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“GIVE THE KING THY JUDGMENTS”

The Psalms are a rich source of our Heavenly Father's Word, historical, devotional and prophetic; they confirm the precious truths of our Great Creator's Divine Plan, truths that are scattered liberally throughout both Old and New Testaments, truths that we have learned to appreciate and love over the years; these are all found in the Psalms. The glory of our Heavenly Father's Jewels that He has been assembling throughout the Gospel Age, the beauty of the New Day which is shortly to dawn for all mankind, yes, these are all to be found in the Psalms. Psalm 72 is one such particularly rich source. Scholars are divided as to who actually penned the words but the context suggests the author was most likely David, writing for his son, Solomon.

Verse 1: Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son.”

The Psalm would have had a literal meaning at the time as did much of the Old Testament, but our interest is mainly centred in the prophetic fulfillment. Looking at the Psalm prophetically we can see that it is a Psalm of the New Age when Jesus and the glorified Church are reigning over the Earth. The king is King Jesus and could include also the Church. The term “king's son” would seem to suggest another person, but most likely it still applies to Jesus. The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament renders verse 1: “Endow the king with your justice O God, the royal son with your righteousness”. The literal fulfillment would have applied to David and to his son Solomon. Both are pictures of Christ, so in the reality we would apply both expressions to Christ, He is of royal stock, a King's Son, a Son of the One and only Supreme King, the Almighty God.

Passages which give us some more details on the judging work as mentioned in the first verse of the Psalm, include John 5:22 - “*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son*” and John 5:26,27 - “*For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.*” Our Heavenly Father is the supreme Judge but He has delegated the work of

judging to His Son, Jesus said, this is because He is the Son of man, because He became one of us and experienced the sufferings and trials of mankind, plus of course the additional trials, which were exclusively His. This made Him the most suitable Judge for the world of mankind, He will have sympathy and compassion with their weaknesses. Romans 2:16 says that He judges by Jesus Christ, that is, God judges by Jesus Christ.

There are many Old Testament passages on judging; firstly, Isa 26:9-10 - “*With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.*” Then Psa 105:7-9 - “*He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac.*” Now Psa 119:62 - “*At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.*”

We have some nice thoughts by Albert Barnes on the expression; “give the king thy judgments”; he says, it means: “ Knowledge; authority; ability to execute thy judgments, or thy laws. That is, he speaks of the king as appointed to administer justice; to maintain the laws of God, and to exercise judicial power. It is one of the primary ideas in the character of a king that he is the fountain of justice; the maker of the laws; the dispenser of

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right to all his subjects. The officers of the law administer justice under him; the last appeal is to him.” This is far from the way many earthly kings and rulers act, but it gives a very exact description of the way that King Jesus will administer the affairs of the Heavenly Kingdom, reigning over the earth in the next age.

Verse 2: “He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment”.

The NIV renders this verse: “He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice”. This seems to convey more the true sense of the verse, the word judgment in the Scriptures often seems to convey the thought of justice. This verse links with **Verse 4: “He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.”** Verses 12-14 can also be taken with these two verses – **“For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight.”**

The hallmark of Christ’s thousand year reign will be justice and righteousness, it will be an equitable reign, completely impartial. That would seem to be the reason that the poor and needy are especially mentioned here, these are the ones that find it hard to obtain justice today if they go to a court of Law. The rich and powerful have the influence and money behind them to engage the best legal counsel with the result that so very often the verdict is not a just one. Our passage is telling us that this will not be the case when Christ and the Church are judging the earth, what we might call the lower strata of society will be treated equally with those who are better educated and more polished. The question could be asked: “will there be any poor in the Millennium?” Most certainly the end result will be no more poor and needy, but we could envisage that it will take quite some time for this to be completely achieved, so at least in the early stages of the Reign we would still have this class, especially would this be true of the spiritual poor and needy which no doubt would be included in these verses.

Verse 3 “The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.”

These are not the literal mountains and hills, but the governments, the mountains being the larger governments, those influential and powerful today, the hills the smaller ones. These will now be righteous governments, because Christ has taken them over, as we see in Rev 11:15 - *“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of*

his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” They will be under the control of Christ’s appointed rulers. The Kingdoms will bring peace, in complete contrast to the way it is today and the way it has been throughout most of the history of this world, the governments have brought more wars than peace. The way it is today is shown in Joel 3:9-10 - *“Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.”*

The way it is going to be at that day, the time when this prophecy is to be fulfilled is shown in Isa 2:4 - *“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”* Verses 2-3 of the same chapter also link in with our verse 3 . Isa 2:2-3, reads - *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”* These words are repeated in Micah 4:1,2, showing their importance in the Lord’s sight.

We note that Christ’s Kingdom is to be established in the top of the mountains. What does this mean? The top of a literal mountain is its highest point, so this means that Christ’s Kingdom is to be established in the highest point of the kingdoms or the nations of this world, the highest point would be the governmental level, and these governments will come under the control of Christ’s Kingdom. None will be allowed to have an administrative part in any of the governments unless approved of by Christ’s Kingdom. We think of the world as being very evil today, and the Scriptures show that it is to become even more so as we near the end of the age; nevertheless there are still many good people in the world who are helpful, ready to assist and would be only too pleased to have a part in the governmental work of the next age. There will be many levels of authority in Christ’s Kingdom. God Himself of course is the highest authority, the next authority is the Lord Jesus whom God has appointed to rule on His behalf, as He says in Psalm 2:6 - *“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.”*

Then will come Christ’s Body members, followed by the Great Multitude, then the Ancient Worthies, also the sifted and purified nation of fleshly Israel, termed also “the holy remnant” and these are followed by those

of a right heart condition out of the gentiles. We have our Lord's words in Matt. 8:11-12, - "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This could have a primary or first fulfillment during the Gospel Age with the selection of the Church out of the gentiles; these will serve together with the Ancient Worthies in that same Kingdom, the Church in the heavenly phase and the Ancient Worthies in the earthly phase, both sitting down together as it were, but it could also have another fulfillment in the Kingdom Age. Some have suggested that sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob means learning from them. Most certainly, the world will have a lot to learn in the coming age, but we would suggest the thought is that of ruling with the Ancient Worthies. We note Jesus' words in Matt. 8:12 that the children of the Kingdom were to be cast out. He is speaking of the great bulk of the nation of Israel. Jesus would not have been saying that these were being cast out so far as their opportunity of being citizens in the Kingdom is concerned, but rather, because of their wrong heart condition they would be denied any position of authority, while many from the gentiles will be granted the privilege of service.

At that Day the governments of all the nations will be righteous, they will be under the control of Christ and His Kingdom. So we can see that they will be instrumental in bringing the blessings of the New Age to their citizens. Several passages convey this thought, one is Isa 55:10-12 - "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Notice especially verse 12, here we have the mountains and hills mentioned again, and they break forth into singing, showing the joy that there is to be among the nations at that time, so different from the way it is today.

We find a beautiful passage in Joel 3:16-19 – "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall

come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." Here in verse 18 we have the same thought, the blessings flowing from the mountains, the new wine would be the best wine that was kept to the last, as pictured at the marriage feast in Cana (John 2:10). The governor of the marriage feast is speaking to the bridegroom: "(he) saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

We could link this in with Matt 9:17 - "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." The new wine at that time would have represented the new doctrines brought to light by our Lord, so then the new wine that the kingdoms are to drop down would represent the full revealing of God's Divine Plan in all its full glory and beauty, showing the blessed opportunity for all who have ever lived, a Plan which truly honours our Heavenly Father and shows Him to be indeed a God of Love. This indeed would be new wine, new doctrine to the majority of earth's inhabitants.

Verses 5-7: "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

The words as long as the sun and moon endureth would mean forever. The word "fear" is from the Hebrew word "Yare" which means "fear" and also "reverence", all those that are found worthy of everlasting life will reverence God forever. We have no need to fear Him except of course a fear of displeasing Him. But His enemies as mentioned in **Verse 9** certainly have need to fear Him, these will lick the dust, meaning they will go into second death. The word "fear" is mentioned in many places in the Scriptures. It is a warning to those who willingly remain evil doers and refuse to reform when given full opportunity. **Verse 7** says: "the righteous shall flourish", just the opposite of the Gospel Age, where the righteous suffer persecution and evildoers seem to flourish. We would suspect that at heart many evildoers are unhappy people, having very little peace and contentment. A nice passage that harmonizes with our Psalm is Deut 32:1-2 - "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:"

Verse 6: “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.”

We have a very poetic and picturesque verse here, we can all envisage rain gently falling on mown grass and the pleasant aroma coming from it. Here we have a beautiful picture of the abundance of blessings that are to flow out to all the humble and submissive of all mankind. We understand the grass to represent the ordinary, everyday people of the earth. We have a very similar worldly expression today when speaking of the common people, who are referred to as ‘grassroots’ in contrast to those in authority, the wealthy and influential. The thought that grass represents people is brought out in the closing words of **Verse 16** of our Psalm. It reads: **“...and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth”**. We note that the showers come down on mown grass, it has been suggested this means ‘shorn of any encumbrances’, perhaps also shorn of the idea of self importance, of pride and arrogance. God rejects, even hates this type of person. This is a human trait which we must all overcome, if we are to receive God’s approval. In the next age all must be shorn in this sense before they can receive the showers of blessing.

Verse 8: “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”

This is just a way of saying, the whole earth, all will be under His control. Psalm 2:8 uses similar language - *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”* We get the same thought again in Zech. 9:10, - *“And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.”*

Verse 9: “They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; his enemies shall lick the dust.”

We have already referred to the latter portion of this verse regarding His enemies. The first part of this verse refers to those that dwell in the wilderness, bowing before Him. This is obviously speaking of a separate class of people, it has been suggested, those outside of the pale of Christendom. That would seem to be the correct thought, they would include atheists, agnostics, the many heathen religions. These are in the condition of spiritual wilderness, as the Hebrew word has the meaning of ‘a dry, waterless place’.

Verses 10,11: “The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.”

These verses show the completeness of Christ’s authority over the whole earth, all are going to be submissive to Him, the kings and rulers, those in authority, they are even going to bring gifts! We think of Psalm 45:6 which shows who is being spoken of here - *“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.”* This verse is speaking of Christ and of the great authority the Heavenly Father has given Him. Hebrews 1:8 identifies Christ as the God in this Psalm, then verse 12 links in beautifully with our study. Psalm 45:12 - *“And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.”*

Verse 14: “He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.”

These are the poor and needy previously referred to, they that have experienced these things in their lives. Their blood would mean their life and would be precious in the sight of Christ.

Verse 15: “And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.”

Young’s Literal translation renders it more clearly - : *“And he liveth, and giveth to him of the gold of Sheba, And prayeth for him continually, All the day he doth bless him.”* The praise is to Christ for the mighty and wonderful works that He is carrying out during the Millennial Age. The verse commences with the words: “he shall live”. Who are the opening words of this verse referring to? Is it referring to the King that is Jesus, or to the poor and needy? The commentator Albert Barnes believes that it applies to the poor and needy and that the rest of the verse applies to Jesus. This seems correct, so then it is the poor and needy who are giving the gift of gold to Jesus and praying for Him and praising Him. Could the poor and needy make a gift of the gold of Sheba? We must bear in mind that this is symbolic gold, Jesus does not need gifts of literal gold. The gold obviously pictures something else. It has been suggested that it symbolizes obedience. Gold is one of the most costly items on earth, it is a substance most precious in the sight of men. Could it picture a full consecration to God, which most certainly would include obedience?

Under the Jewish Law the Israelites had to bring the very best animals for sacrifice, they had to be perfect without blemish and spot. Gold could picture the giving of our very best in GOD’s service, giving our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus first place in our life, using our best talent and ability in His service, giving our all, in this way giving of the symbolic gold of

Sheba. This of course is very true of the called out ones of the Gospel Age, but in the next age a full consecration will still be required as pictured by the Israelites selling all that they had, including themselves to Pharaoh in order to obtain the bread to enable them to live (Gen.47:13-25). Pharaoh is picturing God in this illustration.

Verse 16: “There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.”

This is a very interesting verse. The Hebrew word translated “handful” has three meanings which the Young’s Concordance gives as: “hand full, expansion, super abundance”. The suggestion has been made that the verse simply means that there will be an abundance of food available to all at that time, none will ever go hungry, none dying of starvation as it is the case in many parts of the globe today. As the setting of the Psalm is the Millennial Age, all this will most certainly be true. This understanding is taking a very literal view of the verse, whereas it seems more likely that it is symbolic. A handful of corn could be the correct meaning here, the clue is, that this corn is on the top of the mountains, not all over the earth as it would be if it simply pictured an abundance of food. It is in the top of the mountains, that is, in the top or the head of the kingdoms. This is the same Hebrew word discussed before regarding Isaiah and Micah. We would think that it has the same meaning here, again picturing Christ’s Kingdom, which as we saw, is established in the top of the mountains.

The word “top” here and in Isaiah and Micah is from the Hebrew word “rosh”, Young’s Concordance gives the meaning as “head” or “top”. It is translated in several different ways, “top” 75 times, but we note that it is translated “head” 349 times. A handful of corn would picture the rulers in the Kingdom, Jesus and the glorified Church. We think of our Master’s words in John 12:23-24 - *“And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit”*. Brother Meggison comments regarding verse 16 of our Psalm: “there shall be a handful of corn” (These are) the 144 000 grains from the one grain, Jesus Christ, the first fruits unto God from among men.’

The word corn in Psalm 72 means ‘corn, wheat’ or just ‘grain’. In John 12 Jesus is of course speaking of Himself and His coming death, followed by His glorification, He is saying that a literal grain of wheat must die when dropped into the soil, that is, decay away after it has nourished the new growth. It then brings forth much fruit; many, many grains of wheat. While Jesus

applies this illustration to Himself, the same principle applies to His Body Members, they are exhorted in many places to bring forth fruit now, in this life. But like their Master, it will be when they get to the other side of the veil that most fruit will be produced. Verse 16 of Psalm 72 says the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, that is, the fruitage of Christ and His Body Members is to shake like Lebanon, that is, like the trees of Lebanon. In biblical times Lebanon was heavily timbered with cedar trees. In our mind’s eye we can picture great forests of trees, all shaking and swaying in a strong breeze.

This pictures the great abundance of fruit that the Kingdom will produce, that is, Christ and His Church. What is the fruit that they are to produce? God said to Abraham: “in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed”. Christ and His Body is that Seed, so the fruit is the blessing of all mankind or in other words, completing the great Restitution work of the coming age. This is shown in the last words of our verse, which reads: “they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth”. They of the city are the redeemed of mankind in the next age, all the willing and obedient. The city is the Kingdom, the New Jerusalem as shown in Rev. 21:25 and 27 - *“And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.”* --- *“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”*

Verses 18-20: “Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

These verses picture the grand work of the Kingdom Age completed and 1 Cor 15:28 finally fulfilled, All in the whole universe are going to acknowledge the authority of our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, all will bow the knee to them then and give them the honour and glory due. This is when Romans 14:11 *“As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”* and Philippians 2:10 *“At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”* will have their complete fulfillment.

This is the glorious time we all long for. By the Lord’s strength and with His help and grace may we be accounted worthy to have a small part in the wonderful work of the coming Millennial Age that will bring about those happy conditions.

Amen and amen.
(GT1/04)

“UNANSWERED PRAYER”

What a unique privilege we have of being able to communicate with our Lord God through prayer at any time of day or night and in any and every place. Likewise all humanity, whether Jew or Gentile, has the privilege to pray to our heavenly Father but not all humanity has access to Jehovah’s presence. Many very good things have been spoken of and written about prayer. One outstanding fact is clear – prayer is the vital root of our Christian life. Prayer is just as needful for our spiritual existence as the air we breathe for the life of our fleshly bodies. We cannot survive spiritually without praying. To many people, prayer is a way of extreme supplication or vain repetition. It often becomes a necessity when sickness and difficulties prevail. When prayer is composed of empty words, void of sincerity and spoken as an obligation, then it is meaningless. Prayer should not be a formalised outline of words or a selfish demand for material advantage. It has been said that prayer is the heart’s sincere desire uttered or unexpressed by words. Prayer is the great honour and privilege of having access to the presence of God and having fellowship and communion with Him. A consecrated Christian’s prayer should express his or her gratitude and appreciation to God.

In the first book of Chronicles, Chapter 16, verse 29 we read: ‘Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.... worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.’ Many of the Bible’s great people have been men and women of prayers, but above them all stands Jesus, who always sought His heavenly Father’s presence in prayer. If Jesus in His perfection needed spiritual fellowship and communion with His Father, how much more we need this contact. Every trial of patience is an occasion to pray for the promised help; every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer that we be not high minded. Every service for truth becomes an occasion for prayers of thanks for the privilege of serving. We should pray for one another. Perhaps sometimes prayer may seem to us to be a one-way conversation, so it is very important to us to have answers from Jehovah, but at times it may seem that our prayers are not answered or even considered. Why is this so? What are the reasons for this? Let us look into the Bible for answers.

Watch and Pray

The apostle James writes about this subject in James 4:3: ‘You ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.’ Speaking on this subject of prayer, our Lord Jesus gave us some instruction recorded in Matthew 6: ³²For your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these

things, ³³but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.’ A prayer that will never be answered is a selfish prayer. There is much truth in the saying that if your prayer is faithless, your prayer will be also fruitless. We all remember the well-known passage from the Holy Bible which is found in Matthew 26:41: ‘Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ Watching and praying! What an excellent and beautiful combination! The Manna for 3rd November comments on this subject: ‘Some make the mistake of praying without watching; others make the mistake of watching without praying; but the safe and only proper method is that which our Lord directed, to combine the two. We are to watch, and be on our guard against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and the devil. We are to watch for all the encouragements of the Lord’s Word, the evidence of their fulfillment, the signs that betoken His presence and the great changes of dispensations just at hand. We are to watch for everything that will strengthen us in faith and hope and loyalty and love and while watching we are to pray without ceasing. We are to pray together as the Lord’s people; we are to pray in our homes, as families; we are to pray in secret, in private.’

Having an element of watchfulness in our prayers means to look for answers to all our prayers. The responses to our prayers may come in various providential circumstances. We know that our first parents, Adam and Eve, had very special communication with God in the Garden of Eden. They heard His voice. Faithful men during Old Testament times had communication with God through dreams, visions and talking with angels. Moses was one of the great faithful servants of old. He had a close relationship with God through his prayers. All of his sincere and humble prayers were heard by God. Moses’ prayers pleased God, but not all of his prayers were answered in the way Moses would have liked. How could this be, that Moses’ most fervent prayers were unanswered? Why did God not fulfil His most humble and obedient servant’s sincere desire? What did Moses pray about? Let us read Deuteronomy, Chapter:3 25-27 ²⁵I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. ²⁶But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. ²⁷Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.’

Moses' Prayer

Moses now was 120 years of age. He had spent 40 years of his life as an Egyptian prince in the Court of Egypt where he was trained as a general and a ruler. For the next 40 years of his life, Moses lived as a shepherd in the wilderness. Moses loved the Lord and he faithfully believed in God's promises. He loved the Lord's people, who composed the Israel nation, because he was one of them. For this reason, Moses preferred to live with his own people, God's favored people, rather than to live in prosperity and fame amongst the Egyptian enemies and oppressors. The 40 years of Moses' wilderness experience appear to be invaluable to him, enabling him to transform the knowledge gained from his experiences into strong and deep belief in God and respect for God's promises. And so it is with us. Jehovah sometimes works by natural means to prepare the instruments for His holy service. In the final 40 years of Moses' life, Moses used his knowledge and faith gained from his experiences to serve his people. He shared the position of leader, lawgiver, prophet, prince and king. As the work his Lord intended Moses to do was coming to a close, we read the account of Moses' prayer in which he glorifies God, expressing his gratitude for all the richness of the blessings he has received. Moses asked God to fulfil the greatest of his wishes, his heart's only desire, to see the beauty of the promised land - a wonderland of God's creation, a paradise too good to be true, a country of milk and honey. But this time God refused to answer Moses' prayer.

God's decision did not satisfy Moses' longing to enter the promised land. His heart was overcome with sadness. What had Moses done to deserve such a harsh punishment from God? Indeed, God had His reason. As the Israelites travelled through the wilderness they stationed themselves in Kadesh, a little town. Here in Kadesh there was no water. Exhausted and thirsty, the nation began to grumble and complain against Moses and Aaron. Moses entered the tent of the Tabernacle, knelt down with his face to the ground, and in fervent prayer presented his petition to the Lord God. There was a complaint in the community against Moses for lack of drink of the fruit of the vine, but above all for the lack of water. Even the livestock began to die from dehydration. In Numbers 20:8 we read the words God spoke to Moses: 'Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.' Being fully aware of God's will, Moses and Aaron gathered all the Israelites to the rock and, holding the rod in his hand, Moses said to the nation, ¹⁰'Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?' ¹¹And Moses lifted

up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also ¹²And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.'

The smiting of the rock at Kadesh is actually the second smiting recorded in the Bible. The first smiting had taken place at Rephidim where Moses followed all the Lord's instructions. This is recorded in Exodus 17:1-7. It was the result of the **second** smiting that disqualified Moses from leading the people of Israel into the land of promise. Let us now examine the lesson to be learned in the account of the smiting of the rock. To begin with, Moses represents Jesus Christ, Who is the literal true rock. Just as the rock was smitten, so was our Lord Jesus. He was to be smitten for our sins, but smitten only once. As a result of this smiting at Calvary, the water of life gushed forth for all true Israelites. Moses did not follow God's instruction and did not obey God's will in performing the impossible in unfavourable circumstances. God wanted Moses to provide the Israelites with water. However, before this was to take place, God desired that Moses honour Him, that Moses acknowledge God's name and His greatness, and in so doing show his faith and trust in God's power as well as strengthening his own people's faith and trust in God. Despite Moses' misconduct, God endorsed Moses' authority before all the people of Israel. From the people's point of view, bringing out the water was a blessing, but from God's point of view Moses' behaviour resulted in the unanswered prayer.

Persisting in Prayer

In this account from Moses' life, we have found a beautiful lesson for us, as the Lord's people. Through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord has drawn us out of the bondage of Egypt, which represents the world, into a state of separateness as typified in the wilderness condition. Being set apart, we are taught how to recognise God's will and how to glorify our Heavenly Father and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Similar to Moses' experience, it would seem that sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers. God hears all of them, but He does not answer all of them. If we don't receive immediate answers to our prayers and feel abandoned by God, it is helpful to reflect upon the attitude of the woman of Sidon. Her example encourages us to persist in our prayers. That particular woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter and Jesus, refusing to perform any miracle, answered her, 'O woman, your faith is great; be it as you desire.' And from that very moment her daughter was healed. We can read that in Matthew 15:28. We should always

pray until we truly believe that God's will will be done. We should keep on praying, firmly believing that without a doubt God will provide us with an answer to that which is our heart's desire. The Lord has His own time to answer prayer and He may wish to test our faith.

If we feel that we are losing our faith and losing our hope because of what seems like no answer from our Heavenly Father, our prayers will consequently begin to not be grounded in faith. Jesus' words teach us that if our prayers are not grounded in faith, with full assurance of the result, then we cannot receive that for which we ask. Let us remember that believing is receiving. Have we also smitten the rock of Kadesh without glorifying God, but wanting and doing our own will? Do we expect to be praised before men when presenting God's teachings? Do we sincerely worship God, obeying His instructions? Are we helpful and co-operative to our class elders and deacons? Just like Moses, our teachers of the word of Truth have a great responsibility. They might encounter ex-

periences similar to Moses. Servants of the Lord should be fully aware to ensure that all their words and actions are pure and in agreement with the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

When Moses' work was accomplished, the Lord led him up Mount Pisgah's summit. From this point Moses saw much with his natural eyes, but he also saw much more with his eyes of faith. He saw God's promises made to Israel through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses did according to the word of God; however before his death Moses gathered representatives from the twelve tribes of Israel and addressed them with all warnings and encouragement in the Song of Moses, which is well-known to us and recorded in Deuteronomy 32. Moses' song is a beautiful prayer and a prophecy for the future, even for now, expressing glory and adoration to our Heavenly Father. This prayer of Moses will soon be answered and it will bring earthly and heavenly blessings. May all our prayers be heard and answered by our Heavenly Father; this is my prayer for us all. Amen. (TZ:1/04)

“THE PROPHET MALACHI”

Malachi was a messenger of God. In the Dictionary of the Bible he is called 'the seal of the prophets' and his prophecies constitute the closing of the book of the Canon. We are told that he was a prophet, that is, one through whom the Divine will and purpose are made known and who is a "spokesman" for God, a man of God with an inspired message.

At the time Malachi prophesied, a deplorable situation existed amongst the priests. Contrary to the law, they were accepting lame, blind and sick animals for the sacrifice on Jehovah's altar (Malachi 1:8). They failed to give proper direction and instruction to the people, causing many to stumble (Malachi 2:7,8). When judging matters, they showed partiality (Malachi 2:9). All of this had had a bad effect on the Israelites in general, causing them to view Jehovah's service as being of little value (Malachi 3:14,15). This is apparent from the fact that Israelites did not support the Temple by paying tithes. So far had they fallen from the devotion of Jehovah that apparently they were divorcing their wives to marry women worshiping false gods. Also adultery, lying, fraud and oppression came to exist among them in Israel. For this reason Jehovah gave them advice, warning of His coming to His Temple for judgment (Malachi 3:1-6). At the same time, He urged wrongdoers to repent saying, Return to Me and I will return to you (Malachi 3:7). It is fairly clear that Malachi wrote after 538BC. Malachi, messenger or angel, was the last of the minor prophets, and the writer of the book of his prophecies which comprises four chapters

Let us look at Malachi 3:17 – 'They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.' The heartening words of this prophecy, addressed to Israel, follow a reproof of their wayward and evil course and a warning of the just retribution that must surely follow if they do not repent and turn to God. Malachi was the last of the Hebrew prophets. His name signifies the messenger of Jehovah. He was the last messenger to Israel previous to John the Baptist, the immediate forerunner of Christ, the Great Messenger of Jehovah's covenant. And well would it have been for Israel had they heeded the warning and prepared their hearts to receive the Lord's Anointed. But to this day, with the exception of a small number, they have failed to do so. The promised Messenger, John the Baptist, came to prepare the way of the Lord, preaching repentance and remission of sin, and announcing the event of the Great Messenger of the covenant made with Abraham that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed (Gen.22:18).

But when the Lord suddenly came to His Temple, the Jewish Temple, they were unprepared to receive Him. They were unprepared to recognise the King in His beauty, or to stand the test of character applied to prove their worthiness for the blessings promised in the Abrahamic covenant. Only a few, a small number, were found ready. In meekness and in humility, they inclined their hearts to the testimony of the prophets, of John the Baptist, of the teachings and the works of Jesus of Nazareth, and of the voice from heaven which declared,

‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ Such become inheritors of the Abrahamic covenant, but the nation as a whole, the natural seed of Abraham, to whom pertained the promises, lost their blessing, and received instead the fiery baptism of trouble (Malachi 4:1) which in AD70 utterly destroyed their national existence, overthrew the holy city, destroyed the Temple and scattered them as fugitives among the nations where they have been hated and persecuted unto this day.

It is clear that the prophecy as addressed to Israel applied to them primarily. It is also manifestly shown by the Lord and the Apostles that it had a much wider application; that in a fuller sense it was addressed to spiritual Israel, of which fleshly Israel was a type, and that it applies to the Second Advent of the Great Messenger of the covenant whose work will fully accomplish all these predictions in the largest and fullest sense. Therefore, we recognise the prophecy by Malachi as addressed to both the houses of Israel – to all Israel after the flesh towards the close of the Jewish dispensation, and also to all spiritual Israel towards the close of the Gospel dispensation. To the latter as well as to the former, therefore, are all the warnings of this prophecy, and well would it be for them if they would heed the warning but, like the prototype, they will not do so, only a small number listen to and heed the word of the Lord. To them, therefore, belong the blessings of His special favour (Malachi 3:16,17).

In Chapter 3:1 the messenger who was to prepare the way of the Lord at the Second Advent, the anti-type of Elias, John the Baptist, was the church militant - the church on earth whose mission has been to preach among all the nations the gospel of the kingdom and the Second Coming of Christ, the King, in power and great glory. But this testimony of the church, like that of John the Baptist, has failed to bring peace and goodwill among men. Consequently, the predicted curse as mentioned in Chapter 4:5,6, the great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, is about to follow. This true church in the flesh, in the spirit and power of Elias, has been the forerunner of Christ at His Second Advent, and even now we have the privilege of realising that this glorious Messenger of the covenant in Whom we delight, has come to the Temple, the elect church. By the sure word of prophecy, we recognise His presence, and in Malachi 3:2-5 we read: ‘2But who may abide the day of his coming?’ He is coming in judgment for He is now the judge of all the earth. All judgment is committed unto Him. Blessed, indeed, are all those who hearts are fully consecrated to God, and faithful, and who are therefore approved of Him. Yet even these shall be tried as gold in the fire until all the dross is eliminated and the Refiner can see reflected in them His own glorious image. Then, indeed, are the sacrifices of such pleasant unto the Lord.

Chapter 3:5 declares, ‘I will come near to you’ – to the great systems which comprise nominal spiritual Israel, Christendom so called, - ‘to judgment’ – and who cannot see in the doctrinal conflicts and in the severe handling of criticism of the creeds of Christendom today that judgment has already begun, ‘and I will be a swift witness against’ those who obey the teachings and doctrines of devils in the name of Christianity and thereby plunge men deeper and deeper into the sin of degradation, ‘and against adulterers’ – those who were claiming to be the virgin bride of Christ are living in unholy alliance with the world, whether they be as individuals or religious systems professedly Christian yet joined to and dependent upon the civil powers, ‘and against false swearers’ – those who have made a covenant with the Lord of their entire consecration to Him and yet have been unfaithful, ‘and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages’ – the judgment will indeed be a close one, for every work is to be brought into judgment with every secret thing. This is the significance even now of the turning and examination of every false dogma, civil and religious, nor will it end until it has exposed in all the detail every evil thing.

The few among the masses of the unfaithful who do reverence the Lord and walk in His way are His jewels, and shall be spared in the evil day that is coming upon the whole world. Not only will they be spared, but they will be the Lord’s peculiar treasure. ‘They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up My jewels’ (Malachi 3:17). To this faithful class, now gathered out of the masses of nominal spiritual Israel, as well as to a similar class gathered out of the nominal fleshly Israel in the harvest of the Jewish Age, belong the glorious promises of this prophecy. The remnant of fleshly Israel, including the Apostles, and all the faithful of the early church, the consecrated and faithful, will together constitute Christ’s body with the Head and will be kings and priests unto God, the seed of Abraham in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed during the Millennial reign. ‘If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise’ as it is written in Galatians 3:29.

In Proverbs 3:6 we read: ‘In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths’ and in verse 5: ‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own understanding.’ This is the blessed privilege of all the children of God, and years of experience of many precious saints testify that the Lord is always faithful to those who put their trust in Him. Look for His leading and gratefully acknowledge His faithfulness. Let those who would prove His faithfulness trust Him more and more and cease to lean on their own understanding, and they will be brought to an increasing realisation of the heavenly Father’s love, and care, and providence, and into a closer bond of fellowship with Him. (ZC:1/04)

“THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”

(Acts 2:16-21, Joel 2:28-32)

From the Scriptures we learn that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power or influence of God shed forth in the accomplishment of His designs to have His kingdom established both in heaven and earth. This power was employed in the very beginning. In the narrative of the events of creation, it is said in Gen 1:2 – “*and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the earth.*” The pre-human Jesus, the firstborn of every creature, became the agent of Almighty God in the whole process of creation. God’s almighty power has always operated through His only-begotten Son. The apostle John clearly so understood it when, in commencing his gospel, he says that all things were made through the agency of the Word, God’s beloved Son. The writer to the Hebrews states the same thing in Chap 1:2 – through His Son, God “*made the worlds*”.

In Old Testament times the prophets were guided by the Holy Spirit of God, and many times in the New Testament we read of things that happened as fulfilling the mind of God as foretold in the Old Testament prophecies. In those times God’s almighty power or spirit was exercised to raise up kings and to put them down. In New Testament times, this power of God has been cleverly counterfeited through the agency of Satan, and it requires consecrated effort to discern what is truly put forth by the Holy Spirit of God and what is cunningly devised by the counterfeit of Satan to lead astray.

From the prophecy of Joel we learn that an unusual outpouring of God’s Spirit was to take place and to accomplish certain results. This was not only in Joel but was hinted at in other O.T. prophecies. All God’s true people have noted these prophecies and have wondered how they would be fulfilled, so when at Pentecost unusual happenings occurred, as recorded in Acts 2, the people were amazed as to what it all meant. Their natural minds found it hard for them to understand and since they were acquainted with what drunkenness did amongst men, some saw it as something of that kind.

But now it was time for this prophecy to be made known and Peter was chosen as the mouthpiece. When he had finished speaking, most of the people believed that these events must refer to what Joel in his time had foretold, as we read in Acts 2:37 – “*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*”

The account of the events at Pentecost is in Acts 2:1-

12, and reads as follows. - “*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language, and they were amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans. And how hear we every man in his own tongue, wherein we were born?....we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?*”

When we look carefully at what Joel said, we see that the promise was that this powerful Holy Spirit was to be poured out on all flesh. Certainly all true followers of Jesus would freely admit that they share, and have shared, in the blessings of the Holy Spirit sent down at Pentecost. However, because it is so evident that it has not been poured out upon all people, then this prophecy cannot be applied generally to our day and the Gospel Age. There must be a future demonstration that will bless all people. For this reason, some tell us that Pentecost was only for present day believers and that the word of mankind must wait for a further demonstration in days to come.

To my understanding, the complete fulfillment will occur without any remarkable happenings as at Pentecost. In an endeavour to make this point, let us review some of the stately workings of our God during times past. There was a time when mankind lived apparently as they wanted without any real intervention by the great Creator God; He will deal justly with these in a future day. But eventually through Moses, God instituted a Law to make a change in the way that people lived. However, all did not accept this arrangement and God never compelled everyone to do so.

The world went on and, in due course, Christ came at His first advent. This changed things again, inasmuch that the Law was made redundant for those seeking God and His righteousness. At that time, God did not initially turn to all the world to be profited but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, the Jewish frater-

nity. The Gentiles were not at that time involved and God gave them no special attention until later.

With every change of dispensation, however, God always has someone ready to herald the change. In the days when there was no compulsion, there were always a few who sought the true God, even though they were not the special ones at that time. It was so in the time of the Law, when Gentiles were not specially regarded, that there were Gentiles doing their best to work out how to know and serve God's righteousness. When God's time clock struck again, they were ready for God to deal with them. Cornelius was one such, and God used him to be one of the first to make the change known.

So with this brief lead up, I suggest that while God's Holy Spirit has not yet profited all mankind, in due course it will. At Pentecost it was poured for all flesh; it was God's intention that all should ultimately share in its beneficence. Rotherham's Emphasised Bible seems to have the right thought when it translates Peter's declaration at Pentecost – "this is the beginning of that which was spoken of by Joel." Since the Spirit was shed forth at Pentecost, it has been the means for taking out a people for God's name as prophesied, and when that work is finished, there will be those ready for the continuation of the work commenced at Pentecost.

This will quite naturally begin to flow into people's lives and hearts without any further great demonstration. The end result of this will be a "new heavens and new earth" – God's glorious purpose as recorded in the closing verses of the Book of Revelation. There will be no more waiting for another dispensational change – "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is thirsty say, Come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," Blessing to all by God's Holy Spirit will not be universally received but that which was poured out at Pentecost will have truly reached to all people.

Another has suggested, concerning what Peter mentioned further in his reference to the quotation from Joel's prophecy, that when the Holy Spirit's power has been poured out, the youthful will prophesy, as well as the older ones. Prophesy means to expound publicly and scrutiny of the word "young" suggests that it may not refer always to those young in age, but to the less mature. These would be those who previously had not been prominent in such work; these see visions, not necessarily of the future, but of the past also. They begin to understand Old Testament prophecies that before were obscure to them. After Pentecost, did not this happen? How powerfully men began to speak out,

not famous men, but those labeled "ignorant and unlearned". Their preaching was so powerful and convincing that those who became jealous tried to stop them, but in vain.

Looking at Acts 2:20, we see, apart from the signs and wonders referred to in Verse 19, other different happenings to take place after Pentecost. These would deteriorate with time and the initial powerful effect of the gospel through the Holy Spirit would lose its impact. The Sun which represents God's truth would be turned into darkness. According to the Concordance, darkness as used here refers to all kinds of spiritual darkness – physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral. Over the gospel age, these forms of darkness have developed, and it seems to many today that it is rapidly increasing; evil powers seem more and more to be dominating our world.

Concordances suggest that the Moon represents the Law. God's righteous law is turned to blood – without blood there is no life. Vine suggests that Revelation 12:1 can be considered here; in Chapter 12:1, the woman described is understood to represent the true church (as I see it), clothed with the Sun and with the Moon under her feet. She stands on the foundation of God's righteous law and Vine points out the deterioration that has taken place and continues to do so. God's righteousness, as pointed out in His word, is set at nought, no light is discerned there; God's righteousness no longer has power.

Such is the state of affairs prior to the coming of the awesome (AV – notable) day of the Lord. Rotherham is probably nearer the mark, changing the word "awesome" to "the great and manifest day of the Lord". So the account in Acts 2 has been telling us of events that are to occur before the glorious Kingdom of God and His Christ is ushered in.

(W A Smith)

**"Surely I come quickly. Amen, even so come,
Lord Jesus". (Rev 22:20)**

**Let thy Spirit, Lord, go with us,
Be our comfort and our stay;
Grateful praise to thee we render,
For the joy we feel today.**

**May thy Spirit dwell within us,
May our souls thy temples be,
May we tread the path to glory,
Led and guided still by thee.**

Hymns of Dawn 84

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT-FAITH

In Galatians 5:22-23 the Apostle Paul lists faith as a fruit of the Spirit. Some other Scriptures indicate that faith is a gift of the Spirit rather than a fruit. Gifts and fruits differ in that gifts do not require development whereas fruits take time to develop and mature.

1 Corinthians 12: 8-9 is one Scripture that refers to faith as a gift: *“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; ... to another faith by the same Spirit.”* Likewise Romans 12: 3: *“... according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith”* while Ephesians 2:8 says *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”* In what sense then is faith a fruit as well as a gift?

Philippians 1: 27 infers that faith is a fruit that requires our attention and effort to develop: *“... that ye stand fast ... striving together for the faith of the gospel.”* The concept of “striving” infers that action is required on the believer’s part, and therefore it is appropriate to refer to faith as a fruit.

In 2 Thessalonians 1: 3 the Apostle Paul says *“We are bound to thank God always for you ... because that your faith groweth exceedingly.”* The thought of faith growing is consistent with the concept of faith being a fruit. Consequently the Scriptures refer to faith as both a “gift” and a “fruit”. To fully appreciate the concept of faith being a fruit we need to understand the nature of faith.

The nature of faith

The Greek word translated *faith* in Galatians 5:22 is *“Pistis”* (Strong’s # 4102). In part, Dr. Strong defines *“pistis”* as *“persuasion, i.e. credence, (morally) conviction of religious truth ...”* This definition relates *faith* to a person’s mind; being persuaded (or convicted) that something is truth is a phenomenon of the mind.

In Rom 10:17 the Apostle Paul writes *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* God has given us His Word, an inspired collection of historical accounts, prophecies and promises. As our knowledge and understanding of His Word increases so does the depth of our conviction – our faith – and it is in this sense that our faith is a fruit. This understanding does not deny that He has given us His Spirit, and that His Spirit is necessary to understand His Word. (1 Cor. 2:14)

Other scholars translate *pistis* as *faithfulness* instead of *faith*. The 1901 American Standard Version, the New

International Version, and The New Revised Standard Version all translate *pistis* in Galatians 5:22 as *faithfulness*. Faithfulness relates to a person’s actions, and is a higher concept than faith. Faithfulness requires not only being persuaded that something is true, but that the persuasion is held so firmly that it controls or governs the believer’s actions.

The relationship of the inward conviction (faith) to the outward manifestation (faithfulness) is explained in James 2:14-26: *“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? ... If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works ... Faith without works is dead ... Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? ... Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only ... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*

Faith necessary for the overcomer

Our faith is part of our “armour” (Eph. 6), it is *“the victory that overcometh the world”* (1 John 5:4), and is required before we can be at peace with our Creator. (Rom 5:1) Its development is our ongoing task as we seek to *“work out our own salvation...”* (Phil. 2:12) The Scriptures abound with exhortations regarding the exercise of our faith (i.e. our faithfulness, our outward witness), e.g. Rom Chaps 6; 12, 13; 1 Cor 5; 2 Cor. Chaps. 4, 7; Eph. 4; Phil. 2; Col. 3

**O, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.**

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