittim wood (thorny acacia); and Solomon used cedar, fir, and olive wood for the Temple.

The Israelites, in the Promised Land, were ordered not to cut down fruit trees when besieging enemies; and when planting fruit trees, had to leave the fruit untouched for 3 years, use it for offerings in the 4th year, but were allowed to eat it in the fifth year and thereafter.

For the time of rejoicing at the Feast of Tabernacles, they had to build booths of "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook". (Leviticus 23v34). Sis D Oakley.

THE WAY TO THE KINGDOM

Let those who have "become obedient to the faith" remember that baptism into the one hope of the calling to the Kingdom and glory promised is but the first step to immortality.

Henceforth they serve mammon at the peril of their lives. Friendship with the world places them in hostility to God. The Kingdom is for those only who illustrate their faith and perfect it by their works; for while Abraham, the great father of the faithful's belief of the gospel was counted to him for his righteousness or remission of past sins, his faith was made

perfect afterwards by his works; so that "Ye see how that by works man is justified, and not by faith only."

It is these post-baptismal works by which the saints are justified. Sinners are justified from all their past sins, and become heirs of God, by an intelligent belief of the gospel of the Kingdom counted to them for righteousness in the act of immersion into the Holy Name. Thus they become saints and dependent upon a patient continuance in well-doing, through evil and good report, for acceptance and exaltation in the day of Christ.

The way, therefore, to the Kingdom is plain, though beset with suffering, difficulties, and trials. It is a very unfrequented path; still there are a few wayfarers there. They like and need company, and therefore put themselves to some trouble and expense to obtain it by preaching the Gospel. This is their mission in the world till Israel's King appears. The straight gate will then be closed; and the glory and honour, the incorruptibility and life, of the Kingdom, will be inaccessible for a thousand years.

Author unknown

Names and Titles of God 4

Name	Meaning	Example
Yahweh - Mekaddishkem	Yahweh that doth sanctify	Exod 31:13; Ezek 20:12
Yahweh - Tsebaoth (or Zebaoth)	Yahweh God (or Lord) of Hosts	1 Sam 1:3
Yahweh - Tsikenu or Zidkenu	Yahweh our righteousness	Jer 23:6; 33:16
Yahweh - Shammah	Yahweh is there or here or God is all in all	Ezek 48:35

Yahweh is the name of God and the other Hebrew words found in scripture are more clearly seen as titles of God. The titles express and denote the character, purpose, power and strength of God as embodied or personified through those whom He chooses to use as his agents.