



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

OCTOBER 2021

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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The fellowship of Yahweh

During the last Passover, Philip said to Jesus, 'Lord, show us the Father.' **Joh 14:8**. In response, Jesus said, 'Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. *Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.*' **Joh 14:10-11**.

Jesus' response revealed that Philip had not received Christ, the Word of God. This was evident because he had not received the faith that was necessary to believe and acknowledge what Jesus had revealed through His earthly ministry. **Rom 10:17. 2Co 4:13**. Philip had retained some other belief system which hampered his capacity to hear and receive the ministry of Jesus.

Consequently, Philip had not understood the essential message that Jesus had proclaimed, which was that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him. Christ's message was the revelation of Yahweh. That is, the Son had declared the Father through the capacity given to Him by the Holy Spirit. If Philip had been illuminated to the fellowship of Yahweh, he could have received and understood Yahweh's covenant purpose for him – that he should be called a son of God. **1Jn 3:1**.

Within Their own covenant fellowship, before the heavens and earth were created, Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit determined together to create and bring to glory a multitude of sons of God in Their image and according to Their likeness. **Gen 1:26**. The sons of God would be born of Their life and become participants in Their fellowship. This is God's 'Everlasting Covenant'.

The offering of Yahweh

Each Person of the Godhead laid Their life down, by Eternal Spirit, to bring Their covenant purpose to pass. The Son emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, and the Holy Spirit laid His life down to become the Helper of the Father and the Son. **Php 2:5-7. Joh 14:16.** The Father laid His life down by giving to the Son the fullness of His own expression as Father. **Heb 1:1-3. Joh 16:15.**

Yahweh Son became the full expression of the Father when He was begotten as the Son of God by the word of the Father, who said, 'You are My Son, *today* I have begotten You.' **Heb 1:5.** This birthing action was by the Holy Spirit. **Heb 3:7.** When the Father said, '*Today* I have begotten You', the Holy Spirit, who had laid His life down to reveal the Father as the life of God, brought the Spirit of the Father to the identity of the Son, causing Him to be born anew as the Son of God. **Joh 6:63.**

The portion of the Father's Spirit, which the Son received through the Holy Spirit, is the seed and names of every son of God who would ever be brought to birth through the gospel. By this begetting action, the Son became the Word and Seed of the Father. **Joh 1:1,14.** Furthermore, having received the fullness of the Spirit, the heavenly body of the Son became the heavenly temple, which is composed of living stones. **2Co 6:16. Eph 2:20-22. 1Pe 2:5.** These living stones are the sons whom the Father has named in the Son.

The fellowship of Yahweh, and Their Everlasting Covenant, is the focal point of the gospel. Jesus implored Philip to believe this message, or to believe the works that revealed this message. The apostle Paul explained that the work of creation revealed the Godhead and Their covenant initiative towards man. **Rom 1:20.**

The creation of man

When Yahweh Son was begotten by the Father as the Son of God, the beginning of the creation was established. Making this point, the apostle John said, 'He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.' **Joh 1:1-3**. The order of headship through which Yahweh Son was begotten as the Son of God, was the order through which the heavens and the earth were created. To this end, we note Paul's teaching: 'There is but one God, the Father, *from whom* are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things, and we exist through Him.' **1Co 8:6**.

On the sixth day of creation, the Lord God formed man's flesh from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. By this means, man became a *living soul*. **Gen 1:27. Gen 2:7**. This was the first stage of man's creation in the image and likeness of God. The 'first man' was an eternal identity in a mortal body, but he had not yet received his name as a son of God, which had been predestined for him in the Son before creation. According to the covenant plan of Yahweh, the sons and daughters of men were to receive their name and life as sons of God through the process of new birth, after the Son became flesh and gave His life for them.

The capacity to multiply the identities of the sons of men, was not possible until God created a helper comparable to Adam. **Gen 2:18**. The Lord God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. He removed a rib from Adam's side, and with it He made woman. **Gen 2:22**. From Adam and Eve, through the biological process of procreation, all the identities named by the Father, in the Son, come into being.

The recovery of man

The identity of a person is from the Father and has its origin in creation, but they are not created as a son of God. Every person must be born again by the word of God to become the son whom the Father predestined them to be. **Joh 3:5-7.**

Mankind fell from this predestination when Adam disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **Gen 2:16-17. Gen 3:6.** They ate of this fruit, endeavouring to become the source of their own life and expression apart from the fellowship of Yahweh. **Gen 3:5-6.** Consequently, all of mankind was lost to God. Furthermore, the other law was established in the hearts of Adam and Eve, and in every son and daughter of man who would be born after them. **Rom 7:23.** They were now dead in trespasses and sins and in bondage to Satan through the fear of death. **Eph 2:1-3. Heb 2:14-15.**

Inherent in the offering of the Son and the Holy Spirit, within the Covenant of Yahweh, was Their desire to recover the sons and daughters of men back to the Father. **Luk 19:10.** In response to Their offering, the Father sent His only begotten Son into the world so that, through Him, we might be recovered to the life of sonship that He predestined for us. **1Jn 4:9. 2Co 5:21. Rom 8:29. Joh 3:16-17.**

Through Christ's death on the cross, the whole world was reconciled to God. Now, when a person receives the gospel proclaimed from the cross, they are able to be saved by His life through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. **Rom 5:10. 2Co 3:5-6.** That is, a hearer can be born of God and joined to the fellowship of Yahweh as members of the body of Christ.

The message

The word is the beginning of God's covenant initiative towards us. Notably, the apostle John opened his gospel account, writing, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. **Joh 1:1**. Christ is the Word of the Father. **Joh 1:1**. He is then the Messenger of God the Father. **Mal 3:1**.

The truth of His message is first made known in the creation. We note, for example, the words of King David, who wrote, 'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge'. **Psa 19:1-2**. Paul also explained that since the creation, the eternal power of God and the fellowship of Yahweh have been clearly seen, and can be understood, by the things that are made. **Rom 1:20**.

Adam was created by God to be lord over creation. As Adam joined the fellowship of Yahweh's offering at the tree of life each day, he was learning how to multiply the life of God by offering. The creation was then sustained by the life that Adam multiplied and ministered to it, through this process. **Gen 1:26-28**. As Adam participated in this work, he was learning God's covenant purpose.

The second element of the message that brings salvation is 'the secret of the Lord'. This is the Eternal Covenant purpose of the Father for mankind, which He has made known through the Son. God's purpose for the sons and daughters of men is their predestination to be born again of His life and then joined to the fellowship of Yahweh. The nature of Yahweh's fellowship, to which man is invited, is called in Scripture, 'the mystery of God'. **Col 2:1-3**.

The mystery of God

The mystery of God is revealed and appropriated through the word of the cross. The word of the cross joins a hearer to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings where they can obtain the inheritance of their sonship. The stewardship of this mystery has been committed to messengers whom Christ sends into the world to proclaim the word of the cross. **Col 1:27-28. 1Co 2:2.**

The mystery of God is revealed by God's messengers as Christ is publicly portrayed as crucified through their fellowship in His offering and sufferings. **Gal 3:1. 2Co 1:3-7.** For this reason, Paul testified that he rejoiced in his sufferings for his hearers, and filled up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, in order that the mystery of God might be revealed to, and fulfilled in, his hearers. **Col 1:24-27.**

The love of God is the motive for this mystery. Revealing this great truth, the apostle John wrote, 'Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!' **1Jn 3:1.** By love, and through the word of His grace, the Father draws a hearer near, saying, 'Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.' **Jer 31:3.** He does this so that they might be born again and become the son whom He predestined them to be.

The love of God activates the faith that a person receives by hearing the gospel. By this means, they are able to respond in *obedience* to His call. **Gal 5:6.** This faith is proclaimed by the messenger as a word. **Rom 10:14-17.** The word of faith, along with the convicting work of the Holy Spirit who is sent down from heaven and works with the messenger, prepares the ground of a hearer's heart to receive Christ, who is the Seed of the Father. **1Pe 1:12.**

A messenger sent before Christ's face

Because of the fall of man, Jesus Christ sends messengers before His face in the spirit and power of Elijah. **Luk 10:1**. This is a *ministry of restoration* before His own face to prepare the hearts of those to whom He comes. He does this so that they are ready to receive Him and His message when He personally makes Himself known to them. **Mal 3:1**. **Isa 40:3-5**. Importantly, unless a hearer receives those whom Christ sends to them, they will be unable to receive Christ. **Luk 16:31**.

John the Baptist exemplified this messenger ministry, of whom Jesus said, 'And if you are willing to receive it, *he is Elijah* who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!' **Mat 11:14-15**. Of course, John the Baptist was not literally Elijah, nor was he a reincarnation of the prophet; John ministered 'in the spirit and power of Elijah'. **Luk 1:17**. By hearing John's message, the hearts of fathers could be *turned* to their children, and the disobedient could be *turned* to the wisdom of the just. **Luk 1:17**.

This was a restorative ministry of repentance so that the hearts of those with an ear to hear would be prepared to receive Christ, the Messenger. Through His message, they would receive the adoption and be born again as sons of God. **Mat 3:1-2,11**. **Act 19:4**. The messengers who are sent before the face of Christ function by the spirit of grace and supplication. This is, in fact, the capacity of the spirit and power of Elijah! Grace gives to people the capacity to supplicate (that is, to pray), and to find repentance and recovery to God's covenant purpose.

Least in the kingdom

In His letters to the seven churches, Jesus likened the ministry of Elijah to 'the morning star'. **Rev 2:28**. The mandate for this ministry belongs to those followers of Christ who turn and receive the word ministered through the ascension gift graces of Christ in the presbytery and in the church. The ministry of this particular message is described in the Scriptures as 'the day of visitation' and 'times of refreshing from the Lord'. **1Pe 2:11-12. Act 3:19**. Receiving this word, and joining the fellowship it establishes, enables a person to participate in the messenger administration that ministers in the spirit and power that motivated Elijah.

Jesus foreshadowed this ministry when He sent out the seventy before Him. The Gospel of Luke records, 'After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two *before His face* into every city and place where *He Himself was about to go*'. **Luk 10:1**. Significantly, everyone who is born of God and joined to the fellowship of the presbytery has a participation in the ministry of Elijah, particularly from house to house. **Act 2:46-47**.

In this regard, we note that Jesus described John the Baptist as the greatest man who had been born of woman, because he had been sent to prepare the way before Christ who became flesh and dwelt among them. However, Jesus then said, 'But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he'. **Mat 11:11**. Jesus said this because those who enter the kingdom of heaven are born of God and joined to the fellowship of His body. From the least to the greatest, the sons of God are able to bear *witness* to Christ as those who, themselves, have received the inheritance of sonship that only He brings. **Heb 8:11**.

The fear of the Lord

A messenger is a witness of the things to which they have been illuminated and established, and of the things that Christ, by the Spirit, continues to reveal to them as the proceeding word of God. **Act 1:8. Act 26:16.** This is because the messengers of God are established in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. In word and conduct, they exemplify the culture of godliness that is characteristic of the fellowship of Yahweh. For this reason, through their ministry, Christ is publicly portrayed as crucified among their hearers. **Gal 3:1.**

Having proclaimed the faith of God that reveals the fellowship of Yahweh and Their covenant purpose, the messengers of God then exhort their hearers to *fear the Lord*. Only a person who fears the Lord is able to confess, by faith, that Jesus is Lord, and demonstrate true *repentance*, which leads to salvation. **Rom 10:8-10. 2Co 7:10.** Unless a hearer learns the fear of the Lord, they will reject the gospel of sonship, or they will *presume* upon the kindness of God and continue in their sin. In doing so, they will fail to obtain the hidden riches of sonship that belong to the secret of the Lord. **Isa 45:3.**

Describing the mystery of God as a 'secret', King David declared, 'The secret of the Lord is with those *who fear Him*, and He will show them His covenant.' **Psa 25:14.** Accordingly, the messenger exhorts their hearers to fear the Lord as they proclaim to them the judgement of God. That is, the messenger makes known to their hearers God's wrath on account of the rebellion and sin of mankind. We note this content in the words of the believing thief who was crucified with Christ. Rebuking his companion, he said, 'Do you not even *fear God*, seeing you are under the same *condemnation*? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.' **Luk 23:40-41.**

The judgement of God

The proclamation of God's judgement upon the wickedness of mankind was part of the mandate that belonged to John the Baptist. He said to the multitudes who came out to him, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? *Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance*, and do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' **Luk 3:7-9.**

Mankind is held accountable by God for the wickedness that has resulted from the Fall, causing pain and destruction, both in the natural creation, and in the society of human relationships. Through the word of the cross, ministered in the spirit and power of Elijah, a hearer is caused to look on Christ whom they have pierced as a consequence of their rebellion and sin. **Zec 12:10. Rev 1:7.** Their heart is pierced and laid bare before the eyes of the Lord. The messenger exhorts them to not draw back in unbelief, but to fear God 'who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell!' **Mat 10:28. Heb 10:39.**

A person who resists the Holy Spirit at this point, does not receive a fear of God and is unable to believe the word of the messenger. This is because they turn their eyes away from the Lord, drawing back from Him when their heart is pierced by the word, and their iniquity is revealed to them. Describing this response, King David wrote, 'There is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes, when he finds out his iniquity and when he hates. The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit.' **Psa 36:1-3.**

The example of Thomas

The disciple Thomas was at risk of failing to obtain the salvation of the Lord. He refused to receive the testimony of his brethren who declared, 'We have seen the Lord.' **Joh 20:25**. Before Thomas was able to believe the gospel, and then be born from above as a son of God, he needed to learn the fear of the Lord. He learnt this fear when Jesus confronted him with the wounds resulting from His crucifixion. Jesus made Thomas touch and look at His pierced hands, and put his hand in His pierced side, saying, 'Do not be unbelieving, but believing.' **Joh 20:27**.

In this encounter, Thomas drew near to the Lord by touching His pierced hands and side. He was able to appreciate the effect of his sin and disbelief on the Lord, as well as the salvation that the Lord Jesus had finished for him. By this means, Thomas learnt the fear of the Lord. Furthermore, he was able to believe for resurrection life by the faith that he received as he heard Jesus speak to him. **2Co 4:13. Rom 10:17**. Thomas' fear of the Lord was expressed by the confession of faith, '*My Lord and my God!*'. **Joh 20:28. 1Co 12:3**.

The fear of the Lord is the expression of one's deep appreciation and respect of who Yahweh is. It is demonstrated by the confession of His lordship over their life. The fear of the Lord is also a spiritual grace that motivates a person to *press* into the Lord, His word, and fellowship with His messengers, when He comes with eyes that are as flames of fire. **Isa 11:2. Rev 2:18**. As they acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, they recognise that they have violated God's word and are under judgement and wrath. The fear of the Lord constrains them to accept His purifying initiative towards them, so that they can be sanctified for their participation as a son of God in the fellowship of Yahweh.

The freedom of choice

The spirit of grace and supplication accompanies the word that is preached by a messenger. **Zec 12:10**. This spirit establishes a context of fellowship between the hearer and the messenger. This is the fellowship of Yahweh. **1Jn 1:3**. Within this fellowship, illumination is made available to a hearer as the love and mercy of God is being poured out upon them.

Through this prevenient grace, they are granted freedom from the bondage of Satan and sin, enabling them to respond to the word if they choose to receive and believe it. They can choose either to receive the faith and fear of the Lord, obey His commandments and live, or draw back in unbelief from the face of Christ to live according to their own understanding. This latter response leads to judgement and death.

There are two primary expressions of unbelief in response to the gospel. Some people *stumble*, taking offence at the word of the cross. They will endeavour to stifle this message, and cause injury to Christ's messengers. The Jews, who were cut to the heart by the word of the cross as their betrayal and murder of Jesus was revealed to them through the ministry of Stephen, exemplified this response. **Act 7:51-54**. Having been cut to the heart, they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, gnashed their teeth at him, and they killed him. **Act 7:54,57-58**.

Others draw back in unbelief by remaining ambivalent to the message of the cross or by viewing it as *foolishness*. **1Co 1:18,23**. They malign Christ's messengers as simple, narrow-minded, and even insane. For example, in response to Paul's preaching, Governor Festus said with a loud voice, 'Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!' **Act 26:24**. They reject the word of the cross and choose to live according to their own perception of truth.

Grace to draw near

The grace that is ministered to a hearer through the spirit and power of Elijah is 'prevenient'. It is given by God as a gift, *before* the hearer asks for it or recognises their need for it, so that they can repent and find salvation. **Tit 2:11**. The spirit of grace and supplication relieves the hearer of all the factors that would otherwise affect their capacity to hear and choose the call of sonship contained in the gospel. These influences may include, for example, the other law, sin, previous experiences, cultures and traditions, addictions, and even demonic oppression. This reprieve is an extension of God's mercy to the hearer.

Under the influence of grace and supplication, the hearer can *draw near* to receive the word of the messenger which ministers faith and brings cleansing to them. **Jer 30:21**. As they meet Christ eye to eye, and heart to heart, and fear the Lord, they become poor in spirit as they are illuminated to see their sin and accept their accountability for the death of Christ. **Mat 5:3**.

The Holy Spirit convicts the hearer so that they can mourn. **Joh 16:8-11**. They are able to mourn and repent because of the insight and conviction of sin that the Holy Spirit bears witness to within them, making known to them the wickedness of their heart and the evil that comes from the works of their hands. By the Spirit, they are enabled to see what Christ sees as His eyes search their heart and reveal the thoughts and intents of their heart. **Heb 4:12-13**. **Rom 8:26-27**. **Rev 2:23**.

Consequently, they mourn alone for the desolation of their sonship, as they crucified the Son of God through their sin and rebellion. **Zec 12:10-12**. They are blessed with comfort as they *mourn* in this manner, because they are able to truly appreciate the kindness of God. **Mat 5:4**.

The kindness of God

Those who fear the Lord, and who do not draw back from His gaze, are shown the kindness of God which brings salvation to all men. **Tit 2:11. Tit 3:4-7.** They recognise that Christ's fiery eyes also reveal the love and mercy of God as the messenger proclaims to them the forgiveness and reconciliation of God. This is offered to all on account of the propitiatory and redeeming work that Christ accomplished for every person through His offering on the cross. **Eph 1:7.**

Rather than presuming on this kindness, a person who has received the kindness of God ministered from His finished offering, obeys the instruction to deny ungodliness and worldly desires in order to live soberly, righteously, and godly, seeking for the appearing of Christ Himself. **Tit 2:11-13.**

A person's obedience to this instruction demonstrates that they have obtained faith to believe for the treasure of sonship. This is the same faith that Abraham received when the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield [of faith], your exceedingly great reward.' **Gen 15:1.** By this faith, Abraham was illuminated to see the promise of sonship, likened by God to the stars of heaven. Moreover, he believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. **Gen 15:5-6.** The apostle James explained that, by receiving this gift of righteousness, Abraham became *the friend of God*. **Jas 2:23.**

Likewise, a hearer becomes the friend of God when they receive the free gift of righteousness through faith, which comes by hearing the word of the messenger. **Rom 10:17.** As the friend of God, they give themselves to receive and obey the commands of Christ. **Joh 15:14.** That is, they become disciples of Christ who are committed to abiding in His word. **Joh 8:31-32.**

Present yourself for offering

A believer who has become a friend of God will receive the messenger's exhortation to present themselves as a living sacrifice in the fellowship of Christ's offering so that they can recover their obedience as a son of God. **Rom 12:1.** The obedience that must be found in the fellowship of Christ's offering, which is essential for salvation, is the obedience of Christ. **2Co 10:4-5.** Through His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary, Christ fulfilled the works of sonship that belong to every person. These are the works of priesthood that belong to their name, which was promised to them when, before creation, God predestined everyone to become His sons, in Christ.

The prophet Elijah demonstrated this aspect of the messenger's ministry when he repaired the altar of the Lord and said to the children of Israel, 'Come near to me.' **1Ki 18:30.** As the people received Elijah's words, and joined the fellowship of this offering, they were, symbolically, washed clean by the water of the word that was poured over the sacrifice and altar prepared by Elijah. **1Ki 18:32-35.** Furthermore, they were delivered from their idolatry and the unclean spirits in the land which had proliferated under the influence of Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab. **1Ki 18:19.**

Likewise, as a hearer responds to the messenger's call to present themselves as a living sacrifice, they are washed by the water of the word, which the prophet Zechariah described as a fountain for sin and uncleanness. **Zec 13:1.** Through this action, they are also delivered by the Lord from their idolatry and the unclean spirits that are oppressing them or have possessed them. **Zec 13:2.** Their heart is ready to receive Christ, the Messenger of the Covenant, who comes to sow the Father's word in their heart.

The Messenger of the covenant

A messenger of Christ will bear witness to the light of the gospel. However, they are not the light. As the apostle John explained concerning John the Baptist, who ministered in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.' **Joh 1:7-8.**

Christ is the Light of the world. **Joh 8:12.** Only He can give light. This light is the life and name that is given to a person, enabling them to be born again as a son of God. The light of life is the substance that belongs to the new creation.

A person obtains this substance in four progressive stages when the Spirit of Christ enters their heart: the hearer receives the adoption; **Eph 1:3-5.** Their identity is regenerated; **Tit 3:4-5.** The seed containing their life and name as a new creation son of God is germinated through the work of the Holy Spirit; **1Pe 1:22-23.** And, they join the travail of Christ as a member of His body, to bring forth the fruit of sonship through offering. **Isa 53:11.**

Within the fellowship established by a messenger, who has been sent by Christ as a representative of His face, Christ comes with the Father, sowing the seed of the hearer's name in their heart. He does this by first proclaiming their sonship to them as an adoption. Their adoption as a son of God is the first implication of receiving the Spirit of Christ into their heart. **Gal 4:6.**

When Yahweh Son became the Seed of the Father, the names and life of every son of God were now in Him. The Spirit of Christ is the seed that Jesus referred to in the parable of the sower and the seed. **Luk 8:11.** It is the seed of a person's name, from which springs their glory, works and expression as a son of God.

The adoption

The Son is the expression and image of who a person is to become as a son of God. For this reason, He comes into their heart, expressing their name, crying, 'Abba! Father!' **Gal 4:6**. In this statement, their sonship is being proclaimed to them. This is the adoption being proclaimed to them. Although He has *come* into their heart, He is yet to *dwell* in their heart. His cry, 'Abba! Father!', will become the expression of their sonship obedience once they are born again by the work of the Holy Spirit.

The ministry of the adoption is a feature of the prevenient grace of God, which is characteristic of wayside ground. **Mar 4:4**. Hence, it was observable under the Old Covenant, in the lives of those who received and believed God's word. Consider, for example, the life of Moses. As he journeyed with the children of Israel, through the wilderness to the promised land, the Lord said to him, 'You have *found grace* in My sight, and I *know you by name*.' **Exo 33:17**.

Within this dimension of God's prevenient grace, a person who has received the adoption is *entitled to the inheritance* that belongs to a son. This inheritance is the promise of the divine nature, which becomes their possession when they are born of the Spirit. **2Pe 1:2-4**. The apostle John marked the distinction between the adoption and obtaining the promise of the divine nature as a son of God, writing, 'But as many as *received Him*, to them He gave *the right to become children of God*, to those who believe in His name.' **Joh 1:12**. The new birth is the blessing of the New Covenant. In order for this germination to happen, the identity of a hearer needs to be regenerated. This is the second aspect of the ministry of the Spirit of Christ.

Regeneration

Having been dead in trespasses and sins, the spirit of a person is made alive by the Spirit of Christ; it is regenerated so that they are able to receive the light of life. **Eph 2:1. Luk 11:36.** The light that is shone into their heart is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God from the face of Jesus. **2Co 4:6.** This is the divine nature which is to become the expression of their name as a son of God.

They are *born to see* the kingdom, because the Spirit of Christ, by the Holy Spirit, regenerates and renews their inner man, restoring their capacity to receive Christ, who is the Light of the world. **Tit 3:4-5. Luk 11:36.** The purpose for this regeneration is so that Christ may dwell in their heart through faith. **Eph 3:14-17.** That is, so that this person may be born again as a new creation son of God. **2Co 5:17.**

Regeneration is the effect of Christ breathing on the hearer. **Joh 20:22.** We know that man became a living soul when the Son breathed the breath of life into his body. **Gen 2:7. Act 17:24-25.** Through this same breath, the inner man of the hearer, which is otherwise dead, is regenerated. The prophet Ezekiel prophesied regarding the effect of regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, when the Lord said to him, 'Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, "O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Surely I will cause *breath to enter into you*, and you shall live.'" **Eze 37:4-5.**

Once the bodies of the dead were re-formed, the Lord directed Ezekiel to say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and *breathe on these slain, that they may live.*" ' **Eze 37:9.** The Lord then explained that the regeneration of these identities was the effect of His Spirit within them, enabling them to live and to receive the inheritance of the adoption.

Wayside ground

Jesus summarised this prevenient phase of salvation as ‘wayside ground’. **Luk 8:5**. In summary, wayside ground describes a person who has received and responded to the prevenient grace of God that brings salvation. **Tit 2:11**. The mystery of God, which is the word of the cross, is proclaimed by messengers who minister in the spirit and power of Elijah. Through this ministry of grace and supplication, the word pierces the heart of a hearer, granting to them the opportunity for repentance and for the forgiveness of their sins. **Act 2:37**. When they respond in this manner to the ministry of messengers, their heart is ready to receive Christ Himself.

Christ, who is the Messenger of the Covenant, then comes into their heart as the seed of their sonship. **Mal 3:1. Luk 8:11**. He first proclaims to them their adoption as sons. This is still under the prevenient grace of God. The Spirit of Christ, through His word, then regenerates their spirit by the washing of the water of the word so that Christ, who has come into their heart, can dwell in their heart through faith. **Eph 5:25-26. Eph 3:17**. However, at this point, they have not yet been born to enter the kingdom of heaven, for the seed has yet to germinate within their heart.

Obtaining understanding is the crisis of wayside ground. **Mat 13:19**. A person fails to proceed beyond this phase of salvation because, at some point, they resist the grace of God through which they can be delivered from their own understanding of themselves, of God, and of the gospel. Consequently, they are unable to receive Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life. **Joh 14:6**. The wicked one snatches away the seed that is sown in their heart because they harden their heart in relation to one, or more, of the steps in this phase of salvation.

Waiting for understanding

Fear, disappointment, depression and anger in relation to one's Christian experience are common indicators that a person has not progressed from wayside ground. Germination requires them to receive understanding through a word from outside of themselves. By faith, they are to ask, seek, and knock for understanding as they present themselves for fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. **Luk 11:9-13**. In this regard, they receive the word that calls them to join the offering of Christ, rather than simply live by the convenient grace that they initially experience.

As they hear this word, they are beginning to see that the treasure of their calling as a son of God is buried in the ground of fellowship with the presbytery, which is fellowship with the Father and the Son. **1Jn 1:3**. To have the treasure, they must sell all that they have to buy *the field*. **Mat 13:44**. They sell their most prized article, which is their own understanding of the gospel and the way to life.

As they present themselves in this manner, they need to diligently apply themselves to beating away the birds of the air, that endeavour to rob them of their inheritance by offering alternatives to obtaining life through patient endurance, as they wait for understanding in the fellowship of the offering of Christ. **Gen 15:11. Mat 13:4**.

King David testified that the Lord answered him when he sought the Lord in this manner, writing, 'I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps.' **Psa 40:1-2**. A believer is brought up out of the darkness of the pit when they are joined to the burnt offering of Christ, which He revealed when He was established by the Father on the ground of new creation.



Restoring
my Soul