

# Suffering unjustly

Every person in this world will face suffering, hostility and injustice throughout their lifetime. Some people will readily acknowledge that it is right for them to accept the consequences of their own mistakes. However, most people will find it much harder to accept the *injustice* of suffering because of *someone else's* mistakes. Without the Lord's help, none of us would be capable of coping with injustice.

An 'injustice' is simply something that happens to us, which we think should not have happened. Injustices are wrongs, hurts or injuries inflicted upon us by others. It is important to realise, however, that every Christian needs to learn how to overcome injustice as a part of the trial of faith that God allows for their salvation.

What does it mean to *overcome* injustice? It does not mean that we escape unjust situations. Nor does it mean that we are vindicated, justified or compensated when we suffer wrongly. Rather, to overcome injustice as a Christian means that the life of God is manifest in our flesh as we suffer. His life is triumphant *in the midst of our suffering*. As such, the Lord is faithful to teach us *how* to endure through the injustices we face.

The Scriptures exhort us to observe how Jesus overcame injustice. Jesus suffered hostility, opposition and contradiction against Himself from 'the hands of sinners'. It would be true to say that the cross of Christ was the *most unjust* event in history. According to the law, Jesus would have had every 'right' to defend His innocence and be acquitted of the false accusations against Him. Instead, however, in the humiliation of His sufferings, He was willingly deprived of His right to justice.

## References:

Heb 12:3      Act 8:33  
Mat 26:2, 45      Heb 3:1-2  
Luk 23:2, 19

## Further Study:

1 Peter 1

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 1

# Consider Jesus

The apostle Paul admonished every Christian to ‘consider Him who has endured such hostility against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart’. How did Jesus respond to injustice? We note that He made no attempt to retaliate against the perpetrators of His injustice. Concerning Jesus, the apostle Peter observed that ‘while being reviled [that is, ridiculed], He did not revile in return’. He did not use His ‘rightness’ according to the law as a means to defend Himself.

Jesus *allowed* His right to justice to be taken from Him. He humbled Himself to the point of death. We marvel at how anyone could so willingly accept such extreme humiliation and wrong-doing. Yet, the secret that Jesus understood was that *the will of God* was being revealed through His obedience.

Throughout the events of the cross, the Father was laying upon Jesus the contradiction of the whole world. Every injustice, every competing ‘right’ to survive, every violation and every unresolvable grief was being laid upon Him. Through His obedient work on the cross, Christ had the power to resolve all of the conflict and contradiction that is experienced by every person on account of the fall of man.

For this reason, the only hope we have of finding peace amid the conflicts and contrary circumstances that we face throughout our life, is by joining Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings. As we meet Him in each situation, we are learning ‘the way of the cross’ with Him. We do not even need to resolve, in our thinking, ‘how’ or ‘why’ such situations could transpire! Instead, like Christ, we can have the peace of God that *surpasses* all comprehension.

## References:

Act 8:32      Isa 53:6  
1Pe 2:23      Php 4:7  
Php 2:8      1Pe 3:18

**Further Study:** Hebrews 12

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 2

# Mistreated for being Christian

As Christians, we will suffer opposition, contradiction, hostility, persecution and false accusations. Jesus said this would be so. We will be disliked and defamed because we are followers of Christ. Thus, suffering will be a part of our experience. Even so, it is important to realise that there is *no inherent value* in suffering. For this reason, we do not deliberately put ourselves in suffering's way as a means of gaining some kind of spiritual benefit. This is *not* what 'suffering with Christ' is all about! The Scriptures clearly point out that this kind of 'self-abasement' is of no benefit to us whatsoever.

Rather, like Christ, our focus is on doing *the will of God* in our lives. And when we suffer according to the will of God, then the experience will be of benefit to us. Through prayer, we are strengthened by the Father to join Christ's sufferings. By His grace and capacity that is given to us, we will be able to refrain from defending ourselves or retaliating when we are treated poorly. We will have no need to respond 'in like manner', or to appeal to the systems of this world in order to regain our justice. Instead, we will entrust ourselves to God who judges righteously.

When we suffer according to the will of God, our assurance is that we are, in fact, in the hands of our heavenly Father, and not in the hands of those who mistreat us. The Father is well-aware of our circumstances and we know that no-one is able to 'snatch us out of the Father's hand'. Accordingly, because we are 'in His hand', we are confident that every difficulty we encounter is *not apart from His will* for us.

## References:

Mat 5:11      Psa 7:11  
1Pe 4:14, 19      2Ti 1:12  
1Co 13:3      Joh 10:29

**Further Study:** Colossians 2

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 3

# Our response to suffering

Our faith as sons of God is that *every* contrary circumstance we come across, is from the chastening hand of God upon our lives. When we suffer hostility from others, even though they are intending it for evil, God is working in it *for our good*. This was Joseph's response to the hostility he experienced at the hands of his brothers.

As we meet the Lord, we will not despise, nor be discouraged by, the chastening of the Father coming to us through those who contradict us. As we endure His discipline, the Lord is teaching us obedience, and He is dealing with our 'other law'. Whenever we experience injustice, our other law is the mechanism that rises up within us, causing us to want to defend ourselves.

However, Jesus gives us His own life in the midst of our suffering. And His life enables us to overcome injustice and to refrain from responding according to our other law. In this way, Christ's life is prevailing in us through the adverse circumstances.

All of the contrariness can be resolved as we walk and pray in the Spirit. We 'talk the situation through' with the Lord, asking the Lord to take note of what is happening. And even though we may feel like retaliating against those who cause us harm, as we pray in the Spirit, we can put off our self-defending attitudes. Walking in the Spirit enables us to put off our other law. Then we can love those who humiliate us. This is proof that the life of Jesus is in us, overcoming injustice.

We should not be ashamed to suffer as a Christian, even though we may be ridiculed for being 'weak' when we do not defend ourselves. We humble ourselves in the midst of suffering, knowing that the power of God is being revealed in our weakness.

## References:

Heb 12:5-7    Rom 7:23  
Gen 50:20    Rom 8:2, 4, 6  
Heb 5:8      Act 4:29

Further Study: 2 Corinthians 4

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 4

# Perplexed but not despairing

As we meet the Lord and one another, we learn how to process our responses to suffering. In the first instance, it is helpful to acknowledge that our responses to grief or trauma, such as shock, denial, anger or resentment are *not* necessarily an indication of our unwillingness to accept the sufferings of Christ. This simply shows us that we *are* suffering! Inevitably, there is an emotional, mental or physical impact upon us when we experience a violation or grief.

The apostle Paul made some helpful statements in his letter to the Corinthians concerning our responses to suffering. He said, 'We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed'. Like the apostle Paul, we will be perplexed at times and may not know how to proceed in the midst of our suffering. Yet, we do not despair as people without hope. Even though we feel perplexed, we find resolution because we know that the Lord will lead us through every circumstance.

The Lord teaches us to 'walk with Him' through every step. He helps us to work through our various responses and emotions. The contrariness of our circumstances can only be truly resolved as we fellowship with the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. If, however, we neglect to meet the Lord in this way, we will have no means of finding peace and resolution. And, as such, any unhelpful reactions to injustice that we hold on to, instead of resolving, will become an issue for us. That is, these repressed or ingrained reactions will impact upon our ease of relating with others.

## References:

2Co 4:8-9  
Rom 5:3-5  
Act 5:41

Php 1:29  
Jas 1:2-3,12  
2Co 12:10

**Further Study:** 2 Corinthians 11

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 5

# Fellowship of first love

The apostle Paul described the communion as a fellowship of the love of God. The love of God is also described as *first love*. First love is the unique love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which Christians are given by the Holy Spirit. As sons of God, we are receiving this love so that we may live by it, finding fellowship with God and our brethren.

The Holy Spirit is continually pouring God's love into our hearts. This impacts upon the way we live, relate and fellowship together as members of the body of Christ. We are being 'rooted and grounded' in God's love, meaning that our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ are being established and strengthened in God's love. We now live together in first love *because we are* members of one another.

Paul further explained that as we fellowship with 'all the saints', we are able to apprehend the breadth, length, height and depth of the love of God. What a reason to gather together! As we come to the communion, gifts of the Spirit are ministered and we are illuminated for the season ahead. Each person is ministered to so that they can fulfil God's will. In this way, we are apprehending the amazing diversity of God's love with our brethren.

As sons of God, each of us is enabled to show forth and minister God's love and life to one another. Collectively, we are being *filled up to all the fullness of God*. We could say that we are being filled up with the love and life of God when we meet together.

## References:

I Jn 4:19

Rom 5:5

Rom 12:5

Eph 4:16

Eph 5:2

Act 2:46-47

## Further Study:

### Daily Proverb:

Ephesians 3

Proverbs 8

# A fellowship of giving and receiving

Motivated by God's love, we meet together for communion every week. This is the highpoint of our fellowship with one another and with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our communion services are a *fellowship of giving and receiving*. We don't only come to receive of God's life; we also come to participate in the giving of God's life to one another. Every one of us, including young people, can be confident that we are fully equipped to join this fellowship of giving and receiving. God's love compels us to also leave aside all personal complexity regarding our participation at the communion. We can fully participate as we follow the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit.

As we sing with the Spirit and participate in the gifts of the Spirit, we are strengthened by one another with the Spirit and life of God. Through the ministry of the Spirit, the body of Christ builds itself up in love.

The apostle Paul used the functioning of the human body to illustrate the operation of the body of Christ. He emphasised that each part of the body is necessary for the proper functioning of the whole body. Every believer in the body of Christ has the Spirit and life of God. They are able to participate in body ministry. The body of Christ is built up in love by that which every person supplies.

The love of God motivates us to join the fellowship of the communion. As we all participate together, the life and love of God are multiplied to every member of the congregation. The gifts of the Holy Spirit give us illumination and direction so that we know how to walk as sons of God during the week ahead.

## References:

1Co 14:1, 15, 26    Col 2:19  
1Pe 4:10            Eph 5:17-20  
Eph 4:16

**Further Study:** 1 Corinthians 12

**Daily Proverb:**            Proverbs 9

# The fellowship with us each day

When we have joined the fellowship of giving and receiving at the communion, we then proceed from the table in faith for the week ahead. Paul exhorted the Corinthian church, saying, ‘The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God [the Father] and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all’. Significantly, this fellowship is *with us all* as we go from the communion.

We can be confident that God will lead and guide us through even the most difficult circumstances. He will help us to access the grace and life that was ministered at the communion. How does this happen? During the week, we pray to our Father, and He hears our prayers. Jesus Christ is our Saviour and Friend, who walks with us every moment of the day. We pray and fellowship with Him through the day in the assurance that He is with us. The Holy Spirit is the Helper sent to lead and guide us in the truth of our name and works as a son of God. He continues to pour the love of God into our heart, reminding us of God’s word to us in the season.

Not only are we to fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit throughout the week, but we also fellowship with our beloved brethren in Christ. We proceed through the week in a culture of first love as brothers and sisters together. We devote ourselves to studying God’s word. We fellowship with one another as households together. We break bread together, sharing the testimony of God’s word in our lives. We pray individually and as households, abiding in the fruit of the life we have received. We then return to the communion table the following week, full of faith, ready to participate again as a member of the body of Christ.

## References:

2Co 13:14

Mat 6:6

1Jn 5:14-15

Mat 28:20

Rom 5:5

Act 2:42

## Further Study:

## Daily Proverb:

John 16

Proverbs 10



# Born of precious seed

Many of us were raised in Christian homes. On account of our parents' faith, we were *gifted* with the divine nature. The precious seed of God's life germinated within us at the point of conception in our mother's womb. This is the same seed that a person from the world receives when they meet Jesus and are 'born again'. However, receiving the incorruptible seed of God does not guarantee that a person will be a son of God forever.

In the parable of the sower and the seed, Jesus likened a person's birth 'from above' to a seed that had germinated and begun to sprout. This parable teaches us that the seed of the divine nature does not grow to fruitful maturity within us *by default*. The vitality of the emerging shoot of our sonship is affected by the condition of the ground in which it has been sown. The ground, in this parable, is speaking about our heart.

Does this mean that we cannot *know* whether we will receive an eternal inheritance as a son of God? Certainly not! We recall that the apostle John wrote his first letter 'to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, *so that you may know that you have eternal life*'. The implication of Jesus' parable is that it is *our responsibility* to join the process that Christ established to deal with the condition of our hearts.

Knowing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is the key to enduring in this process and growing in the assurance of our salvation. The apostle Paul said that he had *counted* all his earthly riches as rubbish in view of the amazing treasure of *knowing* Christ Jesus. Do we treasure the blessing of our sonship and our relationship with God? If it is not precious to us, then we will not be diligent to take hold of the life that He wants us to have.

## References:

1Jn 5:13

Php 3:8

1Pe 1:3

Gal 1:15

1Ti 6:12

Heb 3:14

## Further Study:

Mark 4:1-20

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 11

# Maturity and firstfruits

Christian maturity does not just mean being 'grown up'. More specifically, it means that a person's expression of the divine nature is *appropriate* for their age and stage of life. This is what Paul meant when he said that 'as many as are perfect' have the attitude of 'pressing on toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus'. These are people who are bearing the fruit that God requires of them, at the time that He requires it. Obviously, the expression of God's life is going to be markedly different for a seven year-old in comparison with a Christian who is seventeen! Likewise, the opportunities and responsibility for making offering will change as a young Christian ages.

The Scriptures use agricultural symbols to describe the life and culture of God's people. Drawing on this language, we can liken Christian maturity to the principle of 'firstfruits'. The firstfruits were an offering that the children of Israel made to God. They offered the first grains that ripened from their harvest each season. This offering was made in faith for the full harvest, believing that it all belonged to the Lord. Notably, the term 'firstfruits' is based on the same Hebrew word for 'firstborn'. The firstborn was the heir of a covenant household, and the Lord said that the firstborn *belonged to Him*.

A Christian should exemplify the principle of firstfruits. This is a person who has believed the word that calls them to be a son of God, and has been established in the culture of offering. By not drawing back from participating in Christ's sufferings, they demonstrate respect and the fear of God in relation to the processes of the cross. They accept that these processes are necessary to enable them to partake of the divine nature. The life of offering that they live in their mortal flesh is the life they will live forever in an immortal body.

## References:

Php 3:14-15

Exo 23:19

Exo 13:1-2

2Pe 1:3-4

Act 9:31

2Co 7:1, 11

## Further Study:

Daily Proverb:

Acts 10

Proverbs 12

# The foundations of sonship

As we follow the themes of 'firstfruits' and 'the firstborn' through the Scriptures, we see that God gives a specific mandate, or capacity, to those who are like firstfruits. This is the capacity to *reign in life* and to function in the *ministry of reconciliation*. These firstfruits capacities were exemplified in the life of Joseph.

In every situation in which Joseph found himself, he trusted God and was faithful in the work that was set before him. As he believed God's word about himself, he found grace for every circumstance. This is how he reigned in life. Joseph demonstrated the capacity of reconciliation when he forgave his brothers and helped them to recover to the name and destiny that God had for them. God had called and chosen them to be the firstfruits of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

We are firstfruits Christians as long as we '*hold fast* our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end'. To be assured of receiving our full inheritance as a son of God, Paul exhorted believers to be '*imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*'. To imitate those who inherited the promises of God through faith, we must first consider to whom the promises were made.

The promise of sonship was first spoken to Abraham. We recall that God made an 'everlasting covenant' with Abraham and his descendants. The Everlasting Covenant communicated God's desire to bring forth a multitude of sons who were born of His own life. This was the promise of eternal life. This promise was given to Abraham, and was passed on to Isaac and then Jacob as a blessing. Through His interactions with these three men, the foundations of God's covenant promises were fully established.

## References:

Heb 3:6  
Gal 3:16  
Gen 17:5-8

Gen 45:5-8  
Gen 50:19-21  
Exo 3:6, 15

## Further Study:

Hebrews 6

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 15

# The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

When Peter proclaimed the message of the New Covenant to the Jews at the portico of Solomon, he said, ‘The *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers*, has glorified His servant Jesus’. Peter used this description of God to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ because we must come to know the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob if we are to inherit the promises of God that have been made available to us in Christ. We need to know God in relation to His dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Everything that God revealed of Himself to each of the three fathers, He became to them. This why He is called, for example, ‘the God of Abraham’ and ‘the fear of Isaac’. Everything that was established by God through His interactions with Abraham was then encapsulated in His identification as ‘the God of Abraham’. This principle was the same for Isaac and Jacob.

Although Isaac and Jacob had received the blessing of Abraham as a *birthright*, their faith for this blessing was *tested* through specific life experiences and their *personal* encounters with the Lord. Through each of these encounters, they were established in what their fathers had received, and something *further* of God’s covenant blessing was established in their lives. For example, Jacob testified to Laban, ‘If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, *and* the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed’. Jacob understood that his appropriation of the blessing of God through the season of his tribulation was because he knew the God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac. He had received the *faith* of Abraham and the *calling* of Isaac to be a son of the promise. Following his departure from the house of Laban, *election* was then established with Jacob when he wrestled with the Lord and received his new name, Israel, which means ‘prince with God’.

## References:

Act 3:13      Mat 22:32  
Gen 31:42    Act 7:8  
Rom 9:10-11    Exo 2:24

## Further Study:

Genesis 32

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 16

# Faith, calling and election

Paul described Abraham as ‘the father of all who believe’. These are those who follow in the steps of his *faith*. The faith of Abraham was that he believed God, ‘who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist’. Abraham had faith because he received and believed God and His word. And, because of this, God accounted it to him as righteousness. To know ‘the God of Abraham’ is to know the fatherhood of God in our life, and to live by the faith of Abraham.

The *calling* that we receive is the call to be sons of God. Joining the fellowship of Christ’s offering is the crisis for the person who has received the call to be a son of God. The covenant of sonship was confirmed to Abraham and Isaac through participation in the offering of the Lamb that God provided for Himself. In the same way, the assurance of our sonship will only be found as we are conformed to the death of Christ. The true believer takes up his cross and receives the inheritance of sonship by joining the circumcision of Christ, which is the fellowship of His sufferings. This is what establishes believers as sons of God, and demonstrates that they know ‘the fear of Isaac’.

The foundation of *election* was established by God with Jacob. The elect are those people who, like Jacob, patiently endure the testing of the Lord. Through this process, they are being delivered from the propensities of their fallen nature. Like the apostle Paul, they desire to *know* the Lord all the more as they apprehend their *name and works* as a son of God. This is within the community of believers who are being built together as a holy temple for the Lord.

## References:

Gal 3:6

1Jn3:1

Isa 45:4

Gen 22:10-12

Php 3:10-11

2Pe 1:10

## Further Study:

Romans 4

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 17

# Knowing the Father

Jesus said, 'When you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you'. This instruction from Jesus is one of the foundations of the Christian life. We must be clear that we cannot be a Christian without the fatherhood of God. This may seem an obvious thing to say. However, we all need to be encouraged to continue in, and deepen our relationship with, our heavenly Father.

We know that Jesus said, 'If you have seen Me you have seen the Father'. So, doesn't this mean that if we have the Son, we also automatically have the Father? Well, of course, that is true at the moment of believing. But like so many things in the Christian life, what is true as an initial statement of faith, must become true as an ongoing course of action. What is true *for* us, must become true *in* us.

In other words, the way we live must begin to reflect what we profess to be true. For example, the Bible tells us that we are holy; but unless we sanctify ourselves daily to the Lord, we will not remain holy. We may be filled with the Spirit once; but it is the daily in-filling of the Holy Spirit that determines whether we are conducting our time on earth in the fear of the Lord.

When we meet the Father daily, partaking of fellowship with Him, entrusting our lives to Him, these qualities will shine forth in our lives. We will bear fruit. And, as Jesus said, the bearing of much fruit is what brings glory to the Father. This is because the fruit of a son of God is a true reflection of the glory of the Father. The fruit is the evidence that we are living as the Father has predestined us to live.

## References:

Mat 6:6

Joh 17:25-26

Joh 15:24

Heb 12:7

1Pe 3:15

1Pe 1:17

## Further Study:

John 14

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 18

# Knowing ourselves

The possession of a personal name is the inheritance that awaits our full adoption as sons. We may *do* many things in this life, but one thing we will *be* for all eternity is a son of God with a unique name. Our heavenly Father has named us, and it is in knowing Him that we are granted the honour of knowing ourselves. This self-knowledge does not consist in mere psychology, but in the depth of God's knowledge about us.

We could think about a child for a moment. A two year-old does not have to ask her daddy who she is. Her reassurance is in knowing that she is guarded by the constant and far-reaching love of her parents. The filling out of the question of 'who she is' takes place over time, within the safe boundaries of obedience to those parents. We can see the failure of this parent-child relationship in every area of modern life. Without boundaries or proper love, self-knowledge is impossible. Instead, we find young people asserting the right of self-definition: 'If I can define myself, then I have a clear course of action before me. Through my actions, I can create my own reality. I can make myself.'

This imagined 'self' is the work of Satan, who was the first to try to define himself apart from fellowship with God. It was with this fantasy that Satan tempted Adam and Eve, saying 'You can be like God, and live apart from Him'. This is impossible. Nevertheless, human beings continue to try to forge their own future from the raw material of their own imaginations. We have no future unless we know the One who gave us our destiny; that is, the Father. And if we desire to find Him, He will be found. When we meet the Father in secret, He rewards us. The greatest reward for every son of God is the secret of their name.

## References:

Pro 9:10

Isa 43:1

Isa 14:13-14

Gen 3:3-5

Isa 65:1

Mat 6:4

## Further Study:

## Daily Proverb:

Luke 1:57-80

Proverbs 19

# Light and life

As sons of God, it is wonderful to be assured of the truth that we have Christ's life growing up in us. We are assured that we have *received* His life, and we can also be sure that we can *minister* His life. As we consider this, we appreciate that it is God's word that is making us increasingly sure of this truth. God's word is a light that shines on us. His word shines so that we can *see* and *apprehend* the amazing provision of God's life coming *to* us and growing *in* us. The light of God's word reveals His life to us. In fact, His light is His very life! John declared concerning Jesus, 'In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men'.

Having received Christ's life, we know that we are sons of God with an eternal inheritance. Many of us were born into believing households and, therefore, we received the seed of sonship life *while in the womb of our mother*. What an amazing provision! Wonderfully, this means we have been a son of God and a member of Christ's body from the womb. Others of us were born of God at a later stage in life, having come out of the 'world'. Whichever way we came to receive Christ's life, we appreciate the tremendous love of the Father toward us to set us in the body of Christ so we can 'grow up' into the fullness of God. A vital aspect of growing up into His fullness is to be an active and participating member of Christ's body by ministering the life of God. We can minister God's life and light as we walk together as sons of God.

## References:

Joh 1:4

Eph 4:15

1Jn 5:11-12

Gal 2:20

1Jn 1:5-7

## Further Study:

Isaiah 60

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 22



# Priests through baptism

As sons of God, we are called to be priests to God and to *minister*, or share, the life of Christ with others. 'Priesthood' is the work of ministering God's life. We are each responsible for our particular work of priesthood. We each carry our unique load and work; however, we don't do this on our own. We carry our load as a particular member in the body of Christ, and we are able to bear each other's burdens. Our priesthood is our sanctified work which is fulfilling the will of God in our lives. The apostle Peter wrote, 'His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness'. We can be assured that we have everything we require to be a priest.

Our baptism enabled us to be a priest. Through baptism, we have received the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as an ointment, or oil, poured out on us. This oil has anointed us, or ordained us, to be a priest. His name, which is His anointing, has given us the full *capacity* and *authority* of priesthood.

Paul clearly said of baptism, 'For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ'. Baptism joins us to Christ's priesthood and clothes us with a priestly garment. We are clothed as a priest with our great High Priest. Every member of the body of Christ, both younger and older, can receive this *capacity* of priesthood which uniquely belongs to Christ. If we were baptised as a child, we received our own 'little ephod'. This is just as the Scripture described Samuel, the son of Hannah and Elkanah, who served in the temple as a young child wearing a little robe.

## References:

2Pe 1:3

Son 1:3

1Jn 2:20

Gal 3:26-27

Isa 61:10

1Sa 2:18-19

## Further Study:

Galatians 6

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 23

# The baptism of the Holy Spirit

We receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a fire. John the Baptist said of Christ, 'As for me, I baptise you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me ... will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire'. When the oil of Christ's name is ignited by the fire of the Holy Spirit, we are alight as with a flame! This flame, or light, is not the Holy Spirit. Rather, it is the sevenfold Spirit of God (or Yahweh). The Spirit of God was able to be physically seen as 'tongues as of fire' upon the heads of one hundred and twenty disciples when they were filled with the Holy Spirit as they gathered on the Day of Pentecost.

The sevenfold Spirit of God is speaking of 'the fullness' of God. It is the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the power of all three Persons of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit is bringing to us the power of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is enabling us to function as priests and to minister the life of Jesus to others. The very same power that enabled Jesus' priesthood is given to us for *our* priestly service. What an enabling we have received!

Jesus Himself was strengthened to be a priest by the Spirit of God. He received anointing by the Holy Spirit bringing the sevenfold Spirit of God. This strengthened Jesus to make offering and to priest His life to us. We can clearly see that baptism is not a formula or an empty ritual. It has given us a substantial anointing *with power!* We have received oil and a priestly garment.

## References:

Mat 3:11

Heb 9:14

Act 2:1-4

Luk 3:22

Psa 133:1-3

Rev 4:5

## Further Study:

Acts 19

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 24

# Revealing the light

Once we have been baptised into Christ and with the Holy Spirit, we continue to grow up and mature as sons and daughters of God as we priest His life. We are priests who are part of a kingdom of priests! We are now an *active* and *participating* member of the body of Christ. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we have the power of God upon us. We understand that we have everything we need to express the light of the Spirit of God in the body of Christ. We are participating in Christ's priesthood in the midst of the church.

This means that as we come to the communion table, we are fully equipped to participate in the ministry of the body that is building up each member. We are coming in the faith and assurance that we are able to speak a word that is reflecting, or focusing, the light of the Spirit of God. This is the very life of God.

We are reflecting the light of Yahweh in the body of Christ by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God has been brought to us, with power, by the Holy Spirit. We are all able to reflect the light of the Spirit of God in the body of Christ, younger and older together! This light is lighting up the pathway of sonship so that we can walk in it as individuals and as a people together. This light is ministering to every son of God in the household of God. This is how we know how to fulfil the will of God in our lives, each week and in the season ahead. As we walk in the light that is shining, we are growing up into the fullness of God's life.

## References:

Rev 1:6

Isa 61:6

Rom 15:18-19

1Co 10:16

Act 1:8

## Further Study:

Daily Proverb:

1 Peter 2

Proverbs 25

# A kingdom of priests

We should be strengthened in the knowledge that we have received the authority and capacity to be a priest to God. This is because we are joined to Christ and His priesthood through baptism. We are priests and we belong to a kingdom of priests. We have entered the priestly service of the kingdom. Christ who loves us 'has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father – to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.'

We know that we can present ourselves to God and minister life because we have received capacity *by the Spirit of God*. In this regard, Paul wrote, 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant'. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all committed to making us sufficient as priests.

As sons of God together, we are growing up in our capacity to reflect the light of the Spirit of God that is shining on us. This is so we can all be gathered up together in His light. This light that is shining is imparting life to us! And we are receiving the substance of this life as something new that we did not have before.

We can have great confidence that we are, indeed, part of the priesting function of the church. This is because we are ignited by the Holy Spirit with the power of the Spirit of God. We are assured that we are shining with the light of the sevenfold Spirit that is resting on the church. We are walking in light on the pathway of sonship as priests together to our God and Father.

## References:

Rev 1:5-6  
2Co 3:5-6  
2Ti 3:16-17

1Pe 2:5  
Psa 36:9  
Joh 8:12

## Further Study:

## Daily Proverb:

Psalm 50

Proverbs 26