

New Morning Magical

You're teaching angels!

We are back in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, beginning today in Chapter 2. The first three verses are a fast recap of who you and I were, before Yeshua captured our hearts:

1 And you, being dead to your offenses and sins,
2 in which once you walked, in accord with the eon of this world, in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of [the] stubbornness
3 (among whom we also all behaved ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the comprehension, and were, in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest),

In verse 1, we were "*dead to [our] offenses and sins.*" Notice that we weren't dead IN them, but we were dead TO them. In other words, we didn't even know what we were doing really; but, as verse 2 explains, our behavior was in agreement with this wicked eon, with the spiritual authority that basically runs this eon in the sense that it governs the air. Our past lives are even compared to those of "*the sons of [the] stubbornness*" – unbelieving Jews who are the offspring of the original unbelieving Jews, whom you'll remember we described in an earlier MM.

Verse 3 describes the nature we once followed, and relegates our old humanity – our old nature – as no better than the "*children of [the] indignation,*" which you'll also recall as a description we discussed in an earlier MM.

4 yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us
5 (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!)
6 and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus,
7 that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Watch this progression: The Father vivifies us, or makes us alive, raises us and seats us in the celestials, in Christ; He does all this "*because of His vast love with which He loves us*"; no other reason than love. The purpose, Paul says, is so that the Father will display "*the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ.*" In other words, all of us in Christ are the evidence to others in future eons of the Father's transcendent grace and kindness.

8 For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach

present,
9 not of works, lest anyone should be boasting.

If you look at verse 8 in any other English version of the Bible on Bible Gateway, you will find something similar to this:

For by grace you have been saved through faith **[so far so good]**. And this is not your own doing **[still good]**; it is the gift of God **[Oops! Wrong word!]**

There it is: An image has been all but obliterated throughout Christian history, contained in one mistranslated word: "gift." Everyone knows what a gift is. But that's not the word in the original Greek manuscripts. They contain a different word: "approach present." The Jews in Paul's day would never have substituted "approach present" for gift. The difference is as profound as Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:8.

You and I experience many gifts of God: All of nature; the Earth itself, with its atmosphere that supports our lives; our salvation, won by the Father's only begotten Son; the Holy Spirit and its manifestation in our own spirit-language. Gifts are given; the approach present is an offering.

Approach presents were offered throughout ancient Israel as expressions of thanksgiving for all sorts of causes. For example, look at Matthew 8:

2 And lo! a leper, coming to Him **[Yeshua]**, worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if Thou shouldst be willing, Thou canst cleanse me!"

3 And, stretching out His hand, He touches him, saying, "I am willing! Be cleansed!" And immediately, cleansed is his leprosy.

4 And Jesus is saying to him, "See that you may tell it to no one, but go away; show yourself to the priest and bring the approach present which Moses bids, for a testimony to them."

The leper was required by the Law of Moses to take an offering to demonstrate thanks for his healing. It's a bit odd, isn't it, to be healed, and then to be required to show your gratitude?

Ephesians 2:8 shows a picture that appears nowhere else in the Scripture: The Father Himself carries this offering to you and me: Your salvation in grace through faith (Yeshua's first, then yours in Him). It's exactly opposite to the usual picture of a person carrying an offering to the Father; this verse in Ephesians is the only place that Paul writes this and the significance of "the

approach present” has been utterly lost, probably since the first transcriptions from the Greek manuscripts into Latin in the first few centuries after the last apostle died.

Imagine that the father knocks on your door carrying an offering to you: His promise to deliver you – literally, to save you – out from death and into life throughout the eons. You cannot earn an offering; the Father carries it to you and waits for you to take it from His hands in heartfelt acceptance and genuine gratitude. Salvation is not now, nor ever was, forced or required; it cannot be earned, only accepted by acknowledging the Lordship of the One Who died so you can live.

The approach present in Ephesians 2:8, to me, is a fitting conclusion to the word of the conciliation from 2 Corinthians 5. Both are appeals by the Father; one for an end to our estrangement and the other for acceptance of salvation, or deliverance, in grace through faith.

I don’t know whether I’m doing justice to the profound importance of the Father carrying an offering to people, rather than the other way around throughout human history. He becomes so approachable here, rather than aloof, and we see His kindest, sweetest side, unlike anywhere else in Scripture.

I really find it hard to adequately describe how the meaning of the approach present hits me whenever I read it, and has since I found it in early 2009, while writing the first iteration of *Rescuing God from the Rubble of Religion*. Its importance is so profound that a whole chapter in the book centers on it.

Now that we’ve gone through all this follow-up to Ephesians 2:8-9, let’s read it now perhaps with greater understanding and ability to appreciate the image that Paul is painting:

8 For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present,

9 not of works, lest anyone should be boasting.

No one can boast at receiving “God’s approach present,” because you didn’t do anything to deserve it or earn it, which is the nature of grace itself: It is freely given, apart from works.

11 Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations **[or Gentiles]** in flesh -- who are termed 'Uncircumcision' by those termed 'Circumcision,' in flesh, made by hands **[these are the Jews]** --

12 that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of

Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, **having no expectation, and without God in the world.**

13 Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off [*Paul is referring to Gentiles again*], are become near by the blood of Christ.

14 For He is our Peace, Who makes both one [*Jews and Gentiles*], and razes the central wall of the barrier

15 (the enmity in His flesh [*or the natural hostility toward the Father that lived in Yeshua's flesh and lives in ours too*]), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace;

16 and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it.

Here again, reconciling is the right word, because throughout this section, Paul is addressing the former distance and literal hostility between Jews and Gentiles that existed for millennia before Christ.

The enmity that Paul refers to in verse 16 is different from the enmity in verse 15. The earlier verse refers to the enmity within Yeshua's flesh and ours too; while enmity in verse 16 refers to enmity within the "one body," Paul says, which is the collective body of Christ. This begs the question, "Why would the body of Christ harbor enmity within it, or within its members?" Well, it doesn't really, because the cross killed the enmity, or at least the reasons for it. The members, comprised of Jews and Gentiles carried enmity toward each other, so that even before Paul came along to tell us the secret of the body of Christ, now His body, the Father had already killed the enmity in it through the power of the cross. Did you follow all that?

17 And, coming, He brings the evangel [*the glad tidings, or good news*] of peace to you, those afar [*Gentiles*], and peace to those near [*Jews*],

18 for through Him we both have had the access, in one spirit, to the Father.

19 Consequently, then, no longer are you guests and sojourners, but are fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God's family,

20 being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself,

21 in Whom the entire building, being connected together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord:

22 in Whom you, also, are being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit.

Quite the awesome picture, isn't it? The last half of verse 22 is the best part: "*being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit.*" AMEN!

Now let's go to Chapter 3, beginning in verse 3, where Paul declares the source of "*the secret*," which he explains a bit more than in other epistles:

3 for by revelation the secret is made known to me (according as I write before, in brief,
4 by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of
the Christ,
5 which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now
revealed to His holy apostles and prophets)

Paul generously includes others to whom the secret may have been made known; however, we find no evidence that they even grasped the extent of grace, let alone concepts such as the body of Christ, or conciliation.

in spirit
6 the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint
partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel
7 of which I became the dispenser, in accord with the gratuity of the grace of God, which
is granted to me in accord with His powerful operation.

Here Paul owns his unique calling and doesn't try to make a way for anyone else. When you are called by the Father and He reveals something to you that is unique, which He also directs you to share with others, don't compromise your calling by trying to include anyone else. He gave it to you, so own it, humbly, to be sure, but also without apology.

8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of
the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations,
9 and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been
concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all,

As if "*the secret*" wasn't already mind-blowing to Paul's audience, which thankfully includes us today, he's building up to yet another expansion of it.

10 that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the
celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God,
11 in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord;
12 in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith.

Let's look at verse 12 first: You and I, in Christ, *"have boldness and access with confidence,"* to what, we may well ask? The answer is in the phrase, *"through His faith."* Again, Yeshua's faith was that the Father would raise Him up from among the dead and restore the glory that was Christ's in the beginning. Just as Christ had *"boldness and access with confidence"* to *"the purpose of the eons,"* which after all, the Father made in Him, and to the Father Himself as Christ sits at His right hand, so do you who are the Father's son or daughter and as much a part of the purpose of the eons as Christ is.

Now look at verse 10, which is another astonishing revelation all its own: This *"purpose of the eons"* in verse 11 includes making *"the multifarious wisdom of God"* known. The shocker is to whom His multifarious wisdom is made known: *"to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials."* But wait, the shock isn't only that human beings aren't the objects of this demonstration; the added shock is who is chosen to make this demonstration: *"through the ecclesia."* That's you and me!

So, here's what to me is the gigantic takeaway in this latest of Paul's shockers: How you and I live our lives, our behavior, our comportment, as well as what we say to ourselves and others, is all a display and a demonstration of the Father's multifarious wisdom, not to other people, although that's certainly true, but most importantly, *"to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials."* You're teaching angels, if I may say it that plainly, from your rising to your lying down! And not just the good angels, but those who openly oppose the Father and His purpose, because we will meet some of these *"sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials"* again in Chapter 6.

The celestials are watching, even now, as we go through this exploration together. They simply don't have our perspective or our unique position in trusting the Father. This a bit difficult to communicate, but, clearly, they don't have the kind of relationship to the Father that we do. He does not call them sons; they have not been privy to His purpose until now, as Paul says, and that purpose is being worked out in we who are in Christ. They are already in forms that don't die, so the depth of our trust in the Father, our faith in Yeshua, neither of Whom we've met, is probably quite instructive, to say the least. They may be fascinated to see all this history go by, not knowing the end, let alone the stopping points, because, as Paul says in Ephesians 2:9, the Father's purpose has been *"concealed from the eons in God, Who creates [the] all."*

You are a bigger deal to the Father than you know – than any of us grasp. You demonstrate all the facets of His wisdom to messengers throughout their ranks. Now I don't claim to know WHY the Father is doing this, but He is, bless His holy name.

And, one last point before we go: Messengers can watch you and listen to you, but, no matter who they are and no matter their rank, they have no access to your thoughts. They can hear what you speak, but not what you think. I don't know if that helps you to know, but it has many others with whom I've shared that revelation. It isn't really a revelation of God, so much as the Scriptures give no evidence of that, even though it seems to be a prevailing superstition throughout Christendom; and where the belief in a being called Satan, or the devil, is held, this superstition is even worse! I can't count the number of times I've heard someone say, "*the enemy is lying to my mind,*" or something of that nature. Where does the word of God support that belief, I might ask? It doesn't; but, then, it doesn't support this Satan or devil either – not YOU, but whomever I'm speaking to.

I think this may be a good time to share our study into what in Hebrew is known as "the sa-tan," or "adversary," because it has proven to be such a liberating revelation to those who have heard it.

Well, that's enough for 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