

# Gospel, Passover and Lord's Supper

## Outline

1. Passover in Exodus 12 in Egypt (called the Egyptian Passover)
2. Annual Passover
3. Passover Meal, Lord's Supper and the Gospel

### 1. Passover in Exodus 12 in Egypt (called the Egyptian Passover)

**vv 1-3:** The Jewish calendar is set with Passover as its first month (Nisan) — showing its importance. Passover instructions were only given to the Hebrews.

**vv 3-7:** On the 10th Nisan, each Israelite household chose an unblemished-year-

old lamb. They kept *observing* it for four days. Then every Israelite household killed the lamb on the 14th Nisan "evening" [literally—*between the evenings*,

Hebrew phrase for between 12 noon and 6 pm]. They put some of the lamb's

blood

on the top and sides of the door frames of the household where the lamb was eaten. If the household were small, they would invite neighbours to make a group that could share the eating of the lamb to avoid waste because whatever remained

not eaten was burnt (**v10**).

**v8:** The lamb was roasted (not boiled) and eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread on the same night. **These three items (roasted lamb, bitter herbs and unleavened bread) are the vital elements of the Passover—without which there is no Passover meal.** Now it takes a few hours to roast the lamb, and by then, it is past 6 pm, which, according to Jewish time, occurs on the next day—the 15th Nisan. (Our day starts in the morning and ends in the evening. But Jewish day starts in the evening and ends in the morning as in *Gen 1:5*). It is essential to note that two separate events occur:

- Killing the lamb on the 14th Nisan afternoon — **performing the Passover**
- Eating the lamb on 15th Nisan — **eating/celebrating the Passover meal**, known in a family setting as the **seder meal** on the 1st day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

**vv 11, 39:** Israelites had to eat the Passover **in haste** because soon the

Egyptians

would start howling at their firstborn son's death, and Pharaoh will tell Moses and

the Israelites to leave Egypt. There was no time for the bread to rise.

Therefore,

the bread was unleavened (**vv 11, 39**), reflecting their hasty departure. {Leaven in the New Testament is a symbol of sin, corruption, and hypocrisy}

v13: The blood on the doorpost was done **only** on the Egyptian Passover (1st Passover in Egypt), and the destroying angel killed the Egyptian's firstborn son only on that Passover.

## 2. The Annual Passover (Exodus 12 v14, 17)

Every year for generations to come, the Israelites must have a memorial to **remember** the event (but **not re-enact** the event, so they did not put blood on the doorpost anymore and did not eat in haste. Instead, they would recline, relax and eat to celebrate their freedom. Jesus and His disciples were reclining at the table in the Lord's Supper — (Luke 22:14).

(i) **Killing the Passover lamb** was done in the household during the wanderings in the desert after the Exodus till a Temple was built in Jerusalem.

Henceforth, the lamb was killed in the Temple as given in Deut 16:2, "*And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there.* [The lambs were sacrificed in the Temple during Jesus' time. After the destruction of the Temple, the Jews no more sacrifice a lamb, but they share only a part of the lamb's leg at the Passover meal in the family].

(ii) **The three vital elements**—Every Passover meal must have **roasted lamb** (or its shank), **bitter herbs** and **unleavened bread**. The unleavened bread, called the bread of affliction, signifies the affliction of slavery in Egypt and the hasty departure from Egypt. The bitter herbs made of horseradish (strong 'mulla' in Hindi) have a sharp pungent, bitter taste that guarantees to bring tears to your eyes. The idea was that every generation celebrating the Passover meal must identify with the bitter years of slavery in Egypt.

(iii) **A commentary would accompany the seder meal** given in Exodus 12:26-27, "*And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'*" Also, in Exodus 13:8, "*You shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did **for me** when I came out of Egypt.'* (Note: "**for me**" makes it personal).

The commentary was later simplified to 4 questions:

- On all other nights, we eat leavened bread and unleavened bread; on this night, we eat only unleavened bread. Why? (**Answer:** Unleavened bread called the bread of affliction, signifies affliction in Egypt and haste in

leaving it. Leaven also represents the **sin** we must leave behind in our new life of freedom).

- On all other nights, we eat all kinds of herbs; on this night, we eat only bitter herbs. Why? (**Answer:** To remember the bitterness of slavery)
- On all other nights, we do not dip the hyssop even once; on this night, we dip twice. Why? (**Answer:** First dipping in salt water to remember dipping of hyssop in blood (salty) and tears in Egypt. Second dipping in bitter herbs to remember bitter slavery in Egypt)
- On all other nights, we eat either sitting or reclining; on this night, we eat only reclining." Why? (**Answer:** To celebrate with ease and joy our freedom from slavery).

By these four questions and answers, the father could answer his son by retelling the Exodus story (Exod 12:26-27, 13:8)

### **Additional Traditions practised in Seder Meal, in 1st century BC-AD**

**(a) Four cups of wine**--The Mishna (oral traditions) teaches that these cups correspond to the four verbs describing God's redemption in Exodus 6:6-7.

*v6a: I will **bring you out** from under the yoke of the Egyptians*

*v6b: I will **free (deliver)** you from being slaves to them.*

*v6c: I will **redeem you** with an outstretched arm & with mighty acts of judgment*

*v7: I will **take you as my own people**, and I will be your God*

The four cups divide the Passover meal into four parts. After each cup, the Jews praised God, saying, "May You be blessed, LORD our God, king of the world, who creates the fruit of the wine". [They don't bless the food, but they bless the LORD by thanking Him for His goodness]

**(b) Karpas** is hyssop (mint, Hindi-pudina) dipped into salted water. It should be allowed to drip off to represent the tears shed by Jews during their enslavement in Egypt under Pharaoh.

**(c) Reciting the Great Hallel Ps 113-118** as part of the commentary telling the story of Israelites. They recited Ps 113-114 just before drinking the 2nd cup of wine and Ps 115-118 after the 4th cup of wine.

**(d) Roasting the Passover lamb on a cross** made from the pomegranate tree (see Internet pictures of Jewish practice)

The Passover meal is probably the oldest ritual meal in the world. The Jews still eat it annually, 3500 years after the Exodus (1500 BC). And over the years, many

more traditions (e.g., afikomen) were added to the Seder Meal that differed in each Jewish community.

### 3. Passover Meal, Lord's Supper and the Gospel

In several places in the Gospels, Jesus mentions He would die. But when He <sup>wants</sup> to explain the meaning of His death, He chooses to bring it out in the Passover Meal that He transforms with a whole new perspective. We call this transformed Passover meal the Lord's Supper. Therefore, we must understand the

relationship between the Lord's Supper and the Passover Meal.

#### Let us examine Luke 22:7-21

Many Bible scholars say that Jesus celebrated the Passover Meal about 12-24 hours before Jews did so in Jerusalem—because Jesus, our Passover Lamb,

would soon be crucified on the Passover (Friday) evening. He celebrates Passover Meal on Thursday night/Friday morning around 1 am on 14th Nisan to save time.

*Lk 22:9* Jesus gives secret instructions about the place of celebration to avoid detection by those trying to arrest Him. (Jesus told His disciples to look for a man carrying a water jar. That's easily noticeable because a woman usually carries

the water jar, not a man).

*Lk 22:14* The disciples recline around a low U-shaped table. [Note: Though it was a custom to recline and eat, yet it was to remember and **celebrate** their freedom from slavery in Egypt].

*Lk 22:15-16* And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it

*fulfilment in the kingdom of God."*

At this point, the disciples would be perplexed because the Passover Meal was celebrating the Passover in Egypt—the past. But Jesus pointed to the future "**fulfilment**", — which begins with His crucifixion and resurrection in the next

few days. It brings us out from under the yoke of sin, Satan, and death. But the complete **fulfilment** refers to the Messianic Banquet after the 2nd Coming (Rev

19:9). Jesus' death as the unblemished Passover Lamb (1Cor 5:7) is the perfect atoning sacrifice for believers. But it is only when He returns that we experience the full effect of His sacrifice on our behalf. The Lord's Supper, which looks

back to Jesus' death, points forward to the complete fulfilment of His return. That's what it means whenever we partake of the Lord's Supper with faith we proclaim

*Lk 22:17-18 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."*

This was the **1st cup** and giving thanks (Blessing after the cup). This cup meant, "I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians" (Exod 6:6). But Jesus transforms this to mean, He will bring us out from under the yoke of sin, Satan and death. After the first cup, they would have the Karpas (see 2(b)).

Usually, there would be a **commentary** (with questions) at this place (see 2(iii) above). The Gospels don't mention this; instead, Jesus would teach the disciples. After the commentary, they would drink the **2nd Cup** of wine with the blessing following (2(a)). Then follows **v19**.

*Lk 22:19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This **is** my body given **for you**; do this in **remembrance of me**."*

This also shocks the disciples because Jesus takes a past symbol, unleavened bread (bread of affliction of slavery in Egypt), and Jesus points that to the future when He would die on the cross about 12 hours later. The word "is" signifying "representation", Jesus says; this bread represents His body (broken on the cross) that would be given **for you** (whereas Exodus 13:8 says **for me**) because Jesus is the real Passover Lamb dying **for you**. The Passover was a constant reminder and proclamation of God's redemption of Israel from bondage in Egypt. In the same way, the Lord's Supper would be a continual reminder and proclamation of our deliverance from bondage to sin through Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross ("do this in **remembrance of me**").

After eating bread, they eat the hyssop dipped in bitter herbs (see **1A**).

Then it would be time to eat the roasted lamb. But there was no roasted lamb on the table because the Passover in Jerusalem was yet to occur, and the lambs

were

not yet slaughtered in the Temple. Furthermore, Jesus, our Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7), was not yet crucified. Most Catholic and Protestant scholars agree on this. E.g., Cardinal Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict and Presbyterian Pastor Tim Keller, founder of The Gospel Coalition, said there was no lamb on the table. However, the Lamb of God (Jesus) was presiding **at** the table.

*Lk 22:20 In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the **new covenant in my blood**, which is poured out for you."*

This is the **3rd Cup**—the cup of redemption (Exod 6:6c *I will **redeem** you with an outstretched arm & with mighty acts of judgment*). Once again, Jesus shocked

the disciples with His interpretation—for this was no longer the blood of a little lamb but the blood of their Master—Jesus, who would shed His blood to redeem all humanity. They ended by singing Ps 115-118.

Covenants are how God moves forward to redeem, save and relate with His people. All biblical covenants were ratified by blood sacrifice.

- In the Old Covenant (Testament), God rescues the Israelites from bondage to Pharaoh through the blood of the Passover Lamb. But the Old Testament prophets understood Israel's failure to obey God because of sinful hearts (Ps 51:5). They prayed for a more profound deliverance (Ps 51:10-11) that pointed out to a new covenant that God would make with people equipping them with a new heart and a new spirit (Jer 31:31-34, 32:39, Ezk 11:19-20, 36:25-27).
- In the New Covenant, through the blood of the Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus, God rescues believers from all humanity from the deeper bondage and slavery to sin, Satan & death. This is **the gospel**—the good news!

The 4th cup is not mentioned at the Lord's Supper. Probably there wasn't any because Jews rejected Jesus so that He couldn't say in Exodus 6:7 *I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God*. But He will drink it with those who believe in Him in the complete fulfilment of His Kingdom in the end-times (Rev 36:25-27)

### End Notes:

Shemot 12:1-14

1. On the 10th of Aviv choose the lamb.

2. Kept for 4 days of inspection for any blemishes need to be tested.

3. On the 14th day the lamb will be slayed it at twilight "between the eve (1500hrs)

4. When the Kohen HaGadol finishes the slay of the lamb he shouted "it is finished"

First wash, shed the wool of the lamb; kosher slaughtering, then drain the blood for sacrifice use and then skin clean it

### AN ANCIENT WAY OF COOKING THE LAMB



The Jews roasted the whole lamb: "Not a bone of it was to be broken" (Exodus 12:46). Justin Martyr (100-165 AD) says that they prepared the lamb for roasting using two wooden spits, one perpendicular and the other horizontal, which made it like a cross.



# Gospel and Four Spiritual Principles

## Outline

1. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin (*Heb 9:22*)
2. Without repentance, you will perish (*Luke 13:3*)
3. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (*Heb 11:6*)
4. Without Me you can do nothing (*John 15:4-9*)

### **1. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin (*Heb 9:22*)**

Mahatma Gandhi loved the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament but commented that the Old Testament was revolting to him. Gandhi was an Indian and a vegetarian, and the shedding of blood is repelling to all Indian vegetarians. There's blood and blood everywhere in the OT sacrifices — all required by God to forgive sin. But why does God require blood for the forgiveness of sins? Because the wages of sin against God is death (*Rom 6:23*)! *Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness* (*Heb 11:22*). Of course, the blood of bulls, sheep and goats cannot pay for human sin. It was only pointing to the perfect blood of Jesus. Jesus is God and became man to pay for man's sins. (By the way, none of us will accept a blood transfusion from an animal, but only from another human being of whatever race or social status. No animal blood can pay for our sins).

Anthropologists (those who study the history and practices of human cultures) say that every people group in the world, at some time or the other in their history, practised blood sacrifice to appease their gods.

*In all the world religions, except Christianity, the blood flows from the devotees to their gods to appease them for their sins. But in Christianity, the blood flows from God towards us, who are His followers, to cleanse us from our sins. All that is required of us is faith in His sacrifice. This is a vast difference! (Source Unknown).*

We see this as we study *Isaiah 6:1-9* below.

### **2. Without repentance, you will perish (*Luke 13:3*)**

The Bible says, "Man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment" (*Heb 11:29*). If you meet any random person and ask, "Why would God admit you to heaven when you die?" they would answer, "I hope He would because I'm a good person and

I have done a lot of good things in my life." Most people honestly believe they are good.

But God is perfect and majestic in holiness (Exodus 15:11). God is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29). He requires moral perfection for us to stand before Him. The prophet Isaiah was a good person by our standards. Yet when he beheld God, he immediately realised his sinfulness and was terrified. Isaiah faced the wrath of God. *Isa 6:1-8 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted,*

*seated*

*on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." 4 At the sound of their voices, the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke.*

<sup>5</sup> *"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."*

<sup>6</sup> *Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it, he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"*

Most people do not believe in the wrath of the Holy God. They think that somehow God will wink at our sinfulness. But then God wouldn't be righteous. We are all destined to die once and face judgment after death. But we can be like Isaiah today and accept the provision of God to take away our sins or face God's wrath on judgment day. There are four elements to consider in Isa 6:1-8:

- **A high view of God** (Isa 6:1-4)

- **We may sincerely repent** (Isa 6:5). We know we will face God's wrath for

rebelling against Him. We do not trust our reasonable opinion of ourselves. But we change the direction of our life to surrender to God. Turning and surrendering to God is repentance.

- **Accept the provision of our salvation that God provides from heaven** (Isa

6:6-7). That provision speaks of the Son of God who came from heaven, became man in Jesus Christ and shed His blood on the cross for our salvation—which is



the gospel (good news). Jesus lived a life we should have lived but didn't. Then He died on the cross to pay the punishment for our sins that we should have paid, but He spent instead because he loves us. He rose again from the dead, having satisfied the justice and holiness of God on our behalf.

• **Be willing to spread the message of the gospel to others out of gratitude to God** and concern for our fellowmen (*Isa 6:8*).

### **3. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (*Heb 11:6*)**

God so loved the world that He provided the atonement for man's sin by giving His **one and only Son, Jesus** — to die for all humanity — so that **whoever** believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life (the marvellous message in *John 3:16*). But if we don't believe (without faith) in God's **only** offer of salvation through Christ, then we will perish. There is no other way but the only way through Jesus. Therefore, without faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, it is impossible to **please God** (*Heb 11:6*)!

So, what is this faith that saves you? It has three parts—(a) we must know the content of the gospel as the only way to salvation, (b) we must mentally agree with the gospel, and (c) we must trust our lives on the gospel (which includes repentance).

You cannot be saved without fully trusting Jesus to save you! You can't face the holiness of God by your heritage, your good works, your knowledge, or even by your church membership. If you do not have faith (trust) in the atonement provided from heaven (*Isa 6:6-7* above), you will perish!

**But something extraordinary happens when you put your faith in Jesus.**

• **You become part of God's new creation:** The old creation, ruled by Satan, sin and death, will perish eternally. God will not allow this miserable creation to continue. God has already started making a new creation through Jesus, and when you receive Him as lord of your life, you are part of His new creation (*2 Cor 5:16*). You will not perish but have eternal life (*John 3:16*).

• **You receive a new relationship with God:** You become a child of God with the Spirit of sonship by whom you can cry "Abba Father" (*Rom 8:15*). Jesus and the Father love you the same way they love each other (*John 15:9, 17:23*) and nothing can separate you from His love (*Rom 8:28-39, John 10:27-30*).

• **You receive new spiritual power to overcome sin and worldly temptations:** Everyone born of God overcomes the world and does not continue to sin (*1 John*

5:4, 18). You get a new heart and spirit by which you can obey and serve the Lord (Ezk 36:25-27, Heb 8:10, 10:15-16). You have peace the world cannot give (John 16:33, Rom 5:1). As you obey Jesus, His joy will be in you, and your joy will be complete (John 15:11)

There are a lot more results than those listed above. But none of them you earn by any good works you may have done! All these God freely gives you as you trust His Son Jesus! He becomes the indescribable gift from heaven. The more you believe, the more you will honour God; the less you believe, the less you will honour God.

Jesus said, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent (John 6:29).

#### **4. Without Me you can do nothing (John 15:4-9) – Union with Christ**

Jesus tells us that without Him (being in union with Him), we cannot bear any spiritual fruit. Before we were born again, we might have had a **formal relationship** with Jesus, which may also include regularly attending church. But after we were born again, we have a **vital relationship** with Jesus. We are in union with Christ through the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ), who resides in our hearts when we accept Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. But then, Jesus tells us to **remain in Him** (John 15:4), which means maintaining and nourishing that vital relationship with Him. For this, we must do two things:

(a) Let My words remain in you (John 15:7)—which means to meditate on His words and make His words rule your heart and direct the way you think and live.

(b) Remain in My love (John 15:9)—which means never doubt His immense love for you demonstrated by the cross.

By doing these two things, you will not obstruct the Holy Spirit from bringing divine life into you — as sap flows from the stem of a plant to the branches.

You will bear fruit.

*2 Pet 1:3-4 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4*

*Through*

*these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

The primary fruit is to be a disciple of Jesus (*John 15:8*) and participate, in one way or the other, to make disciples of others (*Matt 28:19*); in other words — Christlike character and participating in Christ's mission.

All our works will one day be tested by fire (*1 Cor 3:10-15*) to see whether they

were

of noble metal or wood and hay. If you have genuine faith in Jesus, it will result in fruit (good works) done in union with Christ, and God will reward you. If there is no fruit, then your faith may not be genuine. Thus, your union with Christ may be a formal or fake and a fruitless union—such a branch will be cut away from the vine and perish (*John 15: 6*). Here, **I must encourage new Christians** to maintain and nourish their vital relationship with Jesus by keep trusting God's love for them, be faithful in Prayer and Bible Reading, and submit to God and your church leaders for discipleship. Gradually you will bear fruit that will remain.

**Conclusion: The importance of the gospel.**

The gospel of Jesus is the ONE & ONLY pathway to a relationship with the Father (*John 14:6*). Therefore, the gospel becomes the most beautiful, unique, and

excellent

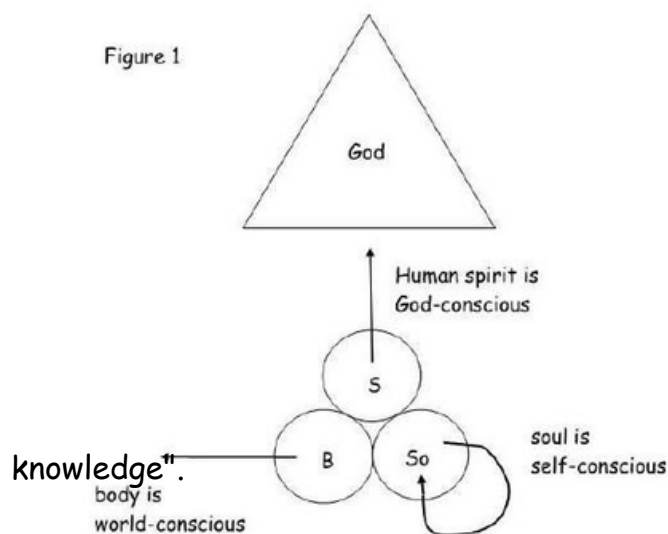
news from heaven. We must keep learning, meditating and praying for a greater revelation of the gospel throughout our lives because we will keep receiving new insights for ourselves—especially the revelation of the wondrous beauty of Jesus Christ. We need to preach it, share it and talk about it as often as possible with others, and as we do so, we will become **the most significant possible blessing to others**. The gospel is the glorious pathway to true worship of God, discipleship, personal revival, fruitful life, and bringing the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven.

# Gospel and the Spirit of Life — 1

## Outline

1. Human beings were created with Body, Soul & Spirit by God
2. Human Beings separate themselves from God
3. Human Beings reconciled with God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ
4. Human Beings in Fellowship with the Spirit of Life (Holy Spirit)

### 1. God created human beings with body, soul and spirit (1 Thess 5:23).



**Figure 1** With our body and through our five senses of touch, hearing, seeing, smelling and tasting., we are conscious of the world. We observe the world through our five senses and send that information to our minds for storage and analysis. Therefore, the knowledge we get from our five senses is called "sensual

**Our soul is self-conscious.** The universe is so large, and we are so small — yet our soul makes us feel that we are the centre of the whole universe. Our soul consists of our emotions and mind. The will of man is also part of his soul but lies somewhere between soul and spirit.

**Our spirit is God-conscious.** A man could be born of any nationality, religion, or period of human history. Yet, he will always bow down and worship God—because man has a component called spirit that makes him conscious of God.

**God is Spirit.** We can neither touch, hear, see, smell, or taste Him. The only contact we can make with God is through our spirit. God wants us to worship Him in spirit and truth. We call that Fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

God created animals, birds, fish etc. They have a body with the five senses, very much like that of man. Therefore, we recognise a dog eating or drinking because we eat and drink. We can identify all the body functions in a dog because we have the same functions. Animals have emotions too. We know when a dog is angry, sad, or happy because we feel the same way and can recognise that in a dog. Animals

have a type of soul inferior to ours and are tied up very much with their bodies. However, animals do not have a "spirit". If they did, they would worship God and be conscious of Him. We would recognise them worshipping God. But nowhere can we find any animal, bird, or fish worshipping God in any period of human history.

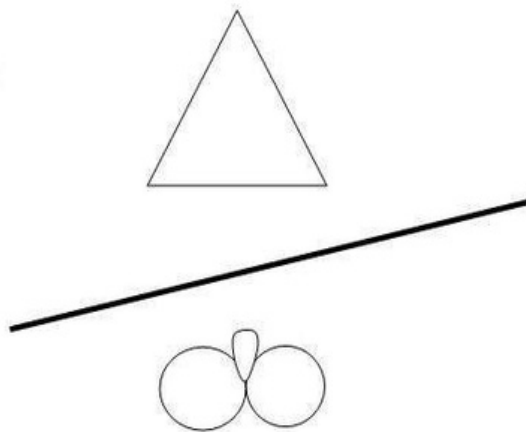
## 2. Human beings separate themselves from God

There were two very significant trees in the Garden. One was the Tree of Life, and the other was the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. God forbade man to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. This represents telling God, "I know you are good, but I want to know what is good and bad for me, and apart from what You tell me. I don't want to depend upon God; I want to be independent of God." God had warned man that he would die if he ate from the forbidden tree.

The Tree of Life represents dependence on God for Life — it represents Honouring God with Humility and Trust in God, and it leads to Eternal Life.

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil represents s Rebelling against God with Pride and Independence from God, leading to death.

Figure 2



**Figure 2** shows a person separated from God because the human race comes from Adam and has inherited his adamic-nature of rebellion, pride and independence from God. From the time of Adam, the whole human race is born in rebellion against God. Notice that man's spirit is small and shrinking because it is

separated from God. Yet it still exists and tries to worship God. All human beings, throughout history, in every continent on earth, have wanted to worship God — but of their own making and understanding. Living independently of God brought human misery caused by sin, death and Satan. No religious leader can save us; no science can save us from human misery. Only the Creator God can save us. And He did, by sending His Son Jesus.

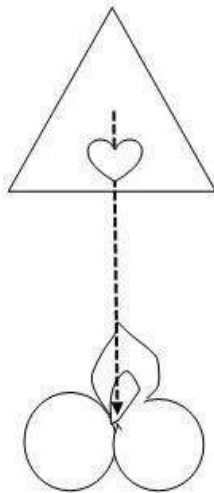
## 3. Human Beings reconciled to God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Jesus was not born of Adam. He was conceived in the womb of a virgin named Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, He was born without sin. He

lived a sinless life from birth to death. He lived the life we should have lived but didn't. He came to take our sins upon Himself and die the death we should have, but He died instead because He loved us. When we trust Him as our Saviour, He not only reconciles us to God, but God sees in us the righteous life that Jesus lived for our sake. *2 Cor 5:21 God made Him, who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we become the righteousness of God.* This is the gospel.

**Figure 3:** Shows a man who has accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. This

Figure 3



man has no sin barrier between him and God because Jesus paid for his sin. The Holy Spirit resides in him (*Rom 8:9*). As the believer meditates on God's love displayed on the cross, the Holy Spirit transforms

him more and more into the likeness of Jesus (*2 Cor 3:18*). All he has to do is to **embrace the cross of Jesus by faith, in every circumstance, good, bad or difficult**. This way, he draws closer to God, and God draws closer to him (*James 4:6*). The spirit of man will begin to grow from being undernourished to becoming full of the Holy Spirit. The means of growing in the Spirit is always by faith, for without faith, it is impossible to please God.

With the help of God's grace, man can sow in the spirit and reap in the spirit. He can sow in the spirit by expressing his faith in:

Being secure in God's love (*Zeph 3:17*)

Casting all cares on God, for He cares for us (*1Peter 5:7*)

Thanking, praising, worshipping and praying to God (*Ps 50:23*)

Hearing and obeying God's word (*John 6:63*)

Believing and confessing God's promises (*2Cor 4:13-14*)

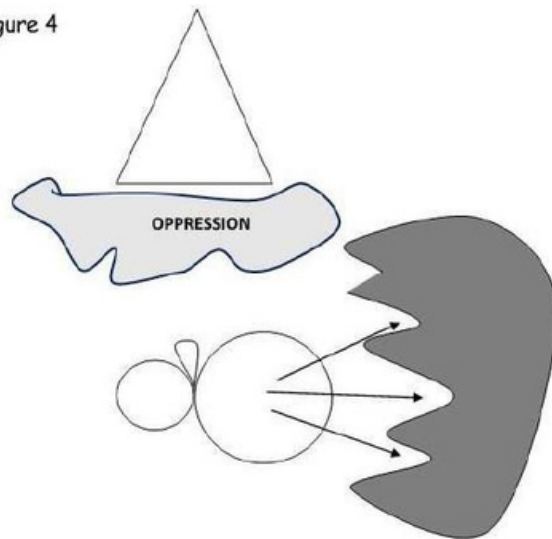
Showing love and justice to others (*Micah 6:8, Gal 6:9-10*)

Praying in tongues (*1 Cor 14:4*) — is the only gift of the Spirit to build us.



#### 4. Human Beings in Fellowship with the Spirit of Life (Holy Spirit)

Figure 4



**Figure 4:** The believer faces serious trouble from external provocation. But notice he has not taken any help from God.

Instead, he reacts to the problem with his soul (in Figure 4) by getting angry, self-pity, sulking, worrying, or silently fretting. The result is that his soul gets enlarged compared to his spirit. The man is not living by his spirit but lives by his soul. This is

equally true if the person reacts against external provocation (e.g. lusts of the eyes and lusts of the flesh) by his body, in which case his body gets inflamed and enlarged. The believer is carnal (unspiritual). Very soon, a cloud of oppression will be over him, making him unable to sense the presence of God.

##### **How does he take help from God?**

**By asking God for mercy and grace** to help him (Heb 4:16)

**By confessing all known sins and forgiving** those who have hurt him.

**By casting all his cares upon God** (1 Peter 5:7). Often, believers keep their troubles in their hands and then pray to God to solve them. The problems remain held in their hands at the end of their prayer — this is not faith! But **faith** is trusting in God's love displayed on the cross. Then believers can cast their troubles into God's hands and pray that God would solve them because He loves them. The problems are left in God's hands at the end of their prayer, not theirs. They walk away, comforted that God has all their troubles in His hands and trusting that He will solve them in His time and in His way. God is both

willing

and able to do that. Only then can they go to the next step.

**By praising God vocally**, though not necessarily loudly. He must look upon the Lord, who is high and lifted and sovereign over the world. He must know that the Lord is faithful to the covenant that He has made with all believers. These are the high praises of God. These praises may be quiet or loud. But it is praised by faith that is higher than the troubles that beset the believer. He must praise

God until he finds a breakthrough in his spirit when all oppression leaves him (Ps 22:3, Ps 149:6-10 NKJV).

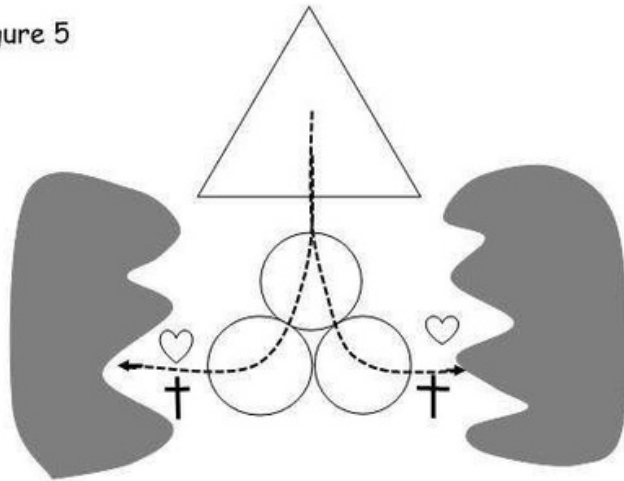
*By asking others to pray for him.*

*By being open to a wise spiritual counsellor.*

*By responding with the opposite spirit.*

**Figure 5: How the believer responds with the opposite spirit.** By refusing to react with his body or soul.

Figure 5



For example, if a person slaps you, do not slap him back. If someone gets angry with you and shouts at you, do not shout back at him.

Where there is hate, the believer responds with love. Where there is revenge, the believer responds with forgiveness. Where there is strife, the believer responds with peace. Where there is lust, the believer responds with purity.

Because he takes help from God, the believer will find God's power flowing through him and can respond with the opposite spirit instead of reacting to the provocation or giving in to the temptation.

As a believer takes the advice given, he will find that he has the peace of God amid trouble and temptation. He will have the ministry of the Holy Spirit working through him. This way, the believer can have Fellowship of the Holy Spirit in trouble and temptation. Notice how the spirit of man has been growing from strength to strength. His spirit is enlarged and bigger than his body or soul. He is now led by the Holy Spirit, who communicates with his spirit. He is not led by his body or soul, as in Figure 4. This is the only way that a truly mature Christian should live.

Suppose our foolishness and immaturity caused the trouble in the first place. In that case, the Holy Spirit will bring us to repentance and help us overcome our foolishness, resulting in us growing into maturity. However, suppose Satan, working through others or circumstances, had caused the trouble. Then eventually, the trouble will be overcome by God's power working through us as we

yield to God. Jesus says, "In this world, you will have trouble, but take heart in Me for I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Jesus overcame the world. Through us and in **union with Him**, Jesus overcomes the world repeatedly — bringing His kingdom here on earth as it is heaven.

## **UNION WITH CHRIST**

**Examine all the prayers of Paul (sample given below).** Notice that Paul does not

pray for material benefits like suitable housing for the poor or rainfall for a

good

harvest. However, nothing is wrong with praying for them. But his focus is always on strengthening **our union with Christ** when we face troubles and temptations:

*Eph 3:16-17 I pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

Paul encourages us to overcome troubles and temptations. Jesus wants us to

reign

with Him by enduring (overcoming) our troubles and temptations (2 Tim 2:12). And

the way to do it is in **union with Christ** (Eph 3:16-17).

The moment you are born again, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, dwells in your heart. But you must allow Him to lead you daily by yielding to Him (Figure 5) instead of letting your carnal desires lead you (Figure 4). And remember, the Holy Spirit is God, and He is powerful.

*Eph 1:17-20 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is same as the mighty strength he exerted in Christ when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.*

## Gospel and the Spirit of Life — 2

### Outline

1. Importance of preaching the Gospel daily to ourselves
2. Dealing with the thorn in our flesh by the Spirit of Life
3. Embracing the place of weakness
4. Sowing in the Spirit

#### **1. Importance to preach the Gospel daily to ourselves because:**

It reveals God's immense love for humanity (John 3:16)

It assures believers that we have a **new identity** as God's children irrespective of our background (John 1:12-13).

It assures believers that we stand perfectly righteous before God. It is not based on what we do or do not do but on what Jesus has done for us through His life, death and resurrection on our behalf (2 Cor 5:21).

It sucks away our pride and makes us humble before God and man (1 Tim 1:15-16)

It gives believers eternal security in God's love (John 10:27-30)

It reveals to believers the importance of daily being in union with Christ. When we yield to Jesus, His power enables us to fight temptations and trials in the world (John 16:33). When we rely on our strength and abilities instead of His, we will fail. We learned this in detail in Figures 4 & 5 in Gospel and Spirit of Life—Part 1.

#### **2. Dealing with the thorn in our flesh by the Spirit of Life**

Paul was a mighty apostle, but Jesus gave him a thorn in his flesh to make him dependent on Him. Paul learned an essential principle that we must learn. Jesus told Paul, "*My power is made perfect in weakness.*" So, Paul delights in weakness because it forces him to rely on God's strength which makes him strong.

*2 Cor 12:7-10 Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times, I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Cor 4:7-10 We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are **hard pressed** on every side, but not **crushed**; **perplexed**, but not in despair; 9 **persecuted**, but not abandoned; **struck down**, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

The weakness Paul delights in is not carnal weakness like immorality or losing one's temper. But his weakness comes from a lack of confidence in his abilities to do God's will and work so that he may depend entirely on God to empower and sustain him. From the scriptures mentioned above (2 Cor 12:10 and 4:8-9), we can see what Paul has defined as "weakness":

**Prayer:** We don't pray because we rely on our abilities. But we can't do anything unless we depend on God's power that we ask in prayer. (Ps 18:4-19).

**Problems:** hardships make us weak and more dependent on God (2 Cor 12:10).

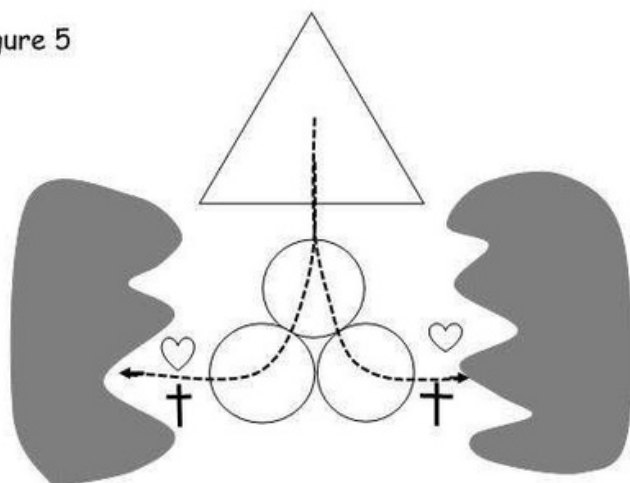
**Persecutions** (struck down, hard-pressed on every side) make us weak. Still, the Church grew in numbers whenever the world persecuted her because she depended more on God in her weakness because of persecution.

**Perplexity:** 2Cor 4:8. Often, we do not understand everything that God is doing, but we must quietly trust God like a weaned child with its mother (Ps 131)

**Patience:** Often, God doesn't answer our prayers for a long time. Yet we keep trusting God patiently like Abraham and wait for Him (Heb 6:12-15).

### 3. Embracing the place of weakness

Figure 5



defeat Satan as we embrace the position of weakness in our life.

Paul's principle is to be weak in our self-confidence to strengthen our union with Jesus. Satan constantly mocks us in our place of weakness (2 Cor 12:7; Matt 4:3, 6; 27:40). But Jesus triumphed over Satan by the cross (Col 2:15), the weakest place in human history. We, too, will

**Refer to Figure 5.** A Christian must have two simultaneous responses to external provocation: the cross and love—which corresponds to patient submission to God and responding in the opposite spirit. Remember, Satan cannot drive out Satan (*Matt 12:28*). Therefore, anger cannot drive out anger. Resentment cannot drive out provocation and persecution. Evil cannot drive out evil. But only good (a value of God's kingdom) can drive out evil (a value from Satan's kingdom).

*Rom 12:17-21 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

#### **4. Sowing in the Spirit**

*Galatians 6:7-10 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

Let us study these verses:

*Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived:* Whenever the Bible says, "Do not be deceived," it is a warning that we are most likely to be deceived in that place. We deceive ourselves when we keep sowing bad seeds into our lives and think that nothing

bad

will happen to us because God is good and loving to all His children.

*Gal 6:7 God cannot be mocked:* There are no exceptions to God's laws. His laws are universal and equally applicable to believers and unbelievers alike.

*Gal 6:7 A man reaps what he sows:* This law of God has no exceptions.

*Gal 6:8* The law of God is explained in the context of our spiritual life. Every human being (including a believing Christian) will reap destruction if he sows bad seeds into his spiritual life, i.e. seeds of behaviour from the flesh. When a believer sows good seeds into his spiritual life, he will reap eternal life — a life of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit — *Rom 14:17-18*). Such a person

will grow in his fellowship of the Holy Spirit.



*Gal 6:9* Satan makes us **weary** and causes unbelief if we do not see results immediately. Therefore, please **don't give up** on doing good; it is a test of faith. But when we continue to do good, we will reap **at the proper time** (after a certain period).

*Gal 6:10* Therefore, make every effort to stay in faith and persevere in doing good to everyone. But especially do good to believers because planting seeds in good soil will yield a big harvest.

Consider the following verses. Notice that they show the same pattern of sowing and reaping and a time gap between sowing and reaping.

*Hos 10:12* Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

*Hos 12:6* But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.

*Ps 37:34* Hope in the LORD and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are destroyed, you will see it.

*James 5:7-8* Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You, too, be patient and stand firm because the Lord's coming is near.

*Heb 10:35-36* So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

### **Sowing methods:**

**Sow good deeds and wait for Him.** Maintain justice, and righteous deeds, be loving and kind even when inconvenient, and give regular tithes (*Hosea 12:6*).

**Be regular in prayer and fasting and Bible devotions** and wait for Him. Arthur Wallis once researched the lives of well-known and very fruitful godly Christians. He found their secret to fruitfulness and godliness in three activities. They all prayed for at least one hour every day, fasted at least one day a week, and read the Bible at least once a year from cover to cover.

**Trust and declare His promises** while waiting for Him (*2Pet 1:3-4, 3:8-9, Heb 6:12-15*).

**Rejoice in Him**, in everything, give thanks and pray continually. It involves constantly practising His presence and depending upon Him (*1Thess 5:16-18*).

**Keep the outward forms** of goodwill to everyone, pray for the sick etc. Read *2 Kings 3*, especially vv 16-20. God says that when the Israelites dug trenches (outward forms) in the desert, He filled it with water (grace and anointing). He will fill your lives with His grace and anointing as you keep the outward forms.

**Pray in tongues** daily and long because it is God's only spiritual gift to build you up (*1 Cor 14:4*).

As you sow these good seeds daily in your spiritual life, you will reap eternal life, which is the life of God—a life of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (*Gal 6:7-10*). And you will be strong in the Lord (*Eph 6:10*).

# Gospel and Holiness of God — 1 (Overview)

## Outline

1. Holiness of God
2. Holiness of Christ
3. Holiness of God and the Gospel

### 1. Holiness of God

The Old Testament Hebrew word for holy is "qadash", and the New Testament Greek word for holy is "hagias". The primary meaning of both these words is "cut and separate". God is cut above and separated **far above and beyond** anything in creation, including man, whom He created in His image. Often, we think of God's holiness as His purity and separation from sin. His holiness includes His purity but also much more. God's holiness is not to be regarded as one of His virtues or qualities (attributes) listed along with His many other virtues like mercy, love, wisdom, faithfulness, spirit, etc. But, His holiness is the crown of all God's infinite perfection and glory. So, His mercy is holy mercy; His love is holy love. His wisdom is holy wisdom; His spirit is Holy Spirit. The Bible says, "*His Name is holy*" (Isa 57:15, Luke 1:49). None is comparable to Him. No one exists in His category. We may have a list of holy people or even holy angels whom we respect. God is not on that list because He is far above and beyond the list of people, angels, or any created being. No one exists in His category.

*Ex 15:11 Who is like you — majestic in holiness,*

*1 Sam 2:2 "There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you;*

*Ps 111:9 Holy and awesome is his name.*

Every revelation of God is a revelation of His holiness. Of course! Because God is entirely and essentially holy, anything and everything that comes from God is holy. His law is holy (Rom 7:12), His judgments are righteous (Gen 18:25). His dwelling place in heaven is holy (Deut 26:15), and every good and perfect gift is from God above (James 1:17-18).

*Rom 7:12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy.*

*Gen 18:25 Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"*

*Deut 26:15 Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling place,*

*James 1:17-18 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

God can only manifest that which is absolutely holy. The most apparent manifestation of God's holiness is in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. Therefore, no one exists in Jesus' category. Jesus cannot even be number one on any list of people or angels. He is above and beyond them. Jesus is holy. He is the exact representation of God's being (Heb 1:3). We are limited in understanding God's holiness because we are from this world. But the Son of God is from above; only He can make God known to us.

*John 8:23 [Jesus said] You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.*

*John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.*

*Heb 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.*

## **2. Holiness of Christ**

(a) The Birth of Jesus — He is called the Holy One and Son of God.

*Luke 1:35-36 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the **holy one** to be born will be called the Son of God.*

*(Contrast with our birth: Ps 51:5 Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me).*

(b) The Life of Jesus — He lived without sin in a filthy world

*John 8:46 [Jesus challenged the Jews] Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?  
Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.*

*(Contrast with our life: Prov 20:9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?)*

(c) The Death of Jesus — He offered Himself unblemished to God on our behalf

*Heb 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself **unblemished to God**, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (also 1Peter 1:18-19)*

*2 Cor 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

### 3. Holiness of God and the Gospel

*Isa 6:1-4 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." 4 At the sound of their voices, the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke.*

King Uzziah reigned for 52 years (around 791-740 BC). He was a strong military ruler, and Israel prospered under his reign. Eleven years before he died, he became arrogant. He entered the Temple to burn incense, which God only permitted the priests to do. When Azariah, the high priest and 80 associates confronted King Uzziah, he responded in anger instead of repentance. God judged him by striking him with leprosy. King Uzziah had to live the rest of his life in a separate place, with his son Jotham probably acting as king. (2 Chron 26)

At Uzziah's death (around 740 BC), the prophet Isaiah had a transforming vision of the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne (Isa 6:1-4). The seraphs, fiery angels, worshipped closest to the Lord. Each seraph had six wings. With two, they covered their face, shielding their eyes from the brilliance of the majestic holiness of the Lord. They covered their feet with two wings, submitting to the Lord humbly acknowledging they were creatures. And with two wings, they were flying, hovering around the Lord, declaring to each other, "*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord Almighty. The whole earth is full of His glory.*"

In English, we could grade any article by calling it (good) (better) or (best). But in Hebrew, they would grade it by calling it, (good), (good, good), (good, good, good). As you can see, an article is best graded in Hebrew when they repeat good thrice. The only place in the Old Testament where we find something graded thrice is the holiness of God. The Bible does not say God is love, love, love or justice, justice, justice. Even though He is. But the Bible emphasises that God is holy, holy, holy. The seraphs worshipped the Lord in the beauty of His holiness, declaring that all glory belongs only to God and not to man or any other creature.

As Isaiah went to worship the Lord in the Temple, he saw the glory of the Lord fill the Temple. Facing God's perfect holiness, every sin is exposed and shown to be utterly sinful. Our hearts drive every part of our body; because our

hearts are sinful, we use every aspect of our body for sin. Our sinfulness is most evident by what we speak, for they come from the heart. (*Matt 15:18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'*). In God's eyes, we are all unclean. When Isaiah saw the Lord, high and



exalted, he said, "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." (*Isa 6:5*).

Woe means cursed and damned. In chapter 5, Isaiah says "woe" six times to the Israelites because they are sinful. But in chapter 6, Isaiah says "Woe" to himself. Then he adds, "I am ruined." It means he is falling apart and disintegrating. Why?

Because, in God's holy presence, every part of his (and our) body has been used for sin. Here is a picture of how a person without Christ would look as they face the holiness of God

on judgment day. Frightening but true. It could be even worse. Without Christ, all humanity will face **the wrath of God** because all humanity is sinful.

*John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.*

*Rev 6:15-17 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17*

*For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

**The Gospel in Isaiah 6:6-7** *Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it, he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."*



The live burning coal from the altar, where sacrifice takes place, represents the purification by blood sacrifice and the fire of the Spirit. The painful cleansing process was necessary before God commissioned Isaiah. Today, the coal represents the cross to cleanse us and the Holy Spirit to guide and empower us.

*"But unless we grasp God's holiness, we will no longer be "amazed" at His amazing grace. When we lose a sense of God's holiness (as many have), then we lose the realisation that anything is holy or unholy...we also lose a sense of our sinfulness, our need for God's grace." (Arthur Lindsey).*

**The Mission in Isaiah 6:8-13** Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

<sup>9</sup> He said, "Go and tell this people: "'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' 10 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise, they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

<sup>11</sup> Then I said, "For how long, O Lord?" And he answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, 12 until the Lord has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. 13 And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land."

Isa 6:8 The words, "whom shall I send" and "who will go for us", may not prove the doctrine of the Trinity but strongly implies it (as in Gen 1:26, 11:7). Isaiah, aware of his utter sinfulness and the amazing grace of God, was available with humble readiness for God to send him on any mission without knowing where God will send him— *Here am I. Send me.*

Isa 6:9 God's message was, 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' God tells Isaiah to give that message to the Israelites, whom He calls "**this people**". Note, in Chapters 1 to 5, God refers to them only as "**My people**" (1:3, 3:15, 5:13), but subsequently, God also refers to them as "*this or these people*" (6:9,10 8:6,11-12; 28:11-14, 29:13-14) which indicates that the Israelites have hardened their hearts to the extent that they have begun to distance themselves from the Lord.

Isa 6:9-10 Jesus quoted Isa 6:9-10 to explain why He taught in parables (Matt 13:14-15, Mark 4:12, Luke 8:10). It is a principle we must be careful about.

Repeated rejection of the message will result in hardness of heart and greater blindness to the truth.

*Isa 6:11-13* Isaiah naturally cries, "For how long, Lord?" The Lord replies till Israel is devastated. Nevertheless, there will be a ***holy seed, a stump*** representing a faithful remnant that will hear and believe, through whose line eventually the Messiah would come and bless the nations of the world.

Isaiah was faithful in a problematic and unrewarding ministry to unresponsive people. But God is faithful to His word. A holy seed remained in Israel through his ministry. God calls us to be faithful in preaching the gospel, and the elect of God will respond as a result. God is faithful.