

April to June 2010

“Trust in the Name of the Lord”

by
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About the Author



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THURSDAY, APRIL 1

ISAIAH 50:1-11

ISAIAH 50:10

“ ... let him trust in the
name of the LORD.”

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

If you are walking in darkness with many others and are feeling your way to a destination which you have never been to, can you trust yourself or others to lead you there? It is foolish to do so. You need a person who has been there or who knows the way and has a light/lamp to lead you there. Unfortunately, many in this world of darkness of sin, deceit, and falsehood, still trust in themselves or in human leaders to feel their way to the Truth or to Heaven outside of the Lord Jesus Christ and God’s Word! Many believe that all religions are good and can lead all to Heaven! They are deceiving themselves or are being deceived without realising that *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”* (Jer 17:9).

The Lord Jesus confirms, *“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”* (John 8:12) and *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”* (John 14: 6), and *“Thy (God’s) word is truth”* (John 17:17); and God’s Word is *“a lamp... and a light”* (Ps 119:105). Without the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and God’s Word, we have neither light nor salvation!

We must know the LORD personally and trust in Him, in His Name and in His Word with complete dependence and submission even when we walk in the darkness of our spiritual warfare, difficulties, or trials. *“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God”* (Isa 50:10).

THOUGHT: Trust in the LORD, in His Name and in His Word!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me trust in Thee, in Thy Name and in Thy Word.

CHRIST LOVED ME AND DIED FOR ME

Today we commemorate the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, who “*bare our sins in his own body on the tree*” (1 Peter 2:24), even “*the sins of the whole world*” (1 John 2:2).

Many argue, “I do not think my life is so sinful. I have never harmed nor murdered anyone, nor committed adultery, etc.” However, God knows what you think, desire, or plan to do, and God will even condemn sins that are in your heart and mind. If you fail to thank, love, worship, and glorify God, your Creator, it is sin already (Matt 22: 37; Rom 1: 21-25). If you embrace sinful lusts or hatred in your heart, it is sin already (Matt 5:28; 1 John 3:15), not to mention your failure to keep God’s commandments, to believe in Him and His Word, and to do what is right and good. “*Sin is the transgression of the law*” (1 John 3:4), and “*whatsoever is not of faith is sin*” (Rom 14:23), and “*All unrighteousness is sin*” (1 John 5:17), and “*to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*” (James 4:17). God’s Word confirms, “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom 3:23). Consequently, “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*” (Rev 21:8).

Because of love, Christ humbly came and died for mankind and rose again for their justification (Rom 4:25). However, not all mankind are saved automatically. Only he who believes and receives the Lord Jesus’ love and death for himself personally is saved, “*the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*” (Gal 2:20). Have you done that?

THOUGHT: Christ “*loved me, and gave himself for me.*”

PRAYER: O LORD, how I thank Thee for having loved me and died for me!

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-20

REVELATION 5:9

“ ... redeemed us
to God by thy blood.”

I AM THE LORD'S

Many profess that they have believed and received Jesus Christ's love and death for themselves personally, but their lives are still their own. They still speak, listen to, watch, read, write, or do what they like regardless of God's will or God's Word, even in His service! Have they been redeemed? Our Lord Jesus Christ confirms: *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”* (Matt 7:21). Christ's blood-shedding death on the cross is a costly price to *“redeem us from all iniquity”* (Titus 2:14) and *“from the curse of the law”* (Gal 3:13) and to redeem us to God by His blood (Rev 5:9). If we have truly received Christ's love and death for ourselves personally, it means that Christ has paid the price to redeem us to God. Therefore, we are not our own, but the Lord's: *“ye are not your own... For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's”* (1 Cor 6:19-20). If I am truly the Lord's, my life, my heart, my mind, my memory, my skills, my time, my body and all that I have must be the Lord's. I have to use them to do God's will and to glorify Him alone. This will be the fruit showing that I have been redeemed: *“And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again”* (2 Cor 5:15).

Have you been redeemed? Are you truly the Lord's? Are you living for the Lord? *“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's”* (Rom 14:8).

THOUGHT: Jesus Christ died to redeem me, so I am His.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me live for Thee and for Thy glory.

JESUS CHRIST, A NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME

To save mankind (including you and me), the loving and merciful God gave His only begotten Son, who is co-equal with God, the Creator, who “*made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*” (Phil 2:7-8). Truly, “*God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Rom 5:8).

However, unlike other religious leaders who have died and are still in their grave, the Lord Jesus Christ was risen from the dead on the third day, showing that He is “*the Son of God with power*” (Rom 1:4). Jesus Christ’s resurrection is vital for our faith, justification, salvation, victory and our future resurrection (Rom 4:25; 8: 28-39; 1 Cor 15:14, 20-23). Moreover, “*God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name*” (Phil 2:9)! Let us ponder over Jesus’ name, which is above every name!

Nowadays, many take Jesus’ name lightly or in vain. Many even blaspheme His holy name. But some day when our King of kings and Lord of lords comes back with all His glory, majesty and power: “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father*” (Phil 2:10-11).

And in the meantime? “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*” (Rom 10:9).

THOUGHT: “*God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*” (Acts 2:36)

PRAYER: O Jesus Christ, Thou art my Lord and my Saviour!

DO YOU TRULY FEAR THE LORD?

“Who is among you that **feareth the LORD**, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God” (Isa 50:10). What does it mean to fear the LORD?

Many assume that they fear God, but they worship Him according to their own ideas, their own understanding, and in their own ways mixed with worldly values, methods, music, manners or customs! They even promote ecumenical mindset and compromisingly worship God together with all kinds of people from different faiths, beliefs, unbiblical doctrines, idolatry, etc. Like the mixed people in Samaria after the people of Israel (Northern Kingdom) were taken in captivity to Assyria due to their disobedience, wickedness and idolatry, “*they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence*” (2 Kings 17:32-33). They did not care whether their religious leaders truly feared God, or whether they believed, knew and kept God’s Word. They were only afraid of God because “*the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them*” (v 25). Actually, “*they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded*” (v 34).

Many are also scared of God but do not obey Him, like the lazy servant, who hid his talent and said to Him, “*For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man*” (Luke 19:21).

When we say that we fear God, we must truly honour Him with our faith, reverence, obedience, dependence and submission according to His Word.

THOUGHT: Do I truly fear the LORD?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me truly fear Thee and keep Thy Word.

TUESDAY, APRIL 6

MALACHI 2:1-9

MATTHEW 6:9

"Hallowed be thy name."

TO FEAR GOD IS TO FEAR AND GLORIFY HIS NAME

Atheists and agnostics do not care about God's existence, God's Word or God's name. So it is not surprising that they will blaspheme God's name due to the corrupt, sinful and rebellious nature of human beings. However, it is sad that many who profess that they believe in God are doing what they like regardless of God's name and God's Word. His holy name is "*profaned*," "*defiled*" (Eze 36:22; 43:8) and "*blasphemed*" (Isa 52:5; Rom 2:24) through what they speak, preach, sing, watch, listen to, write, or do contrary to God's Word. It is even worse when "Christian scholars" arrogantly criticise God's Word and remove God's name from their critical texts. For example, the name "Christ" is omitted over 30 times in modern English versions of the Bible (Rom 1:16; Phil 4:13; et al), and the name "God" is replaced with "He" in 1 Timothy 3:16! Is God pleased with that? Is His name glorified? Absolutely not! They have broken God's third commandment, "*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain*" (Exod 20:7).

God wants His people to obey His Word so that they may "*fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD*" (Deut 28:58). God says, "*My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name*" (Mal 2:5), and "*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest*" (Rev 15:4).

Do we truly honour and glorify God's Name in what we say, sing, preach, teach, write and do?

THOUGHT: "*Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*" (Ps 86:11)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me honour and glorify Thy holy Name in my heart and my life.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

PSALM 138:1-8

PSALM 119:161

“... my heart standeth
in awe of thy word.”

TO FEAR GOD IS TO FEAR AND KEEP HIS WORD

King David wholeheartedly praised the LORD and His name. Why? *“for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name”* (Ps 138:2). God is really serious about His Word! Why? Because God’s Word is His revelation about Himself, His Name, His will, His Truth, His commandments, His creation, His love, His righteous judgment, His gracious salvation for mankind in Christ, etc. If God’s Word is twisted, omitted or modified, it will badly affect His revelation. So from the beginning, Satan has tried his best to attack God’s Word: *“Yea, hath God said”* (Gen 3:1). However, God is always in control, and no one, not even Satan, is able to hinder God’s sovereign will and plan. God is holy, His name is holy, His works are holy, and His Word is holy (Lev 11:45; Ps 99:3; 145:17; Jer 23:9; 2 Tim 3:15). He has preserved His pure words for ever: *“The words of the LORD are pure words... Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever”* (Ps 12:6-7; cf. Matt 5:18).

If you were a boss, a president or a king, what would you think if your staff or your people did not respect or keep your words? Surely, you would feel very offended and angry. They showed their lack of respect for you when they failed to respect your words.

Some may want to show that they fear God and honour His Name, but instead they doubt, question, criticise, twist, or modify His Word! Is God not offended? Surely He is as He is the Creator, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords!

God looks to him who trembles at His Word (Isa 66:2). Do we truly honour God’s Word?

THOUGHT: When God sent His plagues upon Egypt, *“he that feared the word of the LORD”* was preserved from the heavy hail (Exod 9:20).

PRAYER: O LORD, help me honour and keep Thy holy Word.

THURSDAY, APRIL 8

DEUTERONOMY 13:1-11

ACTS 5:29

*“We ought to obey God
rather than men.”*

TO FEAR GOD IS TO LOVE HIM AND OBEY HIM

“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant” (Isa 50:10). *“His servant”* here refers to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa 42:1; 49:3; 53:11). Jesus says, *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me”* (John 10:27). It is serious if we fail to obey our Creator, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has all authority and right to require His creatures to love Him and obey Him so that they may enjoy His fellowship and blessings: *“the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day”* (Deut 6:24). Jesus wholeheartedly honoured, loved and obeyed His Father unto death (John 14:31; Phil 2:8). We have to do the same and to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6).

God’s commandment is *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself”* (Luke 10:27), and *“If a man love me, he will keep my words”* (John 14:23). Those who assume that they fear God and love God but fail to obey Him and keep His Word are only deceiving themselves. When King Saul failed to obey God’s Word wholeheartedly and carefully, he was rejected. *“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice...Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king”* (1 Sam 15:22-23).

When Abraham obeyed God and was prepared to sacrifice his dearly beloved son Isaac, God stopped him and said, *“now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me”* (Gen 22:12).

THOUGHT: *“We ought to obey God rather than men.”* (Acts 5:29)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to wholeheartedly love Thee and obey Thee.

TO FEAR GOD IS TO WORSHIP HIM & SERVE HIM ALONE

There are so many religions in the world! Many assume that they know the way to God and Heaven! Many cannot distinguish between the Truth and falsehood, thinking that all religions are good! Some compromise and welcome all kinds of faiths and beliefs with their ecumenical mindset. Others are proud of their “powerful worship” with lying “signs and wonders,” and with worldly music and entertainment! Are they true worshippers of God?

God is seeking “*true worshippers*” who “*worship the Father in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:23). This means we must be born again to worship God the Father “*in spirit.*” Our worship must be Christ-centred and Word-centred under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to worship Him “*in truth.*” God’s Word confirms, “*there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him*” (1 Cor 8: 6) and “*For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens*” (Ps 96:5) and “*the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God*” (1 Cor 10:20).

God commands us to fear Him, worship Him and serve Him alone. “***Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart***” (1 Sam 12: 24) and “***O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth***” (Ps 96:9). Satan still tempts many to serve and worship him for the vain glory of this world. May God help us to triumphantly resist him as our Lord Jesus did: “*Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*” (Matt 4:10).

THOUGHT: Am I a true worshipper of God?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me worship Thee and serve Thee alone in spirit and in truth.

TO FEAR GOD IS TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS

“Fear God, and keep his commandments” (Eccles 12:13). Many may ask, “Why must I fear God and keep His commandments?” There are two reasons. First, *“for this is the whole duty of man”* (v 13); and second, *“for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”* (v 14).

Many may say, “It is tiring enough to fulfil my duty to my family, my job, and my country. I have no more time and energy to think about my duty to God!” Thus, everyone just lives and does everything for himself or herself without any thought about God and His commandments! If they fail to fulfil their duty to God now, how can they appear before Him, the holy and righteous Judge, who will *“bring every work into judgment”*?

Then, our duty to God, our Creator, is to fear Him and keep His commandments: *“Therefore thou shalt **keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him**”* (Deut 8:6). Keeping God’s ten commandments (Exod 20), which means loving God and our neighbours (Luke 10:27), we should not forget these: *“Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and **honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD**”* (Lev 19:32), and *“Ye shall **not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God**”* (Lev 25:17). It is sad that the young assistant pastors and some elders of a church did not honour the godly elderly pastor but kicked him out and then oppressed other Christian brethren because of their faith in God’s perfectly preserved Word! Did they fear God? Absolutely not!

Do we truly fear God and truly keep His commandments?

THOUGHT: *“Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.”* (Ps 112:1)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me fear Thee and keep Thy commandments.

TO FEAR GOD IS TO TRUST IN HIM

Will you feel offended or despised if people do not trust you? Surely, the more power, authority and credentials you have, the more you will find it insulting when you are not trusted! Many do not know that they are blaspheming, insulting or despising their Creator, the almighty and most high God, when they fail to believe and trust in Him and His Word. They do not fear God at all!

When the people of Israel did not trust the LORD to bring them to the Promised Land as He promised, He was angry and said, *"How long will this people provoke (blaspheme, despise) me? and how long will it be ere (not) they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?"* (Num 14:11). And God pronounced His judgment: *"Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked (blaspheme, despise) me see it"* (Num 14:23). They despised the LORD because of their unbelief! It is really serious to doubt God and His Word! Truly, *"without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"* (Heb 11:6) *"for whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Rom 14:23).

This is God's command for those who fear Him, *"Ye that **fear the LORD, trust in the LORD**: he is their help and their shield"* (Ps 115:11). He who trusts in the LORD must also trust in His Name and His Word (Ps 119:42; Isa 50:10). If we fail to trust in our almighty, sovereign, loving and faithful God and His Word in all situations, we fail to fear Him, and it is sin!

THOUGHT: *"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."* (Ps 118:8)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me trust in Thee, Thy Name and Thy Word in all situations.

MONDAY, APRIL 12

JOHN 15:1-8

2 CHRONICLES 13:18

*“Judah prevailed, because they
relied upon the LORD God.”*

TO FEAR GOD IS TO RELY ON HIM

Many desire and love freedom and independence so much that they are willing to fight for the independence of their country from the dominion or control of another. Their sacrifice is admirable! It is good if we can be independent, i.e., able to support ourselves, but it is dangerous if we are independent of God, our Creator, the Source of life and all blessings. God created human beings not to be independent of Him but to enjoy a constant fellowship with Him and blessings from Him through their trust, submission and dependence. Satan used to be a shining angel, but because he proudly wanted to be “god” himself, independent of his Creator, he was cursed. Satan tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit so as to be like “god” herself and be independent of God. She fell into Satan’s trap and was cursed. Many have fallen into Satan’s trap without even being aware of it. They are even proud of their freedom and independence as they can do what they like regardless of their Creator and His Word. Actually, being independent of the holy and loving God, they have made themselves slaves of their selfishness, sinful nature, worldliness and Satan! Moreover, it is a great sin to proudly forsake God and rely on oneself: *“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water”* (Jer 2:13).

To fear God is to rely on Him: *“Who is among you that **feareth the LORD**,...? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and **stay upon (rely on) his God**”* (Isa 50:10). The Lord Jesus totally relies on His Father (John 5:19, 30). Do we truly rely on the Lord moment by moment like the branches on the Vine (John 15:1-8)?

THOUGHT: *“Without me ye can do nothing.”* (John 15: 5)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to totally rely on Thee all the time.

TUESDAY, APRIL 13

PSALM 136

PSALM 22:23

*“Ye that fear the LORD,
praise him.”*

TO FEAR GOD IS TO THANK HIM AND PRAISE HIM

Will you be angry if your children take your loving care for granted and rudely say to you, “I do not need you! I do not want you to be my Dad/Mom any more”? Are they honouring you when they said this? Absolutely not!

Our God is the almighty, good and merciful Creator who *“made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein... he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness”* (Acts 14:15, 17), and *“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16). Yet, not many give thanks and praise to Him! Many even deny His existence and believe that everything came into existence by itself or through evolution! The holy and righteous God is angry because *“they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful... Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever”* (Rom 1:21, 25).

To fear God is to give thanks and praises to Him. *“Ye that **fear the LORD, praise him**”* (Ps 22:23) and *“ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD”* (Ps 135:20), and *“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever”* (Ps 136:1). We are commanded to give *“thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Eph 5: 20). If we can praise the LORD and thank Him always for all things, even in our trials, without murmuring or complaining, we do honour Him above all.

THOUGHT: *“The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”* (Job 1:21)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to give thanks and praise to Thee always for all things.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

JOHN 20:19-31

EXODUS 20:11

*“Remember the sabbath day,
to keep it holy.”*

TO FEAR GOD IS TO KEEP HIS DAY OF WORSHIP

God *“blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made”* (Gen 2:3; cf. Exod 20:11). God commands us to **“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”** (Exod 20:8). The Sabbath is a day of worship and rest for our benefits: *“The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath”* (Mark 2:27). Sadly, many just enjoy themselves with worldly pleasures or work for extra income regardless of the LORD and His Day! They do not honour God at all!

Jesus Christ is *“Lord also of the sabbath”* (Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5), and He kept the spirit of the sabbath (worship/service unto God and benefits to men). But the Jewish leaders were rebuked for their hypocrisy (Luke 6:9; 13:15-16). Since the Lord Jesus Christ rose again and appeared to His disciples on the first day of the week (John 20:19, 26), the Church has kept the first day of the week as the day of rest and worship. It is called the Lord’s Day (Rev 1:10). Paul was in Troas for 7 days but he preached and conducted the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:6-7).

A Christian should delight in the Lord’s Day and keep it holy, coming to worship the LORD with His people, giving thanks and praises to Him and listening to His Word to receive His blessing. *“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: **Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD**”* (Isa 58:13-14).

THOUGHT: Do I truly keep the Lord’s Day holy?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to respect Thy Day and keep it holy.

TO FEAR GOD IS TO HONOUR HIM WITH OUR SUBSTANCE

Many do not care about giving offerings to God, saying that only God gives and He does not need anything from us. Others give their offerings like an exchange for their salvation, good health, wealth, protection, success, good luck, some ease for their contrite conscience, etc. Sadly, their understanding and motives are not biblical because giving sacrifices without obedience to God is not acceptable: *“to obey is better than sacrifice”* (1 Sam 15:22).

Everything we have, even our breath and life, is from the Lord. *“A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven”* (John 3:27), and in God we *“live, and move, and have our being”* (Acts 17:28). If God does not give us good health, skills, and good opportunities, we cannot work to earn money. We cannot give God what we have not received from Him. Therefore, giving our offerings to God is acknowledging God’s blessings with a thankful heart: *“for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee”* (1 Chron 29:14), and it is an act of honouring our God, **“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase”** (Prov 3:9).

Giving offerings is part of our worship. *“Give unto the LORD the glory due to his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness”* (1 Chron 16:29). The Lord is pleased with our worship in spirit and in truth and with our thanksgiving offerings, *“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work”* (2 Cor 9:7-8).

THOUGHT: Do I cheerfully give my offerings to the Lord?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to honour Thee with the substance Thou hast given me.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

MATTHEW 7: 13-27

DEUTERONOMY 10:12

*“ ... fear the LORD thy God,
to walk in all his ways.”*

TO FEAR GOD IS TO WALK IN HIS WAYS

Many so-called “Christians” worship and serve God and give their offerings to God but fail to walk in God’s narrow way within the boundaries of God’s will and God’s Word. They are compromising and tolerant of sins, worldliness and wrong doctrines. They even bring worldly music and entertainments into their worship, and they assume that God has richly blessed them with success, wealth, and big membership! Do they fear or honour God? Definitely not! Our Lord Jesus says, *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it”* (Matt 7: 13-14) and *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”* (v 21).

What does God require of us? *“What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to **fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul**”* (Deut 10:12) and, *“what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to **walk humbly with thy God?**”* (Micah 6:8).

We are required to humbly walk with God and with other God-fearing people but not with ungodly men (Biblical Separation). We are to do everything according to His will and Word, not men’s. We are to fear, please, and glorify God alone, not men. We are to worship and serve Him in His ways, not in worldly ways.

THOUGHT: Do I truly fear God and walk in all His ways?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to humbly walk with Thee in Thy narrow way.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14 – 7:1

PROVERBS 3:7

“... *fear the LORD,
and depart from evil.*”

TO FEAR GOD IS TO DEPART FROM SIN AND EVIL

Many think that they are very religious because they go to church every Sunday even though they still live in sin and worldliness! Others take God's love and forgiveness for granted, just sinning and repenting again and again without any fervent cry unto the Lord for deliverance and victory (Rom 7:24-25)! Some think that Biblical Separation will not help their church to grow, so they compromise and are tolerant to sins, unbiblical doctrines and worldliness. Do they fear God? Surely not! God's holy Name is neither honoured nor glorified through their ungodly life and worship!

God is holy and He cannot stand lies, hypocrisy, sins, unrighteousness or ungodliness. How can we walk with the holy God while we keep on living in sins? “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*” (Amos 3:3). God's command is, “*Be ye holy; for I am holy*” (1 Peter 1:16; cf. Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7), and “*fear the LORD, and depart from evil*” (Prov 3:7), and “*be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you*” (2 Cor 6:17). This is Biblical Separation!

Only “*by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*” (Prov 16:6), and “*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate*” (Prov 8:13). Truly, Job “*feared God, and eschewed evil*” (Job 1:1). Then, “*let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*” (2 Cor 7:1), “*And every man that hath this hope in him (Jesus) purifieth himself, even as he is pure*” (1 John 3: 3). Do we practise Biblical Separation in our lives, ministry and worship to keep ourselves pure?

THOUGHT: “*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*” (1 Thess 5:22)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to fear Thee and to depart from sin and evil.

GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO FEAR HIM (1)

God's Word confirms His blessings for those who fear Him: "*Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments*" (Ps 112:1) and "***Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD***" (Ps 128:1), and "*He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great*" (Ps 115:13). Do we really want to enjoy God's blessings? May God help us to fear Him and honour His Name and His Word with our humble dependence, trust, obedience and submission in order to:

Enjoy God's great mercy: "*For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him*" (Ps 103:11, 13, 17; cf. Luke 1:50).

Enjoy God's salvation: "*Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him*" (Ps 85:9).

Enjoy God's loving care: "*Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine*" (Ps 33:18-19).

Enjoy God's guidance: "*What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose*" (Ps 25:12).

Enjoy God's provision: "*O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him*" (Ps 34:9-10).

Enjoy God's protection and deliverance: "*The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*" (Ps 34:7).

Enjoy God's healing: "*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall*" (Mal 4:2; cf. Ps 103:3; Isa 53:5; Jer 33:6).

THOUGHT: God surely bless those who fear Him.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to fear Thee so as to enjoy Thy blessings.

MONDAY, APRIL 19

PSALM 115

PSALM 115:13

*“He will bless them
that fear the LORD.”*

GOD’S BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO FEAR HIM (2)

Have knowledge and wisdom from above: “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant” (Ps 25:14) and “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,... the beginning of wisdom” (Prov 1:7; 9:10; 15:33; Ps 111:10).

Have life: “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life ... The fear of the LORD tendeth to life” (Prov 14:27; 19:23).

Have better treasure and heritage: “The fear of the LORD is his treasure” (Isa 33:6), and “thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name” (Ps 61:5) and “Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith” (Prov 15:16).

Have one’s desire fulfilled: “He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them” (Ps 145:19).

Be heard and remembered: “Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name” (Mal 3:16).

Be pleasing to the LORD: “The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy” (Ps 147:11).

Be honoured and praised: “By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour ... Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised” (Prov 22:4; 31:30).

It is wise and vital for us to fear God in order to enjoy all His blessings and to enjoy a blessed fellowship with Him, who is our All in All, our Treasure and our Inheritance.

THOUGHT: “For them that honour me I will honour.” (1 Sam 2:30)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to honour and appreciate Thee above all.

HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART: ACKNOWLEDGE GOD’S GRACE

Surely God’s blessings are for those who fear Him. How can we have a God-fearing heart?

Besides our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect God and Man, who did not inherit the corrupt and sinful nature of man, the only persons who could fear God and keep His Word were Adam and Eve before their Fall. Sadly, after their Fall, sin and death entered into the world (Rom 5:12), and the human heart became enslaved to sin. God had to destroy mankind and all the living things (except Noah and his family) by the Global Flood in Noah’s days because *“GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”* (Gen 6:5).

It is by God’s grace alone that Abel, Seth Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Josiah, etc., could fear God, keep His Word and walk with Him. God chose His people Israel, appeared and spoke to them directly at Mount Sinai, gave them His law and promises, sent His prophets to teach them and warn them, punished them and corrected them. But they kept on sinning and repenting again and again. Why? Because *“there is no fear of God before their eyes”* (Rom 3:18; cf. Ps 36:1), and they had an *“evil heart...a revolting (stubborn) and a rebellious heart”* (Jer 3:17; 5:23).

Who can be saved? *“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil”* (Jer 13:23). Our Lord Jesus confirms, *“With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible”* (Matt 19:25-26). Truly, *“Salvation is of the Lord”* alone (Jonah 2:9; Ps 3:8; 37:39), so all thanks and praises must be to the LORD alone!

THOUGHT: *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”* (Jer 17:9)

PRAYER: O LORD, I really need Thy grace and Thy salvation.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21

JOHN 3:1-16

JOHN 3:7

“Ye must be born again.”

HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART: BE BORN AGAIN TO HAVE A NEW HEART

Human nature is sinful, corrupt and totally depraved. How can we have a God-fearing heart?

We must be transformed (born again) to have a new heart from God, and that is the gracious work of God through the Holy Spirit and His Word: *“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God...Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”* (John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23).

The first step for a sinner to be saved and born again is to sincerely repent of his sins, wholeheartedly receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour, and humbly commit himself to the Lord (as clay in the Potter’s hands) with trust and submission so that the Lord may create in him a new heart. *“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?... And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever... **I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me**”* (Jer 32:27, 39, 40), and *“**A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: ... And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them**”* (Eze 36:26-27). There is no other way.

Thank God and praise the Lord, for it is by His grace alone that we can have a new heart to know Him, fear Him, worship Him, thirst for His Word and obey it.

THOUGHT: *“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”* (2 Cor 5:17)

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for Thy gracious work in me.

THURSDAY, APRIL 22

ROMANS 7:14-25

PSALM 86:11

“... unite my heart
to fear thy name.”

HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART: DESIRE AND PRAY FOR A GOD-FEARING HEART

Even though God has given us a new heart, our sinful nature is still with us until we are totally transformed when our Lord Jesus Christ comes back again. In our heart there is a conflict between God's will and our will and between godly desires and sinful desires. The new nature in Christ wants us to fear and please God and do God's will while the old one tempts us to please our sinful nature. The apostle Paul shared his experience of the conflict in his heart, and he found deliverance through the Lord Jesus Christ: *“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (new nature): But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin (sinful nature) which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death (sinful nature)? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Rom 7:22-25, words in brackets mine). Sadly, many Christians seem to be “contented with” their defeated life in the spiritual warfare against Satan, sinful nature and worldliness. They have failed to fully submit to the Lord and His Word, humbly trust in Him, and fervently cry unto Him for His deliverance and sanctification. They *“are yet carnal”* (1 Cor 3:3).

Nehemiah desired to fear God (Neh 1:11). David asked God to unite his heart (full of conflicts) to fear Him: *“Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: **unite my heart to fear thy name**”* (Ps 86:11). Do we have a victorious life in Christ where God's will alone is done in all things without any conflict?

THOUGHT: *“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.”* (2 Cor 2:14)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to always triumph in Thee.

HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART: SUBMIT TO THE CONTROL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is able to produce His fruit of “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Gal 5:22-23) as well as “the fear of the LORD” because He is “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, **the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD**” and He is able to make us to be “of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD” (Isa 11:2-3). The Hebrew term of “quick understanding” is *ruwach*. It appears 11 times in the Old Testament and the KJV translates it as “smell” eight times, “touch” once, “quick understanding” once, and “accept” once. If we have a very keen sense of smell we can detect bad odour or sweet aroma quickly.

Spiritually speaking, many do not have a sensitive sense of smell. They are neither aware of the holy presence of God wherever they are, nor can they detect the poison or corruption in modern English Bible versions, nor find it worldly to have contemporary music and entertainments in their worship, nor see it ungodly to compromisingly worship with non-Bible-believing people. To them, it is fine to have all kinds of Bible versions, all kinds of music, all kinds of sign gifts including “speaking in tongues,” all kinds of friends, etc. It is hard for them to discern God’s Truth from falsehood, God’s will from men’s, the Holy Spirit’s work from fake healing, God’s true servants from false teachers because of their lack of sharp discernment! How then can they fear the Lord?

The Holy Spirit is able to make our spiritual sense of smell sensitive so that we will fear God and prove “*what is acceptable unto the Lord*” (Eph 5:10) and to “*abstain from all appearance of evil*” (1 Thess 5:22). Shall we not wisely submit ourselves to His control?

THOUGHT: How is my spiritual sense of smell?

PRAYER: O LORD, give me a sensitive sense of Thy fear.

SATURDAY, APRIL 24

PSALM 1

PSALM 119:11

*“Thy word have
I hid in mine heart ...”*

HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART: READ GOD’S WORD WITH A TEACHABLE HEART

God commanded the leaders of His people to write and read His Word so that they might learn to fear Him and keep all His words: *“he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and **he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them”** (Deut 17:18-19).*

Reading the history of Israel, we see that those kings who honoured God’s Word, read it and treasured it were good and God-fearing kings, eg: David, Hezekiah, Josiah, etc. But those who ignored God’s Word were compromising, backsliding or very wicked. We have also witnessed in church history that when God’s Word was not honoured, read, taught, or preached at home, churches or seminaries, the people’s spiritual life tended towards compromise, Catholicism, modernism, liberalism, ecumenism, and apostasy. All the true revivals started with a revival of the reading of God’s Word. That is why God commands us to keep His Word in our hearts and diligently teach His Word to our children (Deut 6:6,7).

Those who arrogantly doubt, question, criticize, modify, misinterpret, mistranslate, or twist God’s Word do not have a God-fearing heart. To have a God-fearing heart, we must have a Word-honouring heart. We must read God’s Word with a reverent and teachable heart. When we hear or read God’s Word, let us tremble at His Word (Isa 66:2) because God is speaking directly to us. Only then can we learn to fear the LORD and grow in His knowledge and His fear day by day.

THOUGHT: I must read God’s Word to learn to fear Him.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to reverently read Thy Word daily.

**HOW TO HAVE A GOD-FEARING HEART:
LIVE IN GOD'S HOLY PRESENCE**

God rebuked His people: *"Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence...?"* (Jer 5:22). If we have a quick and sensitive sense of God's presence, we shall acknowledge His holy presence wherever we are, not only at our devotion, family worship, congregational worship, Bible study but all the time at home, at work, at school, at play, and in the streets as well. Let us practise living, walking, speaking, singing, working, playing in God's holy presence. Then we shall be kept pure from sins, temptations and worldliness. When Joseph was sold to Egypt, far away from his own people and his loved ones, he feared God and kept himself from sins, and God was with him, saw him through all his trials and highly promoted him in His good timing. Shall we not wisely fear God to enjoy His presence and all His blessings? *"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved"* (Ps 16:8) and *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"* (1 John 1:7).

May God grant us a God-fearing heart and unite our heart to fear Him while living in this world full of sins, compromise, ungodliness, temptations, snares, deceits, false isms and apostasy. May God help us to read and keep His Word with trust and reverence, to submit ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit, and to practise living in God's holy presence wherever we are, moment by moment until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

THOUGHT: *"Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."* (Ps 33:8)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me live and do everything in Thy holy presence.

MONDAY, APRIL 26

PSALM 27

PSALM 27:1

*“The LORD is my light
and my salvation.”*

WALKING IN DARKNESS AND HAVING NO LIGHT?

*“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, **that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?** let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God”* (Isa 50:10). In the spiritual sense, walking in darkness usually means walking in sin (Prov 4:19; Eph 5:11; 1 John 2:11). However, according to the context of Isaiah 50:10, those who walk in darkness and have no light are those who fear the LORD and obey His voice! God’s children were going through a period of darkness and suffered afflictions, trials, chastisement and testings.

Job *“feared God, and eschewed evil”* (Job 1:1), and in his great trial, he said: *“For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me: Because I was not cut off before the **darkness**, neither hath he covered the **darkness** from my face”* (Job 23:16-17). David experienced God’s loving care in his darkness: *“the LORD my God will enlighten my **darkness**”* (Ps 18:28) and *“Yea, though I walk through **the valley of the shadow of death**, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me”* (Ps 23:4). When the Lord Jesus came, *“The people that walked in **darkness** have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of **the shadow of death**, upon them hath the light shined”* (Isa 9:2; Matt 4:16).

When we are in our great trial, affliction, or testing, e.g. serious illness, family breakdown, bankruptcy, job losses, accidents or disasters, bereavement, oppressive opposition from the adversaries, etc., and it seems that we have no light, no strength, no hope, no direction, etc., we are encouraged to *“trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon”* our God (Isa 50:10), who is our Light and our Salvation (Ps 27:1).

THOUGHT: I can trust in my almighty LORD even in my days of darkness.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thee in all situations.

TUESDAY, APRIL 27

EXODUS 3:1-15

EXODUS 3:14

“I AM THAT I AM.”

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

In all situations, we are encouraged to trust in the name of the LORD: “*Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him **trust in the name of the LORD**, and stay upon his God*” (Isa 50:10). God has revealed Himself to mankind through His creation (Rom 1:19-20), through His prophets/the written Word, and through His only begotten Son/the living Word (John 1:1; Heb 1:1-2). God has also revealed Himself to His people through His name, so that they might trust in His name as in Himself. The more we know the LORD and His name, the more we shall trust in Him and His name. Do we know His name? “*And **they that know thy name will put their trust in thee**: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee*” (Ps 9:10). How do we know God’s name? It is through His Word alone.

The name *LORD* (all letters in capital), in Hebrew, is the Tetragrammaton YHWH. The KJV translates as “LORD” 6510 times, “GOD” four times, and “JEHOVAH” four times. The *LORD* or *Jehovah* is the covenant name of the covenant God to His covenant people. A shortened form of *Jehovah* is *JAH* (Ps 68:4). God appeared to Moses and said, “**I AM THAT I AM**” (Exod 3:14), and “*I am the LORD: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them*” (Exod 6:2-3). The living and true God has revealed Himself to His covenant people as the *Jehovah*, the **I AM THAT I AM**, the self-existent, eternal, unchangeable, faithful, almighty, and supreme God, who is All they need and who is able to faithfully keep His Word, covenants, promises to His people.

THOUGHT: “*I am the LORD: that is my name.*” (Isa 42: 8)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to know more about Thee and Thy Name.

THE LORD IS GOD

The covenant LORD was always faithful to keep His Word, covenants, and promises to His covenant people in blessing them and delivering them from their troubles and their enemies when they cried unto Him. But sadly they were unfaithful to Him and broke His covenant and law, turning to idolatry instead! God sent His prophet Elijah to rebuke His people: “*How long halt ye between two opinions? if **the LORD (Jehovah) be God (Elohim), follow him***” (1 Kings 18:21). Elijah challenged 450 false prophets: “*Call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God*” (v 24). The false prophets called on the name of their gods from morning until evening, but there was no answer. However, when Elijah offered the sacrifice and called upon the name of the LORD, “*the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice*” (v 38) and the people fell on their faces and said, “***The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God***” (v 39).

It is vital for us to trust in the LORD, our living and true God and our almighty Creator, with our submissive hearts and reverent worship. The compound names *the LORD God* (Jehovah-Elohim) and *the Lord GOD* (Adonai-Jehovih) have about 511 occurrences in the Old Testament (KJV). “*The LORD God made the earth and the heavens... And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul*” (Gen 2:4,7), and “*The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth*” (Exod 34:6), and “*And now, O Lord GOD, thou art that God, and thy words be true*” (2 Sam 7:28), and “*I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD*” (Ps 71:16).

THOUGHT: Trusting in the LORD is trusting in God.

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my God and my Strength.

THE LORD IS OUR FATHER AND OUR SAVIOUR

We can wholeheartedly trust in the LORD, our living and true God and our almighty Creator. Our love for Him should grow when we know that it was out of love that God the Father sent God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be our Saviour: *“The LORD (God the Father) said unto my Lord/Adon (God the Son, Jesus Christ), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool... The LORD (God the Father) hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou (Jesus Christ) art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”* (Ps 110:1,4; Matt 22:42-45; Heb 7:17) and *“the LORD (God the Father) hath laid on him (Jesus Christ) the iniquity of us all... Yet it pleased the LORD (God the Father) to bruise him (Jesus Christ)”* (Isa 53: 6,10). Trusting in the LORD means trusting in our God the Father! *“O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand”* (Isa 64:8).

The equivalent term for **LORD/Jehovah** in Greek is **Kurios/Lord**. Quoting Deuteronomy 6:4 (*“The LORD/Jehovah our God is one LORD/Jehovah”*) Jesus said, *“The Lord/Kurios our God is one Lord/Kurios”* (Mark 12:29). Joel prophesied: *“whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD/Jehovah shall be delivered”* (Joel 2:32), and this prophecy was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord/Kurios shall be saved”* (Rom 10:13; cf. Acts 2:21). Jesus is **Jehovah/Kurios**: *“And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord/Kurios, to the glory of God the Father”* (Phil 2:11; cf. 2 Peter 3:18). Furthermore, the LORD Jesus Christ confirms that He is the **LORD/Jehovah** by His **I AM** statements. *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am”* (John 8:58; cf. 6:35; 8:12; 10:9,11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1).

THOUGHT: Trusting in the LORD is trusting in our God the Father and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

PRAYER: O LORD, my Saviour, help me to trust in Thee.

THE TRINITY OF GOD (1)

Many are against the doctrine of the Trinity (Three in One). They use human understanding and arguments: "How can there be three Divine Persons and yet One God? You cannot find the term 'Trinity' in the Scriptures!" Although we can never fully comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity with our limited understanding and knowledge, we must wisely and safely accept and believe what God has revealed to us through His holy Word.

God's Word confirms that there is only one God/LORD, "*The LORD our God is one LORD*" (Deut 6:4; cf. 4:35,39; 7:9), "*there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him*" (1 Cor 8:6; cf. Mark 12:32; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5). The LORD God is the living and true Divine Being, the Creator, who is eternal, sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, unchangeable, holy, just, glorious, good and merciful. However, there are three distinct Divine Persons: the Father is the LORD God (John 6:27; Isa 64:8) because He possesses all the above attributes. The Son is the LORD God (John 1:1; 8:58; 1 Tim 3:6; Heb 1:8) because He also possesses all the same attributes. And so is the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). The Holy Spirit is called "*the Spirit of God*" (1 Cor 3:16), "*the Spirit of the LORD*" (Isa 11:2), "*the Spirit of the Lord GOD*" (Isa 61:1), "*the Spirit of your Father*" (Matt 10:20), "*the Spirit of His Son*" (Gal 4:6), "*the Spirit of Christ*" (Rom 8:9), and "*the Spirit of Jesus Christ*" (Phil 1:19).

There is only one God/LORD but with three distinct Divine Persons, who are equal in Being, Power and Glory with the same Divine nature, essence and attributes.

THOUGHT: Trusting in the LORD is trusting in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to know Thee and trust in Thee more.

THE TRINITY OF GOD (2)

Many believe in one God but have such wrong concepts or beliefs as: there is only one God, who sometimes appears as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Holy Spirit; or the Trinity of God is like water (H₂O) in three different forms (solid, liquid, and vapour); or the Trinity is like an egg with three elements (shell, white and yoke). It is really heretical to have such wrong understanding or to use such illustrations! We cannot use materials or human ideas to illustrate the Trinity of the supreme God, the infinite and eternal Divine Being!

Although there are three distinct Divine Persons in the Trinity, none acts independently of the others without their mutual trust and honour. The Father honours the Son, “*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*” (Heb 1:8). The Son is “*the only begotten of the Father*” (John 1:14; cf. 3:18), honours and glorifies the Father (John 8:49; 14:28; 17:4), relies on and submits to the Father (John 5:19,30), and trusts in the Holy Spirit (Matt 4:1; 12:28; Luke 4:18; John 3:34). The Holy Spirit “*proceedeth from the Father*” (John 15:26), glorifies the Son (John 16:14) and is sent by the Father and by the Son (John 14: 26; 16:7).

All the Trinity worked together in the Creation (Gen 1-2) and in the Salvation of mankind. The loving Father gave the Son. The Son humbly became a man, died for the sins of mankind, and rose again to save those who believe. The Holy Spirit helps sinners enjoy God’s salvation by His revelation of the Truth, conviction of sins, regeneration, sanctification, teaching, guidance, etc. It is heresy to confuse the functions of the Trinity and say, “The body and blood of the Father!” or “The death and resurrection of the Holy Spirit!”

THOUGHT: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit always work together despite their different functions.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to have a proper understanding of the Trinity.

THE TRINITY OF GOD (3)

God's Word supports the doctrine of the Trinity:

- The name **God** (Elohim), which is a plural noun used with singular verbs, explains the Trinity. So do the plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26: "*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*" and the singular pronouns in Psalm 25:5: "*Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*"

- The Johannine Comma (1 John 5:7), found in the divinely preserved Greek text and the KJV but omitted in the corrupt Greek text and modern English versions, proves the Trinity: "*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (the Son, John 1:1,14; 1John 1:1), and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*"

- At Jesus' baptism, it is recorded, "*And Jesus (the Son), when he was baptized,... and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I (the Father) am well pleased*" (Matt 3:16, 17).

- Jesus has promised, "*And I (the Son) will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter (the Holy Spirit, v 26), that he may abide with you for ever*" (John 14:16).

- Jesus' Great Commission commands, "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" (Matt 28:19).

- Peter's sermon declares, "*Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he (the Son) hath shed forth this*" (Acts 2:33).

- The Benediction states, "*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (the Son), and the love of God (the Father), and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen*" (2 Cor 13:14).

THOUGHT: The doctrine of the Trinity is biblical.

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my God in Three Persons.

MONDAY, MAY 3

PSALM 20

PROVERBS 18:10

*“The name of the LORD
is a strong tower.”*

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

*“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him **trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God**” (Isa 50:10). We have briefly learnt about the Trinity, and we know that the LORD is the covenant name of the covenant God to His covenant people, and that the LORD is God Himself. As there is only one God/LORD with three distinct Divine Persons, trusting in the name of the LORD is trusting in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.*

As *“they that know thy name will put their trust in thee”* (Ps 9:10), we shall learn about the name *God* (Elohim): *the Almighty God* (El Shadai), *the most high God* (El Elyon), *the everlasting God* (El Olam), and *Abba, Father*.

We shall also learn about the name *LORD* (Jehovah): *the LORD will provide* (Jehovah-jireh), *the LORD is my Shepherd* (Jehovah-rohi), *the LORD is my banner* (Jehovah-nissi), *the LORD of hosts* (Jehovah-sabaoth), *the LORD Our Righteousness* (Jehovah-tsidkenu), *the LORD that doth sanctify you* (Jehovah-m’qaddishkhem), *the LORD that healeth thee* (Jehovah-rapha), *the LORD is peace* (Jehovah-shalom), *the LORD is there* (Jehovah-shammah), *the LORD God* (Jehovah Elohim) and *the Lord GOD* (Adonai Jehovih).

Do we really know, fear and trust in the name of the LORD our God?

THOUGHT: *“Our help is in the name of the LORD.”* (Ps 124:8)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to know, fear, and trust in Thy holy Name.

TUESDAY, MAY 4

PSALM 100

1 THESSALONIANS 1:9

“ ... serve the living and true God.”

THE LIVING AND TRUE GOD (ELOHIM/THEOS)

The name *Elohim* means *God* who alone is the living and true God, the Creator, the Most High, eternal, almighty, supreme, sovereign, and the Source of all life and being. *Elohim* is a plural noun but is used with singular verbs. This reveals to us the truth of God’s Trinity. There is only one living and true God but with three equal distinct Divine Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The Greek term for God in the New Testament is *Theos*. The Lord Jesus says, “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God (Theos) with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*” (Matt 22:37; cf. “*God (Elohim)*” in Deut 6:5). By God’s revelation through His Son Jesus Christ and God’s Word, we know more about our God/*Elohim/Theos* (John 1:18: 1 John 5:20). We do need the Lord Jesus Christ and His grace to approach the living and true God. The Scripture begins with God, “*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*” (Gen 1:1), and ends with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, “*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen*” (Rev 22:21).

A short form of *Elohim* is *El*, and God has revealed His name as *El Shaddai* or “*the Almighty God*” (Gen 17:1), *El Elyon* or “*the most high God*” (Gen 14:19; Ps 91:1), *El Olam* or “*the everlasting God*” (Gen 21:33; Ps 90:2), *El Gibbor* or “*the mighty God*” (Isa 9:6; 10:21).

Sometimes we forget the truth that God is our almighty Creator and Maker and that we are only His creatures, and so we fail to fear Him, honour Him and trust in Him.

THOUGHT: “*Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us.*” (Ps 100: 3)

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my God and my Creator and Maker.

THE ALMIGHTY GOD (EL SHADDAI)

El Shaddai is a short form of *Elohim Shaddai*. We have learnt that *Elohim* means *God*. *Shaddai* means *most powerful, Almighty*. It appears 48 times in the Old Testament and the KJV translates it as “*Almighty*” 48 times. *The Almighty* (Ruth 1:20; Job 13:3) or *the Almighty God* (Gen 17:1; Eze 10:5) or *God Almighty* (Gen 28:3; Exod 6:3) is the living and true God who is almighty/omnipotent, sovereign and supreme.

The equivalent Greek term for *shaddai* in the New Testament is *pantokrator*, which is a compound from *pás/pantos* (all) and *krátos* (power, strength, dominion). It appears 10 times in the New Testament and the KJV translates it as “*Almighty*” 9 times (2 Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8; Rev 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 16:14; 19:15; 21:22) and “*omnipotent*” once (Rev 19:6). All referred to God, who is the Ruler over all, omnipotent, almighty. It is so encouraging to notice the compound name of our God, “*Lord God Almighty*” (Rev 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 21:22).

God revealed His name *El Shaddai* first to Abram (later Abraham) when he was 99 years old to encourage him to trust in God: “***I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly***” (Gen 17:1-2). Abram had been waiting for God’s fulfilment of His promise for 25 years since God first appeared to him and called him when he was 75 years old (Gen 12:1-4).

Praise the Lord God Almighty, who has faithfully kept His Word, His promises and His covenants to Abraham and to His people. We have witnessed the fulfilment of God’s Word and promises in the Lord Jesus Christ, to the people Israel, to the Church, and to our lives even today. Are we walking before the Almighty God and wholeheartedly trusting in Him? Without faith, it is sin (Rom 14:23).

THOUGHT: Walk before the Almighty God and be perfect!

PRAYER: O LORD, my Almighty God, help me to walk before Thee with trust and reverence.

DO YOU REVERANTLY WORSHIP THE ALMIGHTY GOD?

When Abram heard God speaking to him, he “*fell on his face*” in reverent worship (Gen 17:3). In heaven, our Lord God Almighty is worshipped day and night: “*they rest not day and night, saying, **Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty**, which was, and is, and is to come*” (Rev 4:8). What about us? Sadly, many so-called “Christians” nowadays fail to worship God worthily of His holy Name, *the Lord God Almighty*, nor do they hear His Word with trembling. They even “*turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*” (2 Tim 4:4). They do not like to hear God’s Word against sin, self or worldliness. They are keen to hear nice human words and interesting stories which may entertain their ears and make them feel good! For the sake of “love and unity” they are compromising and tolerant of sins, unbiblical doctrines, and worldly mindsets, values and entertainments! Their preachers even arrogantly criticise, twist and misinterpret God’s Word! The congregation excitedly sing praises to the rhythm and beat of worldly music! Can the Lord God Almighty be in the midst of such worship? Absolutely not!

The Almighty God requires us to separate ourselves from sins, wrong doctrines, unbelief, and worldliness: “*Wherefore come out from among them, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, **saith the Lord Almighty***” (2 Cor 6:17-18).

Do we reverently worship our Almighty God and hear His Word with trembling, “*but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*” (Isa 66:2)?

THOUGHT: Worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).

PRAYER: O LORD, my Almighty God, help me to reverently worship Thee in spirit and in truth.

DO YOU TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY GOD? (1)

Are we worried or doubtful as to whether the Almighty God is able to fulfil His Word and promises, to take care of us, to preserve us and to see us through our difficulties, troubles, or trials? Let us shut all other voices from the flesh, from men or from Satan, and hear God's Word alone: *“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?”* (Jer 32:27), and *“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God”* (Luke 18:27). Sadly, many just blindly listen to “scholars” who argue that as no man is perfect, so it is impossible to have a perfect Bible today through human transmission! Cannot the Almighty God, who mightily created the heavens and the earth and everything in it, including you and me, perfectly preserve His inspired Word as He promised (Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18; 24:35; 2 Tim 3:16)? Surely He can, or else He would not be almighty! Moreover, the Almighty God *“is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them”* (Heb 7:25), *“is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”* (Eph 3:20), *“is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32), *“is able to make all grace abound toward you”* (2 Cor 9:8), *“is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”* (2 Tim 1:12), and *“is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”* (Jude 1:24). Praise the Lord God Almighty!

Do we really trust in our Lord God Almighty and His Word?

THOUGHT: *“With God all things are possible.”* (Matt 19:26)

PRAYER: O LORD, my Almighty God, help me to trust in Thee, in Thy Word and in Thy power.

DO YOU TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY GOD? (2)

Even though the unbelieving eyes of the people were around him and he and Sarah were too old to have any children, Abram (“*exalted father*”) believed in God and was not ashamed to bear the new name that God gave to him: Abraham (“*father of a multitude*”). Therefore, “*after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise*” (Heb 6:15). Let us learn from the faith of Abraham, “*Who against hope believed in hope, ... And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, ... He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*” (Rom 4:18-22). May the Lord God Almighty help us to trust in Him, patiently wait upon Him and never give up our faith even in our seemingly hopeless situations.

While trusting that our Lord God Almighty is able to do everything, we must still trust in His sovereign and perfect will and submit to Him and His will. It is best to follow our Lord Jesus Christ’s perfect Example. He prayed to His Father, “*Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt*” (Mark 14:36). Moreover, we have to fear the Almighty God: “*Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment... Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it*” (Job 34:12; 35:13).

Do we really trust in our Almighty God with a submissive heart?

THOUGHT: “*Surely I would speak to the Almighty ... Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*” (Job 13: 15)

PRAYER: O LORD, my Almighty God, help me to trust in Thee with a submissive heart.

THE MOST HIGH GOD (ELELYON)

El is a short form of *Elohim*. *Elyon* means *high, highest, most high*. It appears 53 times in the Old Testament. When referring to God and His Name, *Elyon* is translated *the Highest* (Ps 18:13) or *the Most High* (Ps 9:2; 91:1). With other Divine names, *Elyon* means *the Most High: El Elyon* or *Elohim Elyon* means *the most high God* (Gen 14:18; Ps 57:3) and *Jehovah Elyon* means *the LORD most high* (Ps 7:18; 47:3). Then, *El Elyon* reminds us that God is the Supreme Ruler, the Sovereign God, and the Possessor of heaven and earth. He is over all, above all and He is in control of all. Praise the LORD our most high God!

In the New Testament, the equivalent Greek term *Hupsistos* is translated as *the Highest, the Most High*; e.g. “*the Son of the Highest*” (Luke 1:32), “*the Son of God most high*” (Luke 8:28), “*the Most High*” (Acts 7:48); and “*the most high God*” (Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1).

El Elyon is first mentioned in Genesis chapter 14. After God had helped Abram to defeat the enemies and to deliver Lot and his household from their hands, Melchizedek, the king of Salem and the priest of “*the most high God,*” came and blessed him, “*Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand*” (vv 19-20). And Abram acknowledged the supreme sovereignty of God, who gave him the victory and all the blessings, saying to the king of Sodom, “*I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take... any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich*” (v 22-23).

THOUGHT: Do I acknowledge the most high God and His sovereignty?

PRAYER: O LORD, my most high God, help me to acknowledge Thy sovereignty in all things.

MONDAY, MAY 10

DANIEL 4:29-37

JOHN 3:30

*“He must increase,
but I must decrease.”*

DO YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE MOST HIGH GOD?

It is a serious sin when we fail to humbly acknowledge the most high God. Lucifer proudly lifted himself up: *“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like **the most High**”* (Isa 14:14). But he was cursed and cast down (v 15). How about Nebuchadnezzar? Although Daniel had told him that *“**the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**”* (Dan 4:17), several months later while walking in the palace Nebuchadnezzar said, *“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”* (v 30). He quickly forgot that it was the most high God who had given him the kingdom! While he was still speaking, God spoke to him, *“they shall drive thee from men, ... they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen ..., **until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**”* (vv 31-32). God’s Word was fulfilled right after that. Nebuchadnezzar was cast out and he ate grass like oxen in the field and was wet with the dew until God’s judgment was over and Nebuchadnezzar said, *“I Nebuchadnezzar ... **I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:...** Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase”* (vv 34, 37).

Truly, *“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble”* (James 4:6).

THOUGHT: *“A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”* (John 3:27)

PRAYER: O LORD, my most high God, help me to humbly acknowledge Thy supreme Reign and to give all thanks and glory to Thee.

TUESDAY, MAY 11

PSALM 91

PSALM 57:2

*"I will cry unto
God most high."*

DO YOU HONOUR AND TRUST IN THE MOST HIGH GOD?

It is wise to put our trust in our most high God, who is able to make all things work together for good to His beloved and obedient children (Rom 8:28). In perilous time, it is comforting to memorise and cite Psalm 91:1-2: "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of **the most High** shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; **in him will I trust.***" Do we trust in our most high God and His sovereignty and run to Him for protection no matter what happens to us?

People of this world usually cry unto their "gods" for help in their troubles or trials. Sadly, their "gods" are not the living and true God nor the most high God! We must thank our most high God that we can "*come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*" (Heb 4:16), and "***I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me***" (Ps 57: 2). Do we cry unto our most high God for help?

It is proper for us to acknowledge that all we have (our life, good health, good jobs, family, God's peace, guidance, salvation, and victory, etc) come from our most high God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. Abram acknowledged God's blessings by giving his tithes (Gen 14:20). Let us not only give our offerings or tithes but also offer our hearts and bodies unto the Lord as "*a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service*" (Rom 12:1) and do good to others as we are "*the children of the Highest*" (Luke 6:35).

THOUGHT: I must trust in my most high God, my heavenly Father!

PRAYER: O LORD, my most high God, I thank Thee for all Thy blessings.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

GENESIS 21:22-34

PSALM 93:2

“... thou art from everlasting.”

THE EVERLASTING GOD (EL OLAM)

The Hebrew term *Olam* means *hidden time, long, the beginning or end of which is either uncertain or else not defined; eternity, perpetuity* (Gesenius). It appears 439 times in the Old Testament, and the KJV translates it as “*ever*” 272 times, “*everlasting*” 63 times, “*old*” 22 times, “*perpetual*” 22 times, “*evermore*” 15 times, etc.

The equivalent Greek term is *aionios*, which means *eternal, everlasting*: “*The everlasting God*” (Rom 16:26), “*everlasting life*” (John 3:15-16), “*eternal life*” (Rom 2:7).

El Olam was first mentioned in Genesis 21:33 when Abraham called on “*the name of the LORD, the everlasting God*” to express his praise to the immortal and unchangeable God, who was faithful to keep His Word and His covenant. God was with Abraham and granted him a son, Isaac, and greatly blessed him as He promised (Gen 12:1-3). Even Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain came and spoke to Abraham: “*God is with thee in all that thou doest*” (Gen 21:22).

Truly, *El Olam* is *the everlasting God*, immortal, faithful and unchangeable. God and His Word endure for ever and are the same for ever despite the fact that the world and everything will be changed and will pass away: “*They shall perish, but thou shalt endure..., and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end*” (Ps 102:26-27; Heb 1:11-12), and “*the word of the Lord endureth for ever*” (1 Peter 1:24; Isa 40:8), and “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Matt 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33).

As the world and everything in it (human beings including you and me, and human words or arguments) will pass away, who shall we turn to and trust for the salvation of our souls and our loved ones?

THOUGHT: Only the everlasting God and His Word are the same and endure for ever.

PRAYER: O LORD, my everlasting God, help me to trust in Thee and Thy Word alone.

DO YOU TRUST IN THE EVERLASTING GOD? (1)

Let us meditate on God's everlasting Word to learn more about our everlasting God: “*Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that **the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?**” (Isa 40:28) and “**from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**” (Ps 90:2), and His name is “*from everlasting*” (Isa 63:16) and “*endureth for ever*” (Ps 135:13)*

Our Saviour Jesus Christ is “*the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*” (Heb 13:8). He is our “*high priest for ever*” (Heb 6:20) and our “*everlasting King*” (Jer 10:10; Ps 10:16), and His throne is “*for ever and ever*” (Ps 45:6), “*He ruleth by his power for ever*” (Ps 66:7), and His kingdom is “*an everlasting kingdom*” (Ps 145:13; Dan 4:3; 7:27; 2 Peter 1:11), and He “*hast the words of eternal life*” (John 6:68).

The Holy Spirit is the “*eternal Spirit*” (Heb 9:14) and “*the Spirit of the living God*” (2 Cor 3:3).

As God is everlasting, He has preserved His Word “*from this generation for ever*” (Ps 12:7) and “*keepeth truth for ever*” (Ps 146:6). His truth “*endureth for ever*” (Ps 117:2), and His Word is “*for ever... settled in heaven*” (Ps 119:89) and “*shall stand for ever*” (Isa 40:7). Praise the living God, for His mercy is “*everlasting*” and “*endureth for ever*” (Ps 100:5; 136:1), for His ways are “*everlasting*” (Hab 3:6; Ps 139:24), for His “*everlasting love*” (Jer 31:3), His “*everlasting consolation*” (2 Thess 2:16), His “*everlasting kindness*” (Isa 54:8), His “*everlasting joy*” (Isa 35:10; 51:11), His “*eternal purpose*” (Eph 3:11), His “*everlasting righteousness*” (Ps 119:142), His “*everlasting covenant*” (Gen 9:16; 17:7; Ps 105:10), His “*eternal power*” (Rom 1:20), His “*everlasting dominion*” (Dan 4:34), His “*everlasting gospel*” (Rev 14:6), His “*everlasting salvation*” (Isa 45:17; Heb 5:9), His “*eternal redemption*” (Heb 9:12), His “*eternal life*” (1 John 5:11)!

THOUGHT: I must trust in my everlasting God and His Word!

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for Thy eternal Truth and Life!

FRIDAY, MAY 14

PSALM 136

ISAIAH 26:4

*“Trust ye in the
LORD for ever.”*

DO YOU TRUST IN THE EVERLASTING GOD? (2)

Our everlasting God is worshipped day and night in heaven, so let us worship Him too: *“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created”* (Rev 4:10-11).

We are only helpless sinners who deserve to be condemned to Hell for ever, but by God’s grace, mercy, and goodness alone, we have been loved, chosen and saved: *“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee”* (Jer 31:3). Therefore, let us give thanks and praises to our everlasting God always, *“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever”* (1 Chron 16:34; Ps 136:1), and *“Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever”* (Ps 145:2; cf. 52:9), and *“O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever”* (Ps 30:12).

The world (with its vain glory and values) and human beings (with human words, philosophies and theories) are bound to change and will pass away, but the LORD our God and His Word remain the same for ever. Let us wisely put our trust in our everlasting God and His eternal Word rather than in frail human beings and their empty words: *“Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength”* (Isa 26:4), and *“I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever”* (Ps 52:8).

THOUGHT: *“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”* (Deut 33:27)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thee and Thy Word for ever.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

LUKE 16:19-31

MATTHEW 25:41

“ ... ye cursed into
everlasting fire.”

DO YOU FEAR THE EVERLASTING GOD?

It is serious and horrible to be judged and condemned to Hell, not for a year or a million years but for ever without end!

Many think that God is so good and loving that He will not send anyone to Hell. They forget that God is holy and righteous and He cannot ignore sins but will surely judge and condemn sinners to Hell! Actually, God has prepared Hell for Satan and his fallen angels, but God has to send sinners to Hell because they reject His love and salvation in Christ: “*Depart from me, ye cursed into **everlasting fire**, prepared for the devil and his angels*” (Matt 25:41), and “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*” (Rev 21: 8).

Eternal Hell is real whether we believe it or not. God’s Word confirms that it is a place of “**everlasting fire...everlasting punishment**” (Matt 25:41, 46), “*torments*” (Luke 16:23), “**everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord**” (2 Thess 1:9), “*a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth*” (Matt 13:42, 50), “*the lake of fire*” (Rev 20:15), being “**tormented day and night for ever and ever**” (Rev 20:10), and “**eternal fire**” (Jude 1:7).

If we are living against God and His Word, let us wisely repent right away and come back to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and trust in His everlasting grace and strength to live a holy life: “*But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life*” (Rom 6:22). Constrained by God’s love, let us share God’s salvation to our unbelieving loved ones and friends.

THOUGHT: Hell is a real place of everlasting punishment.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to fear Thy righteous judgment and share Thy salvation to others.

ABBA, FATHER

What would you think and how would you behave if you are a son or a daughter of a king? Surely, you would not worry about your life and about what you would eat, drink, or put on. You would feel secured as you are protected by the royal guards. You would behave as a prince or a princess of the royal family. You would never be ashamed of being a child of your father the king. What about our attitude towards our heavenly Father, our everlasting God and our King of kings? Why are we so much worried about our lives and sometimes frightened at our uncertain future? Are we living and behaving as sons and daughters in God's family?

We have learnt about the LORD our God, our Creator, our Almighty God, our most high God, and our everlasting God. However, in our great trials and difficulties, we sometimes feel that the LORD our God seems to be so high, so great and so far away from us and we are nothing and are so small that He may not care for us! Therefore, it is so comforting to remember that the LORD our God is our heavenly Father, who does love us and care for us, His beloved children, and we may cry unto Him, *Abba, Father* (Rom 8:15; Gal 6:6).

Abba is an Aramaic term, which means *father*. *Abba* appears three times in the New Testament and is used to address God in prayer. In the KJV, it appears as *Abba, Father* (Mark 14:36; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). The Hebrew term for "*father*" is *ab*, and in Greek, it is *pater*.

Abba, Father is first mentioned by our Lord Jesus Christ, who fervently prayed to His Father in the garden of Gethsemane with a submissive heart: "*And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt*" (Mark 14:36).

THOUGHT: Is God my heavenly Father?

PRAYER: Abba, Father, I am so blessed to be Thy child.

MONDAY, MAY 17

1 JOHN 3:1-10

JOHN 16:27

“... the Father himself loveth you.”

GOD THE FATHER LOVES YOU!

God the Father has revealed Himself to mankind through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*” (John 1:18), and Jesus says, “*If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him*” (John 14:7). Looking at Jesus Christ, we can be sure that our heavenly Father is not only almighty, holy and just, but also loving, caring, forgiving, gentle, and meek, and this truth will draw us closer to Him.

Do we trust in our heavenly Father’s love? “*For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God*” (John 16:27). He loved us so much that He “*spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*” (Rom 8:32; John 3:16). Our loving Father also gave us the Holy Spirit, who guides us, regenerates us, sanctifies, comforts and strengthens us. “*How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*” (Luke 11:13).

On the day of resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene and told her: “*go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God*” (John 20:17). Let us ponder on this truth: Jesus’ Father is our Father, and Jesus’ God is our God, and we are Jesus’ brethren, and the Father loves us as He loves Jesus, who prays, “*thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*” (John 17:23)!

THOUGHT: “*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.*” (1 John 3:1)

PRAYER: Abba Father, how I thank Thee for Thy love!

TUESDAY, MAY 18

1 JOHN 5:1-13

1 JOHN 3:9

“ ... he is born of God.”

ARE YOU A CHILD OF GOD?

Are you sure that you are born again by God's Word and by the Holy Spirit (John 1:12-13; 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23)? Have you repented of your sins, received Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour and read God's Word with a submissive heart? These are some signs of a born-again Christian:

Thirst for God: “My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (Ps 42:2).

Thirst for God's Word: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2).

Stop living in sin habitually: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3:9).

Believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Anointed Prophet, High Priest, and King) **and love God and His children:** “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him” (1 John 5:1).

Have the guidance and witness of the Holy Spirit: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God... The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom 8:14,16).

Be separate from sin, unbelief, worldliness and wrong doctrines: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a **Father** unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:17-18; cf. James 1:27; 1 Peter 1:16-17).

Repent right away when convicted of one's sins: (Read Psalm 51).

THOUGHT: “Blessed be the God and **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again.” (1 Peter 1:3)

PRAYER: Abba, Father, I thank Thee for having begotten me again.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

MATTHEW 6:25-34

LUKE 12:32

“ ... it is your Father’s
good pleasure.”

DO YOU TRUST IN YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER?

It is our heavenly Father’s sovereignty, love and grace alone that have drawn us to Jesus Christ and revealed His Son to us. “*No man can come to me, except **the Father** which hath sent me draw him*” (John 6:44) and “*Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it (Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God) unto thee, but **my Father** which is in heaven*” (Matt 16:16, 17). Our heavenly Father has even chosen us and prepared His kingdom for us before we were born: “*he hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world*” (Eph 1:4) and “*Fear not, little flock; for it is **your Father’s good pleasure** to give you the kingdom*” (Luke 12:32) and “*Come, ye blessed of **my Father**, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*” (Matt 25:34). Let us thank our loving Father!

Our heavenly Father is always in control and able to make all things work together for our good (Rom 8:28). He is our Creator and Potter and we are just the clay in His hand: “*But now, **O LORD, thou art our father**; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand*” (Isa 64:8). Nothing happens to us without our loving Father’s sovereign will and permission: “*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without **your Father***” (Matt 10:29). Let us praise our sovereign Father!

Let us seek our heavenly Father first and trust in His loving care: “*for **your heavenly Father** knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matt 6:32, 33).

THOUGHT: I trust in my heavenly Father’s sovereignty and loving care!

PRAYER: Abba Father, I thank Thee for having chosen me, cared for me and blessed me.

THURSDAY, MAY 20

HEBREW 12:1-11

LUKE 22:42

“... not my will,
but thine, be done.”

DO YOU HONOUR YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER?

“A son honoureth his father... if then **I be a father, where is mine honour?**” (Mal 1:6). Do we honour our heavenly Father by our proper worship, our obedience and submission to His will/Word and by our honour to His Son, Jesus Christ?

God the Father is worshipped in heaven, but He is still seeking true worshippers on earth: “**the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him**” (John 4:23). We must worship our heavenly Father in spirit and in truth according to His Word, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and with Jesus Christ as the centre of our worship (John 14:6; 17:17; 1 John 5:6). We must submit to our heavenly Father’s will as our Lord Jesus Christ did: “**And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee... nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt**” (Mark 14:36). Only “**he that doeth the will of my Father**” will enter into heaven (Matt 7:21; cf. 12:50), and “**He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father**” (John 5:23), and “**If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him**” (John 14:23).

We must appreciate our loving Father’s chastisement: “**For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; ... shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?**” (Heb 12: 6, 9). If we are backsliding, we should come back to our Father right away: “**And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him**” (Luke 15:20). Our Father is so good!

THOUGHT: Worship and submit to the Father in spirit and in truth!

PRAYER: Abba Father, help me to honour Thee and to submit to Thy will.

FRIDAY, MAY 21

JOHN 15:1-8

JOHN 15:8

“Herein is my Father glorified.”

DO YOU GLORIFY YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER?

Jesus Christ glorified His Father and finished His Father’s work: *“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do”* (John 17:4). We must do the same.

- **Bear much fruit to glorify our heavenly Father:** *“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit”* (John 15:8). And *“the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance... all goodness and righteousness and truth... holiness”* (Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:9; Rom 6:22). Are we bearing such good fruit?

- **Reflect the light of Jesus Christ** in this world of darkness to glorify our heavenly Father: *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matt 5:16). Do others see Jesus in you? In me?

- **Do everything to our heavenly Father’s glory alone:** *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”* (1 Cor 10:31).

- **Give thanks to our heavenly Father** always for all things: *“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Eph 5:20; Col 1:12; 3:17).

- **Be faithful to glorify our heavenly Father:** *“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified”* (1 Peter 4:14).

- **Be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect:** *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”* (Matt 5:48). *“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful”* (Luke 6:36). This command must keep us humble as we are not yet perfect!

THOUGHT: Living against God’s Word will not glorify Him.

PRAYER: Abba Father, help me to glorify Thee always wherever I am.

PRAY TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Jesus prays to His Father, addressing Him as “*Abba, Father*” (Mark 14:36), “*Father*” (John 17:21, 24) “*O Father*” (John 17:5), “*Holy Father*” (John 17:11), “*O righteous Father*” (John 17:25), and we are encouraged to do the same (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). Jesus teaches us to pray to our heavenly Father in His name: “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you*” (John 16:23). And He taught us how to pray properly (Matt 6: 9-13):

Pray with a humble heart before our most high Father: “*Our Father which art in heaven.*” Do we humble ourselves in prayer before our sovereign Father, the most high God, who is in control and above all?

Put our heavenly Father’s name, kingdom, and will first: “*Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*” Do we do that not only in our prayer but also in our life?

Pray for our daily need: “*Give us this day our daily bread.*” Do we trust in our heavenly Father’s loving care day by day?

Pray for forgiveness: “*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*” Do we repent of our sins, ask our heavenly Father for forgiveness and willingly forgive those who have offended us?

Pray for protection: “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*” Jesus still prays His Father to keep us: “*Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me...keep them from the evil*” (John 17:11, 15). Do we humbly ask our heavenly Father to keep us from Satan, evil and sins (Jude 1:24-25)?

Praise our heavenly Father: “*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*” Do we praise our heavenly Father?

THOUGHT: “*Watch ye therefore, and pray always.*” (Luke 21:36)

PRAYER: Abba Father, help me to humbly pray to Thee with trust and submission.

HONOUR THE LORD'S NAME (JEHOVAH) AND HIS WORD

The Jews honour the covenant name of their God with so much reverence that they will only say the name *Jehovah* in their worship, prayers, blessing or in serious vows; otherwise, they will say *Adonai* to refer to *Jehovah*. The translators of the KJV must have understood the Jewish attitude of reverence toward the covenant name *Jehovah* as they translated that name as *LORD* (all capital letters) except in these four verses for special emphasis: Exod 6:3; Ps 83:18; Isa 12:2; 26:4.

When I took the course *Kept Pure in All Ages* under Dr Jeffrey Khoo at the Far Eastern Bible College, it is interesting to learn about the method of Old Testament transmission. For example, the scribe must first read aloud each word before he writes it. Whenever he has to write God's name (i.e. *Elohim*), he must clean his pen; but before writing the name *Jehovah*, he will have to wash his whole body to show his carefulness and reverence to God's Word and His covenant name *Jehovah*. The manuscript is carefully checked and the number of letters counted. One mistake in one page will have that whole page condemned. Three mistakes in any one page will have the whole manuscript condemned. If there is an omission or addition of just one letter, or if one letter touched another, the manuscript will be condemned and destroyed at once. That is how perfectly God has preserved His Word for His people throughout the ages until the printing machine was invented in His due time just before the 16th Century Reformation. However, it is sad that “scholarly” textual critics nowadays have regarded the thrown-away condemned manuscripts as more reliable than God's divinely preserved texts (the texts that underly the KJV)! These critics do not honour the LORD and His Word at all!

Do we keep God's third commandment: “*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain*” (Exod 20:7)?

THOUGHT: “*Fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD.*” (Deut 28:58)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to fear Thy name and to honour Thy Word.

MONDAY, MAY 24

GENESIS 22:1-18

DEUTERONOMY 6:5

“ ... love the LORD thy God
with all thine heart.”

A REAL TESTING!

Abraham must have loved Isaac more than himself or anyone or anything else, so God tested Abraham to see whether he loved God above all. His love for God must be manifested in complete obedience to His Word. God’s instruction to Abraham was: *“Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering”* (Gen 22:1-2). It is a real test for Abraham to offer his only son Isaac in his old age! It is idolatry if we love anyone or anything more than God or if we fail to totally obey His Word: *“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me”* (Matt 10:37).

Abraham believed that God would faithfully keep His Word, covenant and promises when he offered Isaac: *“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son... Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure”* (Heb 11:17, 19). Do we still trust in God and His faithfulness, His Word and His promises when we are tried or when many others doubt God and His Word?

Abraham did not tell Sarah about offering Isaac, neither did he tell Isaac and his servants about it. When Isaac asked him about the lamb for a burnt offering, Abraham answered his son with trust in the LORD: *“My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering”* (Gen 22:8). Sometimes, when we know God’s will, we must obey Him secretly and personally so that no one may hinder our obedience to God.

THOUGHT: *“If a man love me, he will keep my words.”* (John 14:23)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to love Thee and to obey Thy Word above all.

TUESDAY, MAY 25

ROMANS 8:31-39

GENESIS 22:14

*“Abraham called the name
of that place Jehovahjireh.”*

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE (JEHOVAHJIREH)

Praise the LORD for His sufficient grace that Abraham passed the test. The angel of the LORD called to him out of heaven and said, *“Abraham, Abraham:... Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for **now I know that thou fearest God**, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me”* (Gen 22:11-12). Does God know that we fear Him and have not withheld anyone or anything from Him when He requires our total obedience and submission?

Abraham did not lose Isaac as God provided a lamb for a burnt offering, and from this experience, he learnt that God is *Jehovahjireh*, or *the LORD will see and will provide*. And *“Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovahjireh**: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen”* (Gen 22: 14). Truly, we shall not lose anything when we offer it to the Lord, even our lives, our time, our service, etc. We shall experience that our LORD is always faithful and He will richly bless us and provide all our needs when we trust in Him and obey His Word.

Our heavenly Father provided His dearly-beloved and only begotten Son for our atoning sacrifice, and surely He will provide all our need as He is still our *Jehovahjireh* for ever: *“**He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?**”* (Rom 8:32). *“**But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus**”* (Phil 4:19).

Do we trust in *Jehovahjireh*, the LORD our Provider?

THOUGHT: *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matt 6:33)

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for being my *Jehovahjireh*.

YOU NEED THE GOOD SHEPHERD, JESUS CHRIST

Every sheep needs a good shepherd and his loving care, guidance and protection!

Sheep are naive, harmless, and simple. Without a good shepherd's care, they easily go astray and are scattered (Matt 9:36). If the shepherd does not seek the lost sheep and bring them back, they will perish as they do not know how to seek the shepherd or go back to the fold by themselves. The LORD says, "*As a shepherd seeketh out his flock..., so will I seek out my sheep*" (Eze 34:11), "*And other sheep I have... them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice*" (John 10: 16). Moreover, sheep are helpless and defenceless. They cannot protect themselves and become easy prey for the wild beasts. Without a good shepherd's protection, they are helpless: "*an hireling, and not the shepherd,... seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep*" (John 10:12).

Without a good shepherd's guidance and care, the sheep may eat poisonous grass, plants or weeds and then get sick and die. Different types of poisonous grass and plants have made many wandering sheep sick and die in Africa, America, Canada, and Australia. The symptoms are weakened limbs, convulsions, trembling, vomiting, loss of appetite, difficult breathing, constipation or diarrhoea, which eventually lead to death. Spiritually speaking, many "Christians" today are fed with the "poisonous food" of unbiblical doctrines, human philosophy and psychology, worldly values and entertainment, etc. Consequently, they lose their strength to obey God, their appetite for God's Word, their desire to pray, or to walk close with God, their sensitive conscience to discern truth from falsehood or right from wrong, etc.

Jesus says, "***I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep***" (John 10:11). Who is the good shepherd of your soul?

THOUGHT: Without the good Shepherd Jesus Christ, I am lost.

PRAYER: O LORD, I do need Thee to shepherd my soul.

THURSDAY, MAY 27

PSALM 23

PSALM 23:1

“The LORD is my shepherd.”

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD (JEHOVAH-ROHI) (1)

Psalm 23 is very popular because it provides great comfort to Bible-believing Christians, even God’s children. It has even been set to music. Many Christians can recite it by heart. Psalm 23 was composed by King David, who was a good shepherd, caring for his sheep, leading feeding and protecting them (1 Sam 16:19; 17:15, 34-37). Therefore, when thinking of the loving care, leading and protection of the LORD in his life, with faith and gratitude David acknowledged and confessed his trust in the LORD as his personal Shepherd: *“The LORD is my shepherd (Jehovah-rohi); I shall not want”* (Ps 23:1). Can we also confess *“The LORD is my Shepherd”* with a personal trust in His loving care and a personal submission to His leadership and guidance? Meditating on Psalm 23, we must appreciate our LORD’s loving care, guidance, and protection.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: I can enjoy a peaceful rest with spiritual food from God’s pure Word, instead of getting spiritually sick by “junk food” of interesting stories and subjective “experiences” or be poisoned by wrong doctrines, human philosophies, psychological counselling, worldly mindsets, or false isms.

He leadeth me beside the still waters: I can enjoy spiritual refreshment and washing by the LORD and His Word, instead of being deceived and defiled by exciting and forceful human words or worldly music.

He restoreth my soul: I can enjoy a spiritual revival from the LORD’s presence and His Word, instead of being deceived by fake revivals with “speaking in tongues,” fake healing, lying signs or big membership.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake: I can enjoy the LORD’s leading in His right and narrow way leading to life, instead of being misled in the broad worldly way leading to destruction.

THOUGHT: It is really dangerous to follow hirelings!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to follow Thee and Thy Word alone.

FRIDAY, MAY 28

PSALM 23

PSALM 23:4

“Thou art with me.”

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD (JEHOVAH-ROHI) (2)

With the LORD as our Good Shepherd, we can enjoy not only His loving care, nurture, and guidance, but also His protection, His comfort and a blessed fellowship with Him. The personal pronoun *He* now becomes a more intimate *Thou*.

Thou art with me: I can enjoy my LORD’s presence with His peace and protection even in my afflictions or trials instead of being worried and frightened in such perilous time. No matter what you may have or be proud of, without the LORD, you can never have true and lasting peace in your days of troubles.

Thy rod and thy staff comfort me: I can enjoy my LORD’s protection and discipline in godliness and righteousness, which comfort my soul; instead of compromising or tolerating sin, selfishness, worldliness, or wrong doctrines, which only trouble my soul.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: I can enjoy spiritual meal fellowship with my LORD despite the contempt, hatred or envy of the world or the fierce anger of Satan, and not to be enslaved to sin, worldliness or Satan.

Thou anointest my head with oil: I can enjoy the spiritual anointing, enlightenment, empowerment, healing, and comfort from my LORD, instead of being lonely or bitter in spiritual blindness, emotional wounds, or depression.

My cup runneth over: My LORD’s abundant life, salvation, contentment and blessings can be seen in me and overflowing to others, instead of having a meaningless and empty life, always thirsty and hungry for something else.

In the end, I can enjoy a blessed fellowship with my LORD for ever, *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”*

THOUGHT: Do I enjoy many blessings from the Good Shepherd?

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for Thy fellowship and blessings.

SATURDAY, MAY 29

JOHN 10:1-11, 27-29

JOHN 10:27

“My sheep hear my voice.”

ARE YOU THE LORD'S SHEEP?

Perhaps you are wondering how you can enjoy the many blessings of the LORD as your Good Shepherd while you are in a confusing world full of sins, deceits, temptations, and snares, not to mention the compromising stance, misleading “truths,” false religions and apostasy around. The Lord Jesus Christ knows that you really need Him and His loving care. He loved you and came to die for you: ***“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep”*** (John 10:11). He is willing to be your Good Shepherd. Do you want to be His sheep?

To be the Lord’s sheep, you must acknowledge that you need Him and cannot be safe without Him, His care, His guidance and His protection, and then receive Him as your personal Shepherd with full trust and submission.

You must read God’s Word (the Holy Scripture) to familiarise yourself with your Shepherd’s voice, and then be discerning, only follow the LORD and His voice/Word, and flee from hirelings, false prophets (wolves in sheep’s clothing – Matt 7:15), or seductive voice from Satan and the world: *“the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him”* (John 10:4-5). As the Shepherd *“goeth before them, and the sheep follow him”* (John 10: 4), you must humbly walk after your LORD a step at a time with trust and submission and never foolishly run ahead of Him.

You must wisely hide yourself in your LORD, trust in His protection and *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”* (1 Peter 5:8). You are safe in your LORD’s mighty hand: *“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand”* (John 10:28).

THOUGHT: Am I the LORD’s sheep?

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to follow Thee and Thy voice/Word alone.

THE LORD IS MY BANNER (JEHOVAHNISSI)

God used Moses to deliver His covenant people from the bondage under the Egyptians, to lead them and to minister God's Word to them during their days of wandering in the wilderness. It was a hard and tough job for Moses. Besides enduring the unbelief and murmurings of the disobedient and stiff-necked people, Moses also encountered attacks from the enemies. In Exodus chapter 17, after Moses cried to the Lord for help and smote the rock to give water to the murmuring people, *"Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim"* (v 8). What would we do if we were in that situation?

Earlier in Exodus chapter 14, when the mighty Egyptians with their chariots pursued the Israelites after they left Egypt, Moses encouraged his frightened and helpless people to stand still: *"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace"* (Exod 14:13-14).

Now in Exodus chapter 17, understanding that God expected His people to fight against their enemies, Moses asked Joshua to choose men out of them to go out and fight with Amalek. They could not stand still and let the enemies defeat them. Standing on top of the hill, Moses held up his hand and Israel prevailed. When he let down his weary hand, Amalek prevailed. So Aaron and Hur took a stone for Moses to sit on, and each of them kept Moses' hands up until Joshua totally defeated Amalek and his people *"with the edge of the sword"* (Exod 17:13). The LORD commanded Moses to write this incident *"for a memorial in a book"* (v 14). And Moses built an altar and called the name of it **JehovahniSSI** (v15), which means **The LORD is my Banner** because the LORD gave them the victory!

THOUGHT: *"When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back."* (Ps 56:9).

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for being my Victory.

MONDAY, MAY 31

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

1 PETER 5:8

“ ... *your adversary the devil.*”

THE ENEMIES OF OUR SOULS

Today, our enemies are not human beings (flesh and blood): “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph 6:12). When we encounter hatred, opposition, harassment, oppression, or persecutions from human beings, we should see the power of darkness behind them. Satan does not want any to believe Jesus and be saved (Luke 8:12), so he tries his best to tempt believers with “*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*” (1 John 2:16) or to threaten and discourage them with afflictions or trials (Job 1 – 2) or with persecutions (Rev 2:10). Who are the enemies of our souls?

Our first enemy is our sinful nature with “*a revolting (stubborn) and a rebellious heart*” (Jer 5:23) and a deceitful and wicked heart (Jer 17:9). “*... the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*” (Rom 8:7). Our next enemy is worldliness: “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, ...whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God*” (James 4:4). And our most subtle and fierce enemy is Satan or the Devil: “*Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Peter 5:8).

Whether we believe it or not, these enemies are real and attack us every day, tempting us to sin or hindering us from obeying God’s Word. If you are compromising or lukewarm, Satan will not waste his energy to attack you. But if you seriously live a holy life according to God’s Word, you will see your sinful nature and Satan standing against you. Therefore, God commands us to stand firm with His power, put on His armour, and resist the enemies (Eph 6:10-18).

THOUGHT: My soul’s enemies are real, so I must have real victory.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to overcome my soul’s enemies always.

TUESDAY, JUNE 1

1 JOHN 5:1-13

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14

*“God...always causeth
us to triumph in Christ.”*

IS THE LORD YOUR BANNER/VICTORY? (1)

How can we overcome the enemies of our souls?

Be born-again: *“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world”* (1 John 5:5). When the seven sons of Sceva tried to cast out the evil spirit from a demon-possessed man in the name of the Lord Jesus, the evil spirit said, *“Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but **who are ye?**”* and the man prevailed against them (Acts 19:16). If we are not born again, we are victims of Satan and our sinful nature!

Be concerned for God’s name and glory: Moses was always concerned about God’s name and glory, even when God wanted to destroy His rebellious people (Num 14:16-17). How can our LORD be glorified if we are defeated by our sinful nature, temptations or worldliness? How can our LORD’s holy name be honoured if we fail to live a true Christian life? We must wholeheartedly trust in the LORD to overcome the enemies for His glory.

Have faith in the LORD and His Word: Moses must have trusted that the LORD was his Victory when he lifted up his hands. Our faith in the LORD and His Word is our victory: *“**this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.** Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”* (1 John 5:4-5). Doubting the LORD and His Word can never win the battle. We must personally and wholeheartedly trust in the LORD and His Word. The LORD Himself must always be our Banner/Victory. Having Him, we have His victory. Without Him we have no victory (John 15:5). *“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ”* (2 Cor 2:14).

THOUGHT: *“**Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty.**”* (1 Chron 29:11)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to wholeheartedly trust in Thee to win the battle for Thy glory.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

EPHESIANS 6:17

“... the sword of the Spirit,
which is the word of God.”

IS THE LORD YOUR BANNER/VICTORY ? (2)

Put on God’s whole armour: We are to put on the whole armour of God: God’s truth is our belt, God’s righteousness is our breastplate, God’s gospel of peace is our shoes, our faith in God is our shield, God’s salvation is our helmet, and God’s Word is the sword of the Spirit, our weapon (Eph 6:13-17). Joshua totally defeated the Amalekites “with the edge of the sword” (Exod 17:13). We must skilfully use God’s Word, the sword of the Holy Spirit, to defeat our enemies: “*the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one*” (1 John 2:14). Our LORD Jesus lives by God’s Word and defeated Satan by God’s Word (Matt 4:1-11). We must do the same to win the battle. If we doubt or criticize God’s Word, we are defeated by Satan already!

Pray without ceasing: Moses held up his hand and Joshua prevailed. This shows Moses’ fervent prayer to the LORD. David experienced the same: “*When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me*” (Ps 56:9). Having put on the armour of God, we are to pray: “*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints*” (Eph 6:18). Moses needed help from Aaron and Hur. We also need to pray one for another. Satan will be afraid when we unite our hearts and minds to cry unto the LORD for help.

The “*sword of the Spirit*” (i.e. God’s Word) and our prayers are offensive weapons. Satan will only flee when we resist him with God’s Word and our prayers in Jesus’ name. We must be strong “*in the Lord, and in the power of his might,*” trusting in our *JEHOVAHNISSI*, putting on His armour, and fighting a good fight of faith.

THOUGHT: Many are defeated by not using God’s armour!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to use Thy armour well to win the battle.

THE LORD OF HOSTS (JEHOVAH-SABAOOTH)

Sabaoth means *army, host, warfare* (Gesenius). The LORD of hosts refers to the LORD of His heavenly hosts of angels (Luke 2:13-14; cf. Ps 103:20-21) as well as the LORD of His earthly hosts of His people, both Israel (1 Sam 17:45) and His church (James 5:4; Eph 5:23). It is so encouraging to remember that one angel alone was able to destroy the mighty army of 185,000 Assyrians (2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chron 32:21). Why are we afraid of men or our souls' enemies when the LORD of hosts is with us and for us? Our Lord Jesus did not fear His enemies but told Peter to put his sword back and said, *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”* (Matt 26:53). No one would have been able to arrest our Lord Jesus if He had not been willing to give up His life for our sins!

The name **LORD of hosts** (Jehovah-sabaoth) has at least 226 occurrences (2 Kings 19:31; Ps 24:10; 46:7, et al) and is first mentioned in 1 Samuel 1:3, *“And this man (Elkanah) went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh.”* **The LORD, the God of hosts** is mentioned 7 times (Jer 38:17; 44:7; Amos 41:13; et al), **the LORD God of hosts** 21 times (2 Sam 5:10; 1 Kings 19:10; Isa 3:15, et al), and the **Lord of Sabaoth** twice (Rom 9:29; James 5:4).

The name *the LORD of hosts* denotes the sovereignty, power, holiness, glory, faithfulness, mercy, and righteous judgment of God, who is strong, mighty, wise and quick to help and defend His people or to judge His people and the nations.

THOUGHT: If the LORD of hosts is with me and for me, I am safe.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to know more about Thee and to trust in Thee.

FRIDAY, JUNE 4

JEREMIAH 33:1-12

ISAIAH 47:4

“... for our redeemer,
the LORD of hosts.”

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OF HOSTS (1)

The LORD of hosts is sovereign: “*The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand*” (Isa 14:24, 27). Shall not we trust in our LORD’s sovereignty and commit everything to Him as “*we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (Rom 8:28)?

The LORD of hosts is good and merciful: “*Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever*” (Jer 33:11). Do we acknowledge and appreciate our LORD’s goodness and mercy and then give thanks and praise to Him always? Truly, “*Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah*” (Isa 1:9; Rom 9:29).

The LORD of hosts is our mighty Redeemer: “*As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel*” (Isa 47:4; Jer 50:34). Is the LORD of hosts our personal mighty Redeemer, who has redeemed us from our sins, unrighteousness and the curse of the law? Do we belong to Him alone?

The LORD of hosts is our Maker and Husband: “*For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called*” (Isa 54:5). The church in Ephesus was rebuked by the Lord because they had left their first love (Rev 2:4). Our Lord loved us so much that He died for us. He would be most displeased and saddened if we fail to love Him above all.

THOUGHT: It is amazing that the LORD is my Maker, my Redeemer and my Husband!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thee, love Thee, and obey Thee.

SATURDAY, JUNE 5

ISAIAH 6:1-13

ISAIAH 6:3

*“Holy, holy, holy,
is the LORD of hosts.”*

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OF HOSTS (2)

The LORD of hosts is holy and glorious: Isaiah really humbled himself when he saw the glory and holiness of the LORD of hosts: *“And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory...** Then said I (Isaiah), **Woe is me! for I am undone**”* (Isa 6:3, 5). If we are still proud of ourselves, we have not yet seen the LORD’s glory and holiness!

The LORD of hosts is wise and perfect in His Work: *“This also cometh forth from **the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working**”* (Isa 28:29). Do we trust in our LORD, *“who **hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ**”* (Phil 1:6)?

The LORD of hosts is always ready to help and defend His obedient people: *“**God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...** **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge**”* (Ps 46:1, 7), and *“**As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem ... he will preserve it**”* (Isa 31:5). When a host of Syrians compassed about Dothan where Elisha dwelled, his servant was so frightened that he cried, *“**Alas, master! How shall we do?**”* Elisha said to him, *“**Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them,**”* and Elisha prayed the LORD to open his eyes and then he saw the mountain *“**full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha**”* (2 Kings 6:15-17). It is so vital to have our spiritual eyes open to see that the LORD of hosts is with us and around us so that we shall not panic before the mighty enemies.

THOUGHT: I need the LORD to be with me always.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to humbly exalt Thee and to trust in Thee.

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OF HOSTS (3)

The LORD of hosts resists the proud: *“For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low”* (Isa 2:12; cf. Mal 4:1). Truly, *“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble”* (James 4:6). It is better to humble ourselves than to have the LORD of hosts humble us because of our pride or arrogance.

The LORD of hosts expects us to hear and obey His Word alone: The LORD commands us not to hear the words of false prophets or false shepherds, but to hear and obey His Word alone: *“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; ... Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words?”* (Jer 35:13; cf. Jer 23:16; 29:8). Do we hear, trust and obey God's Word or human words?

The LORD of hosts is righteous in judgment: The holy and righteous LORD cannot tolerate sins and injustice, so He has judged and will surely judge all the nations and His disobedient people: *“the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment”* (Isa 5:16), and *“Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered”* (Jer 35:17). God has chastised His people throughout the ages due to their sins and backsliding to bring them back to Himself in repentance so that they *“might be partakers of his holiness”* (Heb 12:10). Shall not we wisely fear Him and depart from sin and evil?

THOUGHT: I must fear, trust and obey the LORD and His Word!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to fear Thee, trust in Thee and obey Thee and Thy Word.

MONDAY, JUNE 7

ROMANS 3:1-12

PSALM 11:7

“... the righteous LORD
loveth righteousness.”

NO ONE IS RIGHTEOUS BUT GOD

Many still trust in their goodness, their self-righteousness, or their good works. They do not humbly seek God’s righteousness and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how good we are, before God we are only hopeless sinners who are in great need of God’s grace and mercy. We need His salvation and righteousness. God’s Word confirms: “***There is none righteous, no, not one... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God***” (Rom 3:10, 23) and “***But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags***” (Isa 64:6). Knowing that no one is righteous, we cannot look to ourselves or men for salvation. We must not be deceived by men who claim that they are holy representatives of God and that we must come to God through them!

God’s Word declares that only God is righteous: “***The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works***” (Ps 145:17). He is the “*righteous God*” who tries our hearts (Ps 7:9). He is our “*righteous Father*” (John 17:25). He is “*the righteous LORD*” who loves righteousness (Ps 11:7; cf. Heb 1:9). His righteousness is “*very high*” (Ps 71:19) and “*endureth for ever*” (Ps 111:3). Truly, “*Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth*” (Ps 119:142). We must speak of God’s righteousness alone, not ours: “*I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*” (Ps 71:16).

As the LORD is upright and righteous (Ps 119:7, 137) and all His acts are righteous (I Sam 12:7), we must neither complain nor murmur against Him, nor blame Him for anything, nor revenge ourselves on anyone, but commit ourselves to Him and trust in Him and His righteousness in all things (Rom 12:19; Acts 17:31; Rev 19:11).

THOUGHT: No one is righteous but God alone.

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou alone art righteous.

TUESDAY, JUNE 8

ROMANS 4:1-13

JEREMIAH 33:16

“THE LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU)

Because no one is righteous but God, God must give His righteousness to mankind as a gift or else no one can be saved or can stand before Him, “*much more they which receive abundance of grace and of **the gift of righteousness** shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ*” (Rom 5:17). God has manifested His righteousness through His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to die for our sins and rose again for our justification: “*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, ... Who (Jesus Christ) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*” (Rom 3:21; 4:25). “*... this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU)***” (Jer 23:6; 33:16; cf. 1 Cor 1:30).

Our perfect Righteousness before God is not a thing but the living Lord Jesus Christ Himself! Receiving Him with trust and submission, we shall have His righteousness. Without Him we shall never be able to stand before the righteous God. Do we appreciate, love, and honour our Lord and count all things but loss “*that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, **the righteousness which is of God by faith***” (Phil 3:8-9)? Our Lord Jesus, who died for our sins, is ever living to make intercession for us, so no one, not even Satan, can accuse us of anything or condemn us before God: “*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*” (Rom 8:33-34; cf. 1 John 2:1). Praise the LORD!

THOUGHT: “*The righteousness which is of God by faith.*” (Phil 3:9)

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for being my Righteousness.

IS THE LORD YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS? (1)

Do you thirst for the LORD’s Righteousness? Jesus says, “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Matt 5:6). To hunger and thirst after righteousness means having a strong desire to be right before God, a right relationship with God, being acceptable to God. To be acceptable unto the holy God, we are to acknowledge our sins and our unrighteousness, then humbly come to the Lord Jesus in repentance and hide ourselves in His righteousness: “*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*” (2 Cor 5:21). Thank God for accepting us in Christ (Eph 1:6; 1 Cor 1:30-31).

Do you seek the LORD and His Righteousness? It is not enough to thirst for the LORD’s righteousness. We are to seek Him and His righteousness and this requires our heart, our zeal, our energy, and our time in our personal devotion (prayer and Bible study) and in our worship. God’s Word encourages us: “*Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth... seek righteousness, seek meekness*” (Zep 2:3), and “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*” (Matt 6:33). Seeking our LORD’s righteousness means seeking to know His Word, His will, His Truth and His work of salvation, through which we may know how to be accepted before God in Christ.

Do you humbly receive the LORD’s Righteousness by faith in Christ? The Pharisee who prayed to God with his trust in his righteousness and good works was rejected by the Lord. But the tax collector who acknowledged his sins and trusted in God’s mercy was justified (Luke 18:9-14; cf. Dan 9:18). Abraham “*believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness*” (Gen 15:6).

THOUGHT: “*The just shall live by faith.*” (Rom 1:17)

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for accepting me in Christ.

IS THE LORD YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS? (2)

Be clothed with the LORD’s Righteousness: To give us His robe of righteousness, our LORD Jesus had to obey His Father and keep God’s law to the jot and tittle (His active obedience) as well as to die on the cross to bear all our sins and unrighteousness (His passive obedience). We must personally take off our filthy garment of our unrighteousness and then put on our LORD’s perfect robe of righteousness: “*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness*” (Isa 61:10; cf. Phil 3:9).

Bear the fruit of Righteousness: Having Christ’s righteousness, we must also show the fruit of righteousness in our lives. We must be born again and be submissive to the Holy Spirit so that we may live a righteous life, keeping God’s Word even in our hearts, minds and deeds: “*If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him*” (1John 2:29; c.f. 3:7), and “*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth*” (Eph 5:9) and “*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk ... after the Spirit*” (Rom 8:4).

Next, we are to separate ourselves from sins, unbelief, worldliness and wrong doctrines: “*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?*” (2 Cor 6:14). We are to study and keep God’s Word with faith and obedience so that we may be perfect (mature) in Christ: “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*” (2 Tim 3:16-17).

THOUGHT: “*The fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*” (Rev 19:8)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to bear the fruit of Thy righteousness.

FRIDAY, JUNE 11

JOSHUA 7:1-15

HEBREWS 12:14

*“Follow peace with all men and holiness,
without which no man shall see the Lord.”*

ARE YOU SANCTIFIED?

Without being sanctified, *“no man shall see the Lord”* (Heb 12:14). Do we want to see the LORD? Then, we must be sanctified. There is no other way. Because God is holy, He commands us to be sanctified, or else He will neither be with us nor have fellowship with us: *“neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow”* (Joshua 7:12-13), and *“Be ye holy; for I am holy”* (1 Peter 1:16; cf. Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7).

The verb “sanctify” means to make holy, make clean, to consecrate, to set apart from common use for God’s use. The temple was holy because it was set apart from common use for God’s use. It was dedicated to the LORD, and was filled with His holy presence (2 Chron 7:1-3).

First, we must separate ourselves from sins, self, worldliness, wrong doctrines and disobedient brethren: *“I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people”* (Lev 20:23-26; 2 Cor 6:14-18; 2 Thess 3:6, 14-15). Are we separated unto the LORD?

Next, we must dedicate ourselves to the LORD and belong to Him alone: *“And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine”* (Lev 20:26; 1 Cor 6:20). Do we belong to the LORD alone?

Finally, we must submit to the LORD and His holy Word, be controlled and used by Him according to His will and way: *“And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you... Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them”* (Lev 20:8, 22). Do we submit to the LORD and His Word?

THOUGHT: Without holiness, no one will see the LORD!

PRAYER: O LORD, please sanctify me and keep me holy.

SATURDAY, JUNE 12

HEBREWS 10:1-14

EXODUS 31:13

*“I am the LORD
that doth sanctify you.”*

**THE LORD THAT DOTH SANCTIFY YOU
(JEHOVAH-M’QADDISHKHEM)**

Human beings with their totally depraved and sinful nature can never save nor sanctify themselves. We are saved and sanctified by grace through faith alone (Eph 2:8; Acts 26:18; 1 Peter 5:10).

Sanctification is the gracious work of the Triune God, and His name is **JEHOVAH-M’QADDISHKHEM**, which means *“I am the LORD that doth sanctify you”* (Exod 31:13; Lev 20:8; 21:8). We are sanctified by God the Father (John 17:17; Jude 1), by God the Son (Heb 2:11), and by God the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13). God Himself is the Author and Finisher of our sanctification: *“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly”* (1 Thess 5:23). Without the LORD’s holy presence and His gracious work in our hearts and lives, we can never be holy or sanctified!

We have our position of sanctification in our Lord Jesus Christ, we *“are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints”* (1 Cor 1:2). Our Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself as an atoning sacrifice for us so that we may be sanctified by His sacrifice and His blood, *“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”* (Heb 10:10, 14) and *“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood”* (Heb 13:12). Praise the Lord!

But sanctification is also a process of transforming us into the image of the Lord Jesus until we shall be like Him when He comes. God’s Word is holy (Rom 1:2; 2 Tim 3:15), and the Holy Spirit uses God’s holy Word to sanctify us, *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”* (John 17:17). If we are not submissive to the control of the Holy Spirit and to the authority of God’s Word, we cannot be sanctified.

THOUGHT: I am sanctified by the Triune God and His holy Word.

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for Thy gracious work of sanctification.

ARE YOU WHOLLY SANCTIFIED? (1)

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thess 5:23-24).

God made man a two-fold being: material (i.e. the body) and non-material (i.e. the spirit and soul).

The non-material part of man that communicates with God is man's spirit. Before being saved, our spirit was “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Eph 2:1). To have a sanctified spirit, we must first be born again to see God's truth, understand His Word, and cry unto Him, *Abba, Father*.

Next, our spirit must be separated from sins, idolatry, doubt, disobedience, self-will, self-glory, wrong doctrines, and from anyone or anything that is against God's Word. Many are influenced by spirits that are not of God without even being aware of it. It is especially dangerous if that spirit is of antichrist or is anti-God's Word: “*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God ... And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist*” (1 John 4:1, 3; cf. 2 Cor 11:4).

Then, our spirit must be consecrated to the LORD in order that we can look unto Him alone (Heb 12:2), hear His Word alone (John 10:4-5), trust in Him alone (Ps 118:8-9), obey Him and His will alone (Acts 5:29), serve Him and worship Him alone (Matt 4:10), glorify Him alone (1 Cor 10:31), fear Him alone (Matt 10:28), love Him the most (Matt 22:37) and know Him more and rejoice in Him (Phil 3:8, 4:4).

Finally, our spirit must be filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18) and by God's Word (Col 3:16) so that we may grow in grace and in God's knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) and we can be used to serve the LORD, to preach Christ and to contend for His truth.

THOUGHT: I must be sanctified wholly.

PRAYER: O LORD, please keep my spirit holy always.

ARE YOU WHOLLY SANCTIFIED? (2)

The non-material part of man that communicates with other human beings and the things around him is man’s soul. Our soul must be sanctified as well.

Many allow their minds or thinking to be influenced by human philosophies, worldly mindsets or values (Col 2:8). As a result, their worldly view together with human reasoning hinder them from receiving God’s truth with a child-like faith. Their consciences may be so dulled or hardened by their sinful habits, unbiblical doctrines or ungodly environment (1 Tim 4:1-3) that they cannot discern truth from falsehood or right from wrong. Some use their skills for their own pleasure and glory regardless of the LORD and His Word! Others love someone or something so much that their hearts and minds have no place for the LORD, and that is idolatry! And there are those who allow their souls and minds to be defiled by worldly pleasures, anger, bitterness, vengeance, pride, sinful lusts, selfish ambitions, etc (Eph 4:31; 5:3-5).

Our minds, consciences, emotion, understanding, judgment, memory, skills, etc must be separated from sins, self-will, self-glory, lusts, pride, wrong doctrines, worldliness and anything against God’s Word.

We must dedicate our souls to our LORD and be filled with the Holy Spirit and His Word and be used according to His will and for His glory alone. Our love must be controlled by God’s holy love and our mind by Jesus’ mind. Our conscience must be tuned up to God’s holy Word. Our memory must be used to store God’s Word and remember His grace and blessings. Our talents must be used to glorify our LORD. Sadly, many so-called “Christians” are using their mind, understanding, judgment, and skills to argue against God’s divinely preserved Word instead of magnifying God and His Word (Ps 138:2)!

The Holy Spirit can use a sanctified Christian and fill him with His truth and wisdom to contend for God’s Truth. And God can sanctify his skills and talents for service to the LORD for His glory.

THOUGHT: My soul must be sanctified unto the LORD.

PRAYER: O LORD, please keep my soul holy always.

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

ROMANS 6:1-13

ROMANS 12:1

“... present your bodies
a living sacrifice, holy ...”

ARE YOU WHOLLY SANCTIFIED? (3)

The material part of man is his physical body. Our bodies are like “*instruments*” (Rom 6:12-13) carrying out what we want or desire in our hearts: “*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*” (Matt 12:34). A heart full of sinful lusts may lure a person into pornography, adultery, or fornication. A heart full of anger or vengeance may pour out unkind words or wicked actions. Sadly, many are deceiving themselves by assuming that they are “*saints*” just because they are in monasteries, church buildings or temples while their hearts are still “*full of hypocrisy and iniquity*” (Matt 23:28) and are not right before the LORD (Acts 8:21)! A person may restrain himself from watching pornography, but if he still embraces sinful lusts in his heart, he has sinned. It is vital to have a sanctified spirit and soul first and then a sanctified body.

Our physical senses are like windows opened to the world. If we fail to close the windows of our eyes (stop reading or watching ungodly products), the windows of our ears (stop listening to worldly music and unbiblical messages), or if we fail to keep our feet from going to places of temptations, our spirit and soul will be defiled.

Our bodies must be separated from sin, self, lust, worldliness, fornication, adultery, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, unhealthy stuff, etc. Our bodies must be offered to our LORD as “*a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*” (Rom 12:1). Our eyes, ears, hands and feet must be used to do God’s Will for His glory. Our tongues must be separated unto our LORD to speak, sing, or preach what pleases Him alone. Sadly, the same tongue that sings praises to the LORD, prays to Him, or preaches God’s Word is used to sing worldly songs, to tell lies, to curse others or to argue against God’s Word!

THOUGHT: “*Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost... therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit.*” (1 Cor 6:19-20)

PRAYER: O LORD, please keep my body holy always.

PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF ILLNESSES

After God had created the heavens and the earth and everything in it, including the first human beings, Adam and Eve, “*God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good*” (Gen 1:31). Sadly, due to the disobedience of Adam and Eve, curse, sin and death entered into the world (Gen 3:16-19; Rom 5:12). But thank God for granting human beings wisdom, intelligence and skills to diagnose and treat many illnesses and diseases. Thank God for good doctors, nurses, modern medical equipment and good medication. However, they are still searching for methods to treat new diseases, cancer, bacteria, viruses, etc. Why? Because we are living in a sinful and cursed world.

The Jews read Deuteronomy 28 and concluded that all the sick were cursed by God. So did Jesus’ disciples when they saw the blind man. And Jesus had to correct them (John 9:2-3). So, we must not quickly misjudge others when they are sick as Job’s three friends did to him when he was afflicted (Job 11:14). Our LORD is sovereign. Nothing happens to His children by accident or without His will or permission. We must understand that through illnesses God may want to:

- judge the wicked (Exod 9:11; 1 Sam 5:9; Acts 12:23; 13:11),
- manifest His work of healing for His glory (John 9:3),
- bring some to His truth and salvation or redirect their lives to do His will (Acts 9:1-19; Gal 4:13-15),
- chastise His children (Deut 28:15-29; 1 Cor 11:29-32),
- allow Satan to afflict His children to refine them (Job 2:4-8; 23:10),
- keep His children humble and reliant on Him (2 Cor 12:7-9),
- bring His children home to be with Him (2 Kings 13:14).

THOUGHT: There is some reason behind an illness.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thy sovereignty in my illness.

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

EXODUS 15:22-27

EXODUS 15:26

*“I am the LORD
that healeth thee.”*

THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE (JEHOVAH-RAPHA)

The children of Israel murmured against Moses for the bitter waters at Marah. Moses *“cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet”* (Exod 15:25). This is followed by the LORD’s instruction and promise to His people individually throughout the ages: *“If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for **I am the LORD that healeth thee**”* (v 26). The Lord is still our Divine Healer today, *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”* (Heb 13:8). Praise the Lord! Many fake healers teach that sign-gift like healing is still ongoing, and that the Lord always wants His children to be healed and be healthy (John 5:6). They have deceived many by their empty claims of healing the sick. They also blame those who are not healed for their lack of faith! We must not be deceived by them.

Our Lord gave His apostles power to heal the sick in order to confirm His Word when they preached in the first century (Mark 16:20), but the sign-gifts have ceased since the New Testament was completely recorded for reading, studying, preaching, and teaching (1 Cor 13:8-10). At the beginning of Paul’s ministry, many were healed by him in Jesus’ name. But later Paul had to cry unto the Lord for mercy upon Epaphroditus who was seriously sick (Phil 2:27). He also left Trophimus at Miletum due to his illness (2 Tim 4:20).

The LORD is still our Divine Healer. So when we are sick, we just come directly to Him in prayer with trust and submission, not to any fake healer.

THOUGHT: The LORD is my divine Healer.

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for being my great Healer.

IS THE LORD YOUR DIVINE HEALER? (1)

What should be our proper attitude towards illnesses?

Be not surprised or frightened but trust in God’s sovereignty because God is able to make all things work together for good to His obedient children (Rom 8:28). Our bodies are naturally getting weaker (2 Cor 4:16), and God can call us home any time, even tonight (Luke 12:20). If we desire to be with the LORD (Phil 1:21-23), we shall have peace as God may use illnesses to bring us home to be with Him!

Examine ourselves as God may use illnesses to chastise us and bring us back to Himself or to refine us and keep us humble. Have we loved the LORD and our neighbours as He has taught us to (Luke 10:27)? Have we carefully kept His Word or done the right thing in His sight? If not, we must humbly confess our sins to the LORD and *“confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed”* and ask Bible-believing elders to pray for our illnesses (James 5:14-16).

Seek the LORD first before seeing the doctor because King Asa was not blessed nor healed, *“in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians”* (2 Chron 16:12). Many just seek the doctors or fake healers when they are sick. Some do not go to see the doctors nor take medication as they want to trust in the LORD alone. Both attitudes are not biblical. God can heal His children directly or use doctors, nurses, medical equipment and medication to heal them. Jesus says, *“They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick”* (Matt 9:12), and Luke was *“the beloved physician”* (Col 4:14). Therefore, when we are sick, we need to see the doctor, but we must seek the LORD in prayer and examine ourselves first.

THOUGHT: I must trust in the LORD and seek Him first.

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thee, seek Thee, and examine myself first in my illness.

IS THE LORD YOUR DIVINE HEALER? (2)

Dedicate our lives to the LORD with trust and submission as the LORD will not heal us so that we may continue living in sins. Surely, He will not support sins, ungodliness or worldliness: *“Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee”* (John 5:14). We must rededicate our lives to the LORD to live for Him and for His glory as a living and holy sacrifice unto Him (Rom 12:1).

Live wisely as our body is God’s temple (1 Cor 6:19) and wisely take care of it with healthy food and enough rest. We should stop taking anything harmful to our bodies although it may be delicious or tasty, for example, tobacco, alcohol, food stuff with harmful chemicals, etc. We should also keep our hearts peaceful and joyful in the LORD, *“the joy of the LORD is your strength”* (Neh 8:10), and *“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones”* (Prov 17:22). Truly, stress, anxieties, pride, anger, hatred, vengeance, envy, etc. will harm our souls and bodies.

Look forward to our Lord’s coming when He *“shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body”* (Phil 3:21) and look forward to the new heaven where *“there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain”* (Rev 21:4). No more pain or illness or death! Praise the LORD!

Even though we may have sought the LORD in prayer, examined ourselves, asked godly elders to pray for us, seen the doctor, taken the medication, our illnesses may not be cured. But we must still trust in the LORD and His sufficient grace with a submissive and thankful heart (1 Thess 5:16-18).

THOUGHT: *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”* (Job 13:15)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to trust in Thee with submission always.

THE LORD IS PEACE (JEHOVAHSHALOM)

Do we truly have peace in our hearts? Many think that they can just live with optimism without any worries, but life in this world is not as simple as they think. We do not know what may happen to us and to our loved ones tomorrow. Today we may live in peace when we are still healthy, have a stable job, a nice family, and money in the bank, etc. However, without Christ, anxieties and insecurities will occupy our hearts when we lose our jobs, lack money, fall sick or have family breakdown, or when we are misunderstood, criticized, opposed, or when our secrets are exposed, or when we have to encounter difficulties, trials, threats, dangers, natural disasters or death, etc. Thank God and praise the LORD that He is All we need, even our Peace in all situations.

The Book of Judges tells us about the failure of sinful and totally depraved human beings, even of God's chosen people Israel, in keeping God's commandments, about God's righteous judgment and chastisement, and about God's great mercy and deliverance when they repented and cried to Him for help.

Chapter 6 tells us about the enemies coming to oppress the children of Israel due to their sins and idolatry. Then, they humbly cried unto the LORD for help, and the Angel of the LORD (the Lord Jesus Christ in pre-incarnate appearance) appeared to Gideon and sent him to deliver His people from the oppression of the enemies. Gideon was so frightened, assuming that he would die as he had seen the Angel of the LORD. But the LORD said, “*Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die*” (Judges 6: 23). Then, Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it “*Jehovahshalom*” which means *the LORD is peace* or the Lord sends peace (v 24).

THOUGHT: Only the LORD can give me true peace.

PRAYER: O LORD, I thank Thee for being my *Jehovahshalom*.

MONDAY, JUNE 21

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21

JOHN 14:27

“ ... my peace I give unto you.”

IS THE LORD YOUR PEACE? (1)

How can sinful and rebellious human beings live in peace with the holy and righteous God? Thank God for His grace, love and mercy when He sent His only begotten Son, who humbly came into this world, died for our sins and rose again to bring us back to God in reconciliation, “*all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*” (2 Cor 5:18; cf. Rom 5:1; Col 1:20; Isa 53:5).

Jesus Christ is “*The Prince of Peace*” (Isa 9:6), “*the King of peace*” (Heb 7:2) and “*he is our peace*” (Eph 2:14), and He is still able to give us His own peace in all situations: “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*” (John 14:27; cf. 16:33). Jesus Christ alone is our Peace with God and Peace of God. Having Him, we have His peace. Without Him, we have no true peace at all. How can we enjoy His peace?

Fear God and depart from sin and evil as sin always troubles our souls and separates us from our LORD of peace. God’s Word confirms twice that “*There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked*” (Isa 48:22; 57:21). The only way to enjoy God’s peace is to come back to Him in repentance right away to restore our fellowship with Him, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9). We should not envy those who are doing wicked things against God and His Word even when they seem to be prosperous because they have no true peace at all. May the LORD sanctify us and keep us holy to enjoy His peace always (1 Thess 5:23).

THOUGHT: Sin is the cause of all troubles.

PRAYER: O LORD, keep me holy to enjoy Thy peace always.

IS THE LORD YOUR PEACE? (2)

Humbly trust in the LORD, look unto Him, and commit everything to Him to enjoy His perfect peace: *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee”* (Isa 26:3). In all situations, let us turn to our LORD, look unto Him alone (not at ourselves or others or our troubles), cry unto Him for help, commit everything to Him, and trust in Him alone. *“Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And **the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus**”* (Phil 4:6-7). How wonderful it is when God’s peace keeps our hearts and minds in Christ, and others will be surprised at our peace in times of danger, trial or fatal illness!

Hear God’s Word, do God’s will and follow His guidance to enjoy His peace. Jonah ran away from God’s will and he got into trouble as well as brought troubles to others (Jonah 1). It is always wise for us to hear our Shepherd’s voice (God’s Word), do His will, and follow after Him alone. *“Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them”* (Ps 119:165; cf. Phil 4:9). Let us submit to the Holy Spirit and God’s Word and experience His fruit of peace (Gal 5:22; Rom 8:6; Col 3:15).

Keep a close fellowship with the LORD to enjoy His peace as the LORD Himself is our Peace and All we need. The LORD carried Daniel and his three friends through their perilous trials because He was with them and for them (Dan 3:16-30; 6:10-23). If the LORD of peace is with us and for us, we shall have His peace and All we need.

THOUGHT: Keep a close fellowship with the LORD always.

PRAYER: O LORD, please be with me and for me always.

THE LORD IS THERE (JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH)

Although the prophecy is for His covenant people Israel and the LORD’s name *Jehovah-shammah* is the name of God’s City or new Jerusalem (Ezek 48:35; cf. Rev 21), *Jehovah-shammah*, which means “**The LORD is there**,” is for all His children, including you and me. Truly, God did love mankind and desire to dwell in the midst of His people, so He gave His only begotten Son to come into this sinful and cursed world to die for their sins, and His name is “*Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us*” (Matt 1:23). *Jehovah-shammah* denotes our LORD’s omnipresence and omniscience. He is everywhere, and knows everything, and nothing can be hidden from Him. “*O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising... For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me... Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*” (Ps 139:1-2; 4-7).

Moreover, we have the great privilege and honour to have the Trinity to be with us and in us: “*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter (the Holy Spirit), that he may abide with you for ever... If a man love me (Jesus, the Son), he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we (the Father and the Son) will come unto him, and make our abode with him*” (John 14:17,23). Let us ponder on this precious truth! Let us love the LORD and keep His Word to enjoy His blessed presence.

Our LORD Jesus promises, “***I am with you always, even unto the end of the world***” (Matt 28:20). Truly, “*Jesus Christ is in you*” (2 Cor 13:5), and “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Col 1:27). It is so comforting!

THOUGHT: It is amazing and comforting to have the Trinity with me!

PRAYER: O LORD, how I thank Thee for being with me!

DO YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD'S OMNIPRESENCE AND OMNISCIENCE?

Sometimes, due to our difficulties, problems, or trials in life, we may be so worried, troubled and frightened that we forget our LORD's presence with us and in us. It is so comforting to remember that our LORD is with us always because His Word says so (John 14:17, 23; Matt 28:20). This confidence is based on His faithful Word, not on our feelings. Let us trust in our LORD more with thanksgiving because He cares for us and He knows our weaknesses, our health condition, our difficulties, our trials, and all our needs. *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me"* (Ps 23:4).

Acknowledging our LORD's omnipresence and omniscience, we shall also fear Him more as we cannot hide anything from Him. He knows our hearts, minds, faith, doubt, love, desires, motives, service, etc. To the seven churches in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), Jesus says, *"I know thy works"* (Rev 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15). Jesus knows all their strengths and weaknesses, and He rebukes them for leaving their first love toward Him, for their compromise and tolerance of sin and wrong doctrines, for their spiritual death and for their lukewarmness (Rev 2-3). What about us and our church? May the LORD help us to walk in His narrow way in the boundaries of His Word, that leads to life, *"lead me in the way everlasting"* (Ps 139: 24; Matt 7:14), and *"he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever"* (1 John 2:17).

Acknowledging our LORD's omnipresence and omniscience, we must humbly rely on Him moment by moment as branches on the Vine (John 15:4-5). Then we can have His strength and power to walk with Him and to overcome sin, self, temptations, worldliness and Satan.

THOUGHT: *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things."* (Rev 21:7)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to humbly walk with Thee in Thy victory.

FRIDAY, JUNE 25

EXODUS 20:1-17

DEUTERONOMY 4:5

“ ... *the LORD my God
commanded me.*”

The LORD God (JEHOVAH ELOHIM)

Due to the sinful, depraved and corrupt nature of human beings, even of God’s covenant people Israel, they quickly forget that the LORD is their God. Therefore, to remind His people that the LORD is God, God revealed Himself with His compound name *Jehovah Elohim* (Gen 2:4) or *Jehovah El* (Exod 34:6), which means *the LORD God*. It has about 221 occurrences in the Old Testament (KJV). The prophet Elijah prayed, “**LORD God** (*Jehovah Elohim*) of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that **thou art God** (*Elohim*) in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD (*Jehovah*), hear me, that this people may know that **thou art the LORD God** (*Jehovah Elohim*), and that thou hast turned their heart back again” (1 Kings 18:36-37).

How is our response when God says to us personally, “**I am the LORD thy God**,... **Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, ... Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain**” (Exod 20: 2, 5, 7)? Is the LORD our personal God? King Saul was rejected because of his rebellion against the LORD. The LORD was not his personal God but Samuel’s. Saul said to Samuel, “*I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God*” (1 Sam 15:30)! Moses confessed not only before Pharaoh that “**the LORD our God**” (Exod 5:3; 8:10, 26, 27; etc), but also before his people personally, “**the LORD my God**” (Deut 4:5). Caleb had the same confession (Joshua 14:8), so did David (Ps 18:2), Elijah (1 Kings 17:20-21), etc. What about us? Have we personally confessed “**the LORD my God**” with our heartfelt trust, reverence, and submission?

THOUGHT: “*The LORD is...my God.*” (Ps 18:2)

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my God.

My Lord (ADONAI)

The living and true God also manifests Himself in His name *Adon/Adonai*, which means *My Lord, Lord, Master, sovereign God*. *Adon/Adonai* is a plural noun but used with singular verbs, proving the Trinity of God. *Adon* is used of both God and human beings, with 335 occurrences in the OT (KJV). *Adonai* is only used of God with 434 occurrences.

The equivalent term of *Adonai* in Greek is *Kurios*. Our Lord Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1, "*The LORD/Jehovah said unto my Lord/Adon,*" saying, "*The LORD/Kurios said unto my Lord/Kurios*" (Matt 22:44). The *Lord/Adonai* is always sovereign and in control. Isaiah saw "*the Lord/Adonai sitting upon a throne*" and He is worship and praised, "*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory*" (Isa 6:1,3). He is *Lord of lords*, "*For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords/Adon of adon, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward*" (Deut 10:17; Ps 136:3) and "*the Lord of all the earth/the whole earth*" (Jos 3:13; Ps 97:5; Zec 4:14; 6:5), and "*thou, O Lord/Adonai, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*" (Ps 86:15). Praise the Lord!

When we confess to God, "*My Lord/Adonai/Kurios,*" (Exo 34:9; Phil 3:8) or "*My God and my Lord/Adonai*" (Ps 35:23) or "*the LORD/Jehovah, Thou art my Lord/Adonai*" (Ps 16:2), we must mean, "My God/LORD is my personal Lord, Master and Owner, who has full authority over my life, my heart, my mind, my body, my time, and my all. I belong to Him and submit to Him and His Word alone as His bond-slave." That is what David, Nehemiah, Daniel, Paul, etc. meant in their confession as God's "*servant/ebed/dulos/bond-slave*" (2 Sam 7:20,28; Neh 1:11; Dan 9:17; Rom 1:1).

THOUGHT: "*And why call ye me, Lord/Kurios, Lord/Kurios, and do not the things which I say?*" (Luke 6:46)

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my God and my Lord.

The Lord GOD (ADONAI JEHOVIH)

God's name *Adonai* is also used with His covenant name *Jehovah/Jehovih/LORD* (*Jehovih* is a form of *Jehovah*) to emphasize the sovereignty, lordship and ownership of the covenant God, who is self-existent, eternal, supreme, unchangeable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, just, good, merciful and faithful in keeping His Word, His promises and His covenants to His covenant people.

Adon Jehovah (Exod 23:17; 34:23; et al) and *Adonai Jehovih* (Gen 15:2,8; Deut 3:24; 9:26; et al) have about 290 occurrences in the Old Testament, and the KJV translates them as *Lord GOD*.

Let us meditate on these compound Divine names: *Adonai Jehovih sabaoth* or *the Lord GOD of hosts* (Ps 69:6; Isa 22:14; 28:22; Jer 2:19; et al). *Adon, Jehovah sabaoth* or *the Lord, the LORD of hosts* (Isa 3:1; 10:33; 19:4; et al). *Adonai Jehovih, Elohim sabaoth* or *the Lord GOD, the God of hosts* (Amos 3:13). *Jehovah, Elohim sabaoth, Adonai* or *the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord* (Amos 5:16), etc.

We must honour, trust and submit ourselves to the *Lord GOD* and to His Word in order to enjoy His blessings, "*O Lord GOD/Adonai Jehovih, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant (bond-slave)*" (2 Sam 7:28), and "*I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD/Adonai Jehovih*" (Ps 71:16), and "*For the Lord GOD/Adonai Jehovih will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded...who is he that shall condemn me?*" (Isa 50:7,9), and "*Ah Lord GOD/Adonai Jehovih! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee*" (Jer 32:17), and "*For thus saith the Lord GOD/Adonai Jehovih; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out... I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down*" (Ezek 34:11,15). Praise the Lord GOD!

THOUGHT: "*O Lord GOD: thou art my trust.*" (Ps 71:5)

PRAYER: O LORD, Thou art my Lord GOD and my trust.

JESUS (JEHOVAH-HOSHUA)

As hopeless sinners, we “*were dead in trespasses and sins ... were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope.*” But we have been saved by God’s grace in Christ (Eph 2:1, 12; cf. 5, 8) and “*are now the people of God*” (1 Peter 2:10). We must therefore give thanks and praises to the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification (Rom 4:25).

Jesus is a shortened form of *Joshua* and of *Jehovah-hoshua*, which means *Jehovah is salvation*. In Jesus Christ alone, we sinners can enjoy God’s salvation and God’s covenant for His covenant people! Truly, without Jesus Christ, there is no salvation for mankind: “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12), and “*no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (Jesus)*” (John 14:6) Moreover, “*God hath made that same Jesus, ... both Lord/Kurios and Christ*” (Acts 2:36) and “*God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, ... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord/Kurios, to the glory of God the Father*” (Phil 2:9).

Sadly, looking at Jesus’ humble birth in the stable and His shameful death on the cross, many despise Jesus’ name and reject His salvation for them. However, it will be too late for them when Jesus comes back again with His glory and majesty as they will say “*to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*” (Rev 6: 16).

THOUGHT: I must exalt Jesus as my Lord, Saviour and Christ (Anointed High Priest, King and Prophet) today before it is too late.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, Thou art my Lord, my Saviour and my Christ.

TUESDAY, JUNE 29

PSALM 100

PSALM 45:17

*“I will make thy name
to be remembered.”*

TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

*“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him **trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God**”* (Isa 50:10). Do we trust in the name of the LORD and rely on Him even in our darkest days of difficulties, troubles, afflictions and trials? Truly, *“**Our help is in the name of the LORD**”* (Ps 124:8), and He is All we need and will provide All we need as our *Jehovahjireh*.

When we need God’s salvation and sanctification, *Jesus* or *Jehovah-hoshua* is our Salvation, *Jehovah-tsidkenu* is our Righteousness, and *Jehovah-m’qaddishkhem* is our Sanctifier. When we need God’s loving care, guidance and protection, *Jehovah-rohi* is our good Shepherd. When we fight a battle against sin, self, worldliness and Satan, *Jehovahnissi* is our Banner/Victory with His help as our *Jehovah-sabaoth* or *the LORD of hosts*. When we need healing, *Jehovah-rapha* is our Healer. When we need peace and God’s presence, we can trust in *Jehovahshalom* and *Jehovah-shammah*.

Moreover, we can trust in our God’s sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness and help through His name *El Shadai* or *the Almighty God*, *El Elyon* or *the most high God*, *El Olam* or *the everlasting God*, and we can cry unto our sovereign and loving God, *Abba, Father*.

Some trust in themselves or worldly means, *“but we will remember the name of the LORD our God”* (Ps 20:7), *“have trusted in his holy name”* (Ps 33:21), *“wait on thy name”* (Ps 52:9), *“exalt His name”* (Ps 34:3), *“praise the name of the LORD”* (Ps 113:1; 61:8), *“bless His holy name”* (Ps 103:1; 72:19), *“give thanks unto thy holy name”* (Ps 106:47), and *“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name”* (Ps 96:8; 86:12). Amen.

THOUGHT: *“I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations.”* (Ps 45:17)

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to remind the young generations of Thy Name.

GOD MAGNIFIES HIS WORD ABOVE ALL HIS NAME

How can we know the LORD and His blessed name so that we can put our trust in Him and His name and rely on Him? It is through His divinely inspired and divinely preserved Word alone! Therefore, David praised God, “*thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name*” (Ps 138:2). Sadly, many still doubt God’s holy Word, causing much harm to their faith and others’ as well.

If you were an emperor or a king and you had asked your servants to write your decree to be sent to every part of your empire or kingdom in the days when the printing machine was not yet invented, your decree would have to be copied and copied very carefully and accordingly. If you knew that some copies had mistakes, would you ignore them? If you were still living and powerful, I am sure you would not. How about our living and true God, perfect, almighty and all-knowing? Surely He preserved His every perfect word as He promised (Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18, 24:35), and by His sovereignty, providence and timing, through His faithful, godly, and highly qualified servants, His inspired and preserved words in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek were confirmed in the Traditional Hebrew Text of the Old Testament and in the Traditional Greek Text of the New Testament underlying the KJV, just on time to be printed and used by His people during the great Protestant Reformation. This is the logic of common faith of the Church for nearly four centuries!

We should not be misled or deceived by non-Bible-believing and non-God-fearing textual critical scholars who deny the Verbal Plenary Preservation of the Holy Scriptures. How can we believe, preach, and teach God’s Word and defend God’s Truth with full authority and conviction if God’s perfect words are not in our hands today? “*God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar*” (Rom 3:4).

THOUGHT: God has magnified His Word above all His Name!

PRAYER: O LORD, help me to honour and magnify Thy Word always.







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