

## New Morning Magical

### How free are you?

The Apostle Paul was moved to write a second letter to the Corinthians, much like he did for the Thessalonians, and we begin exploring 2 Corinthians now all the way into chapter 3:

4 Now such is the confidence we have through Christ toward God

5 (not that we are competent of ourselves, to reckon anything as of ourselves, but our competency is of God),

6 Who also makes us competent dispensers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, **for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying.**

Paul acknowledges that any competence he may have, especially when it comes to what he calls, “*a new covenant*,” comes from the Father. This new covenant, which Paul introduces here for the first time, is “*not of the letter, but of the spirit*.” We aren’t dealing with anything written down, let alone chiseled into stone tablets, as was the former covenant of the Mosaic Law. Next, Paul makes this astonishing statement: “*for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying*.” For a Hebrew, steeped in the law, this admission would be unthinkable; however, Paul has come a long way from his roots in Judaism and his former position as a Pharisee.

The point for us in Paul’s statement in verse 6: “*for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying*,” is to recognize a fundamental principle that separates religion from a genuine relationship with the Father and the Son. We are not bound to a written laundry list of do’s and don’ts; never mind the rituals that accompany those kinds of religious rules and regs. The “*letter*,” Paul says, “*is killing*”; it does not bring life; it brings the opposite. The “*spirit*,” on the other hand, makes alive, or “*vivifies*.”

The Father is not religious, nor does He author religion. At its root, Judaism began as a form of government that included what we may consider religious ceremonies, but they were actually proper forms of worship that the Father could accept and even honor, so long as they were heartfelt. Yeshua observed all of the law and its requirements, because that was part of His mission, but He never authored a religion with letters that kill; instead His Father sent His Spirit, the Ruach HaKodesh, the Spirit of Holiness, to make us alive now – to vivify us, so to speak, in our spirits – even before He literally vivifies us in the Day of the Lord at Yeshua’s return.

Every religion, bar none, contains within its foundation, “*the letter [that] is killing*.” You are not bound by any such system, or perhaps I should say you need not be bound by any such system. The Spirit alone makes you alive today, way beyond the reaches of “*the letter*.”

Remember how distressed Paul was over the Galatians, who fell prey to men who tried to enslave them to the law, even after the Galatians had received the life and liberty of the Spirit. Here's what Paul wrote in Galatians 5:1, as a reminder to us today:

For freedom Christ frees us! Stand firm, then, and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery.

You and I won't repeat their mistake, so long as we adhere to the Spirit of God operating inside us vivifying our own spirits!

Later in 2 Corinthians 3:9, Paul says,

9 For if in the dispensation of condemnation is glory, much rather the dispensation of righteousness is exceeding in glory.

*"The dispensation of condemnation"* is the Law of Moses here, which was Israel's glory, but is also *"the letter {that} kills."* Paul contrasts this with the life of the Spirit in us, which Christ won, *"the spirit [that] vivifies."*

You and I have a choice every day to hold to *"the spirit [that] vivifies"* and reject out of hand, *"the letter {that} kills."* That's not too hard a choice, is it? Yet, throughout the world, many who are following religious traditions of some kind – and that's a lot of people – are making exactly the opposite choice. Thank God that He will sort out this mess when Christ returns to rule and reign.

Paul continues this vein from 2 Corinthians 3, verse 12:

12 Having, then, such an expectation, we are using much boldness,  
13 and are not even as Moses. He placed a covering over his face, so that the sons of Israel were not to look intently to the consummation of that which is being nullified.

The children of Israel were prevented from seeing in Moses face the glory He saw and the eventual nullification of the very law He had to deliver.

14 But their apprehensions were calloused, for until this very day the same covering is remaining at the reading of the old covenant, not being uncovered.  
15 for only in Christ is it **[that is, the Law]** being nullified. But till today, if ever the reading of Moses should be reached, a covering is lying on their heart.

Can you imagine this: In every Jewish synagogue, a figurative veil covers their hearts and minds when the Torah is read. They simply blind themselves in their adherence to the Law that Christ fulfilled and that has been eclipsed by the grace of God that they simply cannot see, and the vivifying spirit that they cannot enjoy. Kind of tragic, isn't it?

16 Yet if ever it should reach a turning back to the Lord, the covering is taken from about it.)

Oh, OK, so the Jews aren't *doomed* to die under the Law; they *CAN* turn "*back to the Lord*," Paul says, and when they do, the veil is lifted and they can see the Father's grace and enjoy the life of the Spirit. There are, in fact many Jews, even in Israel, who have turned to Christ. Some call themselves "*completed Jews*," or "*Messianic Jews*."

17 Now the Lord is the spirit; yet where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

If you find yourself feeling bound, shackled, or otherwise held to anything or anyone, your freedom is in the spirit and you can break free whenever you want or whenever the Father makes His way of escape clear to you. Barbara says, "*If you're going through hell, don't stop!*"

Finally, Paul closes Chapter 3 with this:

18 Now we all, with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit.

I don't think I need to explain that at all! I'll only say AMEN!

And that's where we'll leave it today. So, until next time,

May Yahweh bless you and keep you;  
May Yahweh light up His face toward you  
and be gracious to you;  
May Yahweh lift His face to you  
and appoint peace for you.

AMEN