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Bearing the Lord's Name

Exodus 20:7, Numbers 6:27, James 2:7

A study of the significance of "bearing or taking the Lord's Name" and how we do it.

Joel Portman

God places great emphasis on "the Name" in both the OT and NT and we can understand that emphasis. Even in our everyday lives, one's Name represents...

1. His Entire Person... one is known by the name that they bear
2. His Reputation/Character before others. Having a "good name" is important to one's life.
3. His Resources... acting in the Name of, or under the authority of another.
4. His Authority.. speaking in the Name of another person, such as an official speaking in the king's name.

"My Name" is found first in Genesis 32:29, when Jacob asked the name of the angel wrestling with him in the dark night at Penuel. We also notice that this expression is encountered in other places, such as in Exodus 9:16, when God said to Pharaoh, "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Again, in Matthew 6:9.. "Hallowed be thy Name", meaning that it is set apart from common uses and not to be used in vain. We often read and think of Matthew 18:20, where in that case, those believers are "gathered unto my name" in relation to an assembly matter. The Lord's commendation is directed toward the feeble believers in Philadelphia, when He said that they had not "denied my name" but that they had honored it by their lives and testimony.

In Exodus 20, Israel was now being introduced to God as Jehovah, whereas He wasn't before known by them in that character (Exodus 6:3). That Name is emphasized in the ten commandments and they, as His people, were expected to reverence it.

This commandment immediately teaches us that the Name of God is not to be used carelessly. We recognize and believe this, and we should hallow that name. It isn't to be used as a common expression..oh

god", "my god"... as is often the case. There isn't any thought of His august Person when used in this way. It is just a casual expression to most speakers and means nothing.

Neither is it to be used as a common oath in blasphemous speech, as some people express it along with other expressions of disregard for the reverence that is due to a holy God. We should also use care not to use even modifications of it, as many believers do without thinking, such as "gosh", "gee", even "good heavens.." Our Lord said to swear not at all, not by anything, so as to emphasize what is said. If that is the case, then much less thoughtless expressions that can creep into our speech. This kind of talk only dishonors HIM, not just the Name, but all that the Name represents of His Person.

But it helps us to learn that if we look more closely at the commandment, we see that there is more than this in it. "Take" in this verse means to carry, bear, lift up, support, sustain, endure, assist. It is first found in Genesis 4:13 with regard to Cain's punishment being "greater than I can bear..". So it is usually translated as "bear, lift, take, carry, bring".

Notice also the meaning of the word "vain", which is "worthless, empty, falsely". If we understand this and meditate on it, then we learn that the verse is saying "Thou shalt not bear the Name of the Lord thy God in an unworthy manner, or falsely". This is more in line with the OT references that bear on this truth.

Notice other examples in the Old Testament: In Exodus 28:12, 29, Aaron bore the names of the tribes of Israel on the shoulder pieces of his garment and on the breastplate. In Numbers 6:27, the Lord said that He would "put my Name upon them..." so that in their corporate testimony, they were bearing that Name and all that it represented in order to honor Him in the sight of the nations around. We read in Psalm 16:4, "...nor take up (bear) their names into my lips" in the sense of making vows in their names. Israel was entering into a covenantal relationship with the Lord and was chosen to "bear His Name before the nations, to represent Him in their behavior and character" How they did that would reflect on the Lord.

It was a common practice in ancient days to brand slaves on their hands or bodies with the names or signs of their owners.. they were his property and represented him. They were under his authority and responsible to him, and their conduct and obedience reflected on the person whose name they carried. They were "bearing his name" every day of their lives and expressing that relationship with him.

God condemned Israel for defiling and profaning His Name before the nations (Leviticus 18:21, Ezekiel

36:17-23, Daniel 9:16-19). When the nation behaved wrongly and became like the surrounding Gentiles, they dishonored His Name by

1. misrepresenting God's character by their evil lives and
2. causing others to have misconceptions of God when He brought judgment on them, since the others would think that God had failed them and His promises.

Application to Us in our Day

The same principle applies to us as those who are identified with our Lord; believers carry the Name of the Lord in their lives from the moment of salvation and especially from the time of baptism. We read that the believers who were in Antioch were first called "Christians", indicating that before the city and those around them, they were bearing that Name, and they did so honorably so that others were attracted to Christ also "into the Name.." (Acts 11:26). James reproves his readers in James 2:7 when he exposes their wrong

conduct as they showed partiality for the rich. The rich ones were those who "blaspheme the excellent name which has been called upon you?" (Darby Trans). Those dear believers (and all who are like them) began to bear the Name of the Lord Jesus when they confessed Him and especially in their baptism. It was the moment when that blessed Name was called upon them. And isn't that what baptism is? It is a public declaration that I am identified with the Person who possesses that Name and I am bearing it in public testimony to honor Him and do His will.

An illustration of its reality is what we read that Paul wrote in Galatians 6:17.. "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus". Those marks were like those branded on the bodies of slaves, soldiers, and some servants of the pagan temples, and they indicated identification and ownership. What Paul had suffered in his service for the Lord were the marks that he bore honorably for the sake of that Name and all that it meant to him. Peter reminds his readers (1 Peter 4:16) that if they suffered because they were Christians, they should not be ashamed but that they should glorify God that, (literally) it was because they bore that Name. Bearing that Name in their lives and public testimony resulted in their suffering, so that it was an indication of the honor that the Lord was giving them to suffer for the sake of Christ (Philippians 1:29).

How can we Bear His Name?

In view of this precious truth, we should ask ourselves, "how do I bear His Name and what can I do to bring honor to that Name in my life?" We can suggest a few means that would be an important part of doing so.

1. By our Reverential Conduct. How we conduct ourselves each day in our lives as individuals before an unbelieving world reflects honor to the Name of our Lord Jesus. How do we react when others blaspheme or use the Name of our Lord Jesus carelessly. It's easy to simply ignore it or accept it, but then, are we bearing that Name honorably or in vain? How we conduct ourselves or appear when we come together as believers in assembly gatherings is important. Many believers, when coming to the assembly building, seem to come without any realization that how they dress, how they behave, what attitude they express, or how our interest is shown will all impact the honor of the Name that we profess to carry. Reverence always becomes God's house because it is holy, not the building, although the building is associated with the testimony of the assembly and our conduct with relation to it will reflect on the honor of His Name (Psalm 93:5).

2. By chaste behavior, words, deeds, attitudes. The world is full of those who claim the Name of Christ but whose behavior may be immoral or compromised so as to conform to the world and its standards. Holiness should become our lives and behavior in every environment. The innuendos and suggestive

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Editors: Joel Portman & Jim Brown

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expressions of this world are unbecoming to those who bear the Name of the Sovereign, Holy Lord. His Name is holy (Psalm 99:3), and all that is contrary to His holiness is an affront to His honor. We represent Him in this world and in the eyes of most, what the world observes is all that they may know about the Lord Jesus. Many a person has been won to the Savior by observing the controlled and modest dress and behavior of a believer in the midst of others in the world. Peter teaches that an unsaved husband may be won by observing the quiet and modest behavior of his Christian wife, even more than by her "preaching" to him.

3. By Attitudes that express subjection to the Spirit's control. We are to be "filled with the Spirit", which means that He is to have full liberty to control and direct our lives. It is doubtful if most of us really know what it is to be led by the Spirit in everything that we do. We little consider the Lord's will in our decisions, even though we might use the expression, "Lord willing..." (This is one of the oft-used but little-meant expressions in many believers' language). James reproves those who make their decisions without due consideration for the will of God in their lives (James 4:13-17). Bearing His Name means that all is subject to Divine control and as a believer consciously seeks to express that control, His Name is honored.

4. By our Priorities of life and the place that the Lord has in our daily living. This world is full of those who claim to be born again and to be Christians, but sadly His Name is blasphemed because of them, even as David's conduct with Bathsheba also did (2 Samuel 12:14). It is often said that the unsaved man doesn't read the Bible but they read the Christians, and perhaps the scarcity of those who desire God's salvation is due in part to the character of the lives of those who profess Christianity. Hebrews 11 emphasizes that faith in every genuine respect will result in actions that express its reality. Otherwise it is "dead" (James 2:17, 26).

5. In the Character of our Secular work before men. Peter encourages believers that were suffering abuse and persecution from the world that in their daily work and service as slaves, their testimony would honor the Name of the One whose they were (1 Peter 2:18-21, 3:1, 16, 4:14). Paul also reminds us of the need to conduct ourselves wisely in our lives in the workplace so that this is an important aspect of honoring the Name. When we are at work for an employer, they should receive the faithful service that they expect in return for the salary that they pay. Some believers seem to think that they have liberty to use their time at work to seek to witness to others, but in that way, they are actually robbing their employer of time and work.

6. By the Quality of our Study of God's Word. It's possible to read the Holy Scripture (as we should) on a daily basis, prepare for preaching the gospel or speaking in the assembly, or other ways in which we use the Scripture as a "tool" rather than allowing it to be the "man

of our counsel." The blessed man in Psalm 1 was a person who delighted in the law of the Lord. Jeremiah 15:16 expresses the prophet's attitude, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." Peter reminds us that the result of the new birth that he describes at the end of 1 Peter 1 is a hunger for the Word of God even as a newborn baby craves the milk of its mother (2:1-3). Other passages remind us that those who were exercised to manifest the honor and dignity of the Lord's Name had a deep reverence for God's Word and sought to saturate their souls in it constantly. There is much material in this vile world that can occupy our minds. The best, and only, way to preserve spiritual sanity and maintain our Christian pathway is through the avid application of our minds to God's holy Word (Psalm 119:9).

Do we carry His Name in Vain? Are we striving to constantly Honor and Magnify Him in every way? Paul could honestly write, "For me to live is CHRIST..." and his life proved the reality of that declaration.

Samson and Samuel

Cristian Chirinos, Venezuela

A comparison of Samson and Samuel, who lived at approximately the same time in the same era of Israel's history.

Both were children of pious parents. Both were born in a miraculous way. Both were Nazirites from birth. Both had the presence and resources of God. Both lived in times of spiritual decadence, having the same opportunities to do good to God's people, since they lived in days when the Philistines defeated Israel. Both were judges in Israel, but which of the two was greater?

Anyone would think that Samson was, because of his enormous strength and fame, but the Bible tells us that Samuel was the greatest before God. Let's compare Samson and Samuel in seven aspects:

1. Their Naziriteship

Samson's Naziriteship was formal, outward, and in appearance. His long hair was only a screen, which could not conceal the real nature of his heart, for he partook of worldly banquets, was unequally yoked with unbelievers, consorted with harlots, and defiled himself with the dead.

Samuel's Naziriteship was as much from without as from within, it was something that belonged to his nature. Of him it is said that, "while the sons of Eli were ungodly men, and had no knowledge of the LORD..., the young Samuel grew up, and was accepted before God and before men... and all Israel... knew that Samuel was a faithful prophet of the LORD" (1 Samuel 2:12,26; 3:20). The Nazirite was to be a man different from others, like

John the Baptist, and above all, like our Lord Jesus Christ: "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners", who is the example par excellence. In this sense, every holy believer is a Nazarite for God.

Are we like Samson or Samuel?

2. Their Spirituality

It would seem that Samson would have been a very spiritual man, because the Spirit of God is mentioned several times in his history, but we see that this was in an occasional and waning form. At the beginning of his public life, "the Spirit of Jehovah began to move him" (Judges 13:25); but thereafter in an occasional form. It is said three times, "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson," and finally God departed from him. Samson's immorality caused God's presence to recede further and further from his life.

On the other hand, since Jehovah manifested himself to Samuel in the temple, it is said: "and the Lord was with him... and the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel" (1 Samuel 3:19,21). His consecration filled him more and more with the presence of God. The Bible says: "Be not drunk with wine... but be filled with the Spirit".... "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith".... "that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 5:18; 3:17,19). How can this be achieved? As Paul accomplished it: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me". "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed" (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:30).

3. Their Victories

Samson's victories were sporadic, he never dominated the Philistines, and he wasted his strength hunting foxes and carrying the gates of a city, where he had slept with a harlot. James says: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). He does not say, play with the devil. "Shall a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned?" (Proverbs 6:27). If Samson had joined his powers to holiness, the pages of his history would be full of glory, but as Proverbs says: "because of a harlot woman a man is brought to a morsel of bread" (Proverbs 6:26). Samson, whose name means: "like the sun", was really a dull sun. That is why the wise mother said to King Lemuel: "Give not thy strength to women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings" (Proverbs 31:3).

On the other hand, it is said of Samuel: "So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the land of Israel; and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel" (1 Samuel 7:13). His victories were lasting. Paul says: "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ Jesus" (2 Corinthians 2:14). Brother, "be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

4. Their Strength

Samson's strength was bodily, while Samuel's strength was spiritual and his presence instilled fear and respect. This is testified twice: "And Samuel cried unto the LORD; and the LORD gave thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel" (1 Samuel 12:18). Later, when he went to anoint David: "So Samuel did as the LORD had said unto him: and when he came to Bethlehem, the elders of the city went out to meet him with fear, and said, "Comest thou peaceably?" (1 Samuel 16:4).

Samson was a morally weak man. There are five "descents" in his life. His three encounters with women demonstrate the decaying process of a believer: With the first was only the pleasing of the eyes: "the lust of the eyes." With the second, a passing union: "the lust of the flesh". With the third, he loved her: which led to "the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). The believer must grow in the grace of God, and never descend to the level of the ungodly.

5. Their Prayers

Samson's prayers were self-centered, seeking his own good. There are only two prayers in his life, and they are of this same nature. First he prayed for water, but only for himself: when he was very thirsty, he called on the Lord and prayed, "... now shall I die for thirst?" (Judges 15:18). Then he called for strength for vengeance, but not on behalf of the people, but "for his two eyes" (Judges 16:28). He had a very small heart, he sought his own.

Samuel's prayers were always in favor of the people; his are these memorable words: "far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Samuel 12:23). Intercessory prayer is one of the pleasing sacrifices that the believer can offer to God: "Pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

6. Their Losses

Samson lost his Naziriteship, lost the women he loved, lost his hair, lost his strength, lost the presence of his God, lost his eyes, lost his testimony and lost his life. We do not read of losses in the life of Samuel; earlier, in his days: "The cities which the Philistines had taken from the Israelites were restored to the children of Israel... and Israel delivered their land out of the hand of the Philistines" (1 Samuel 7:14).

7. Their Death

Samson's death was a tragic and premature death. Samuel, on the other hand, died peacefully, full of gray hair and full of days. God honored him to the end. "And Samuel died, and all Israel gathered themselves together, and mourned for him" (1 Samuel 25:1). God says: "I will honor them that honor me, and those who despise me will be lightly esteemed" (1 Samuel 2:30).

Although Samson regained his hair and strength, he regained neither his freedom nor his life.

Only the Lord knows what the end of our days will be like; it may be that the Lord will come sooner; if not, may He help us to be "faithful unto death" (Revelation 2:10).

Ministry Arranged and Controlled...by Who?

F. H. Bush, Auckland, New Zealand

Reemphasizing what has been the practice of assemblies from early days but which is being abandoned today.

This is a highly important truth to which the Holy Spirit opened the eyes of saints, early in the last century, and which was the Lord's order for ministry in the Church, and gifts given for this purpose. When it was discerned that the Source of all true ministry is the ascended Lord, the Head of One Body, (Ephesians 4:4-11) and that their distribution, manifestation and operations are to be directed by the will and power of the Holy Spirit, (1 Corinthians 12:11) it became clear that man's system of clerisy dishonors both the Lord and the Holy Spirit, by substituting human order and authority for Divine order and power. We speak not of clergymen—some of them saintly, much used men—but of the clerical system.

"The form of sound words" is to be held in faith and love; and the beautiful deposit committed to us can be guarded only by the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us. (2 Timothy 1:13, 14). When His power is lost, fleshly abuses, such as any-man ministry, may come in.

When we meet with that most deplorable abuse of privilege, brethren speaking in fleshly energy, thus grieving the Spirit, the remedy is to humble and judge ourselves before our Lord, because of our weakness and failure, and to wholeheartedly seek dependence upon the Holy Spirit, that His will may prevail. He will not fail us if we are true before Him. Let us cultivate waiting upon God.

Some dear brethren, in all sincerity perhaps, convene "conference" meetings, appointing speakers for such occasions. Let us consider the question, "How can the will and operations of the Spirit be realized by us, if man appoints the speakers, virtually instructing the Holy Spirit whom He shall use as mouth-pieces?"

The words "worketh," "dividing" and "will" in 1 Corinthians 12:11 are in the present tense, expressing a continuing action by the Spirit. He distributes gifts in exercise, as His will (or choice) assigns to each individual.

Some claim that "pre-arranged" speakers exclude unprofitable ministry. How can that be, seeing it excludes the operation of 1 Corinthians 12:11, leaving no room for the Spirit to act? Brothers to whom He may give messages are silenced by man's violation of the Holy Spirit's sovereign rights. There may be "excellency

of speech" and "persuasive words of human wisdom" (1 Corinthians 2:1-4) under such conditions, but not the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

"Where is the difference," you ask, "between pre-arranging speakers for local ministry meetings and for conferences?" There is, in some cases, a difference; e. g., when the Lord sends a ministering brother to visit a local assembly. But in proportion as ecclesiastical arrangements in local assemblies increase, the direct guidance of the Spirit is set aside. Should we not return to "God and the Word," (Acts 20:32) rather than wander further away?

When MAN appoints speakers, may not human preferences operate in favor of popular preachers who will minister "smooth things" for itching ears, (2 Timothy 4:3) and exclude the ministry of faithful men who, like their Lord, preach righteousness in the great congregation, and have not refrained their lips? (Psalm 40:9).

The subtle plea that the Lord gave gifts, (Ephesians 4:11) and they should be recognized by handing over the platform to those possessing them, reveals how easily our hearts can deceive and cause us to slip into error. It is right to discern and acknowledge gifts the Lord has bestowed; but to interpose human control and regulation between Him and His gifts is an unwarranted intrusion, which constitutes a partial return to clerisy.

"Let all things be done decently (with decorum) and in order," (1 Corinthians 14:40) is quoted to justify human pre-arrangements. That the Greek "taxis" (order) can be rendered "arrangement" is pressed in that direction. If this is correct, then ALL assembly exercises, prayer and worship meetings included, are to be subject to human pre-arrangement and control! and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; 1 Corinthians 14 can be dispensed with! Whither are we drifting?

If 1 Corinthians 14 be thoughtfully read from verse 23 on, and chapter 12 is borne in mind, it is seen to lead to the exhortation to orderliness (the only sense of arrangement in 14:40) as opposed to confusion (verse 33). Divine order, not man's pre-appointments, is in view here.

"But the brethren prayed for the Spirit's guidance in selecting speakers!" The Spirit's answer is that HE divides to each severally as He wills! Does man pretend to know what the Omniscient Spirit knows, the suitability of the ministering vessels, the state and needs of the saints on present and future occasions?

Quietly—like leaven—human pretensions developed in the early Church, evolving the clerical system and the tyranny of priestcraft. Beware, then, of human pretensions and insidious wiles of error, lest we drift back into Nicolaitanism! Revelation 2, verse 6, 15. Beware of driving "new carts," or of lifting human hands to God's ark, in order to maintain Divine things according to worldly wisdom, which is 'foolishness with God. (2 Samuel 6: 3-7; 1 Corinthians 3:19, 20).

We still avow and proclaim the inspiration and authority of God's Word. We profess to own Christ as

Lord; our dependence upon the Holy Spirit. But—Is Lip-Service Enough for the Lord?" (Luke 6:46).

Do we ever add to or diminish from His Word (Deuteronomy 4:2) in practice, or do we really believe in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17?

Ten times are we told in Exodus 39 that Spirit-filled artisans fashioned the furnishings for the tabernacle "as the Lord commanded Moses;" eight times in chap. 40 the faithfulness of Moses in God's house is stressed in the words "as the Lord commanded Moses."

Yet very soon after a remnant was graciously restored from the chastisements of the Exile, the High Priest made room for an enemy of God and his furniture in the temple, by turning out of it God's provision for His servants! Nehemiah 2:10,19; 4:3; 6:1-12; 13:1-9; Deuteronomy 23:3). The entrance of man's order necessarily involves the expulsion of God's order.

"Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." (Proverbs 19:27). May we learn from Moses, and noble, courageous Nehemiah, and not from the disloyal priest!

WIS August 1939

Consecration of Christians, pt. 3

Robert Surgenor, dec.

Concluding article on consecration illustrated by that work in the lives and service of the Aaronic priesthood by our esteemed, departed brother.

The Burnt Offering

The next offering was a burnt offering. After Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the ram, thus identifying themselves with it, it was slain, and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about then cut the ram into pieces, washing the inwards, and placing the whole ram upon the altar to burn as a sweet savor to the Lord. This event is similar to the laying of their hands on the sin offering but the effects are contrasted. Instead of their guilt being transferred to the victim, in the burnt offering, they themselves are transferred to become identified with the ram to be slain. Their sins were transferred to the sin offering, but in the burnt offering, they are being invested with all the acceptability of the burnt offering. Their standing was to be changed on the ground of the value of the offering. The blood was sprinkled round about the altar, thus, its life was presented to God. The inwards being washed symbolized the spotlessness of Christ. The inwards are mentioned which symbolically speak of Christ's motives. Next, the legs indicate Christ's movements, and finally the head, Christ's mind. Paul, the man of knowledge wrote, "He knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5). John, the man of inward affection wrote, "In Him is no sin" (1 John 3). Peter, the man of action wrote, "He did no sin" (1 Peter 2). Christ devoted His all to His Father and God, in His sojourn here.

The whole ram was consumed on the altar expressing that the whole ram was acceptable to God.

Here we see the perfect devotedness of Christ, even to the death of the cross. He never deviated, nor did He hesitate to do the will of God. "He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). Edward Dennett rightly said; "Their sins were cleared away by the sin offering, but now, they stand before God in all the positive acceptance and savor of the burnt-offering – both of these results being gained for the believer by the death of Christ, for these offerings do but present the varying aspects of His one sacrifice."

The Ram of Consecration

The last sacrifice offered was the ram of consecration. After Aaron and his four sons put their hands on the head of the ram, it was slain, its blood was taken and applied to the tip of their right ear, the thumb of their right hand, and the great toe of their right foot. We are picturing what the blood applied announced regarding their consecrated life to follow.

Blood on the Ear

In applying this ceremony to ourselves we would say that the blood on the tip of the right ear, signifies that our hearing is consecrated to God. Remember, that "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and 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 Corinthians 6:19-20). What do I allow to enter my ear? The music of the world? The vain babbling of sinful men? God tells us to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babbling: for they will increase unto more ungodliness" (2 Timothy 2:15-16). Eve had an open ear for the lies of Satan, and thus ruined the human race.

Isaiah 50 is a prophecy concerning God's obedient Servant, the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice verses 4 and 5. "The Lord GOD hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back". Christ is our example. The desire of God for His people in the former dispensation, has not changed regarding us. "Give ear, O My people, to My law: incline your ears to the words of My mouth" (Psalm 78:1). "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels" (Proverbs 1:50).

Blood on the Hand

The blood was applied to the thumb of their right hand. The thumb completes the act of the hand to grasp, and blood on it tells us that our grasp is consecrated. The world is greedy for more, and more, and more. What is the Christian to be like? God says, "Let your conversation (lifestyle) be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee (Hebrews 13:5). It is true that we desire neat and clean

homes, reliable transportation, and a good standing in the community, which is only right. However, there is the danger that we go overboard with our desires and furnish ourselves with things we really don't need. We need a dependable car, but not a flashy luxury vehicle. We have a mansion in heaven, but don't need one here, putting us into a quagmire of debt. Buying a home is an expensive transaction that requires assistance from a lending institution. A contract is made, and the institution owns the home until one pays entirely for it. However, when it comes to the everyday things of life, Christians should pay for what they buy, and if they don't have the money, they should wait on their purchase until they do. I believe that Romans 13:8 is still in the Bible. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.

The Lord teaches us with these challenging words; "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought (to be anxious to be troubled with cares) for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) 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" (Matthew 6:25-26; 31-33).

Blood on the Foot

Finally, the blood was to be put on the great toe of the right foot. The believer's walk before men is most important.

We are the only Bible
 The careless world will read;
 We are the sinner's Gospel,
 We are the scoffer's creed;
 We are the Lord's last message,
 Given in deed and word;
 What if the type is crooked?
 What if the print is blurred?

"The LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect (without blemish)" (Genesis 17:1). "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps" (1 Peter 2:21). Christ never walked to a sporting event, a theater, or any of the world's attractions and pleasures. He will never lead you to any place inconsistent with His holiness and righteousness.

God is very concerned about the way we walk, and has proved His concern by mentioning it so many times in holy scripture. Notice:

Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).

"Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1).

"Let us walk honestly (in a seemly manner)" (Romans 13:13).

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Galatians 4:1).

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

"Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Ephesians 4:17).

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" (Ephesians 5:15)

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5).

"That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory" (1 Thessalonians 2:12).

"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

"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" (1John 1:7).

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6).

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 4).

Never forget my dear brethren and sisters that the blood of consecration is on your foot. Take heed how you walk.

Consider the following thoughts.

BLOOD ON THE EAR

God ministering to me. My attention.

BLOOD ON THE HAND

Me ministering to God. My grasp.

BLOOD ON THE FOOT

My testimony before men. My balance.

BLOOD ON THE EAR

My waiting on God.

Mary sat at Jesus' feet - heard His word.

(Luke 10:39)

BLOOD ON THE HAND

Barnabas working for God.

He sold his land & gave it to the Church. (Acts 4:37)

BLOOD ON THE FOOT

Paul walking after God — He pressed "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

BLOOD ON THE EAR

Mary's Personality

BLOOD ON THE HAND

Barnabas' Possessions

BLOOD ON THE FOOT

Paul's Path

The Anointing

Following the blood being applied, they were to be anointed with oil mingled with blood, typifying the blood of Christ and the unction of the Holy Spirit. As soon as a person trusts Christ, they are cleansed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The blood of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, have set us in association with Christ.

I hope that your only thanks to God isn't that you won't be in hell. There is much more than that in God's purposes for you. He saved you and consecrated you to be a holy and a royal priest. You have been saved in order to serve and bring glory to His holy name. We have been sanctified and endowed for holy services. We have been charged to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). It is not enough that you have been installed into the priesthood. Our priesthood must be consecrated. All the gifts of the Spirit and the blood shed for us are to be for the everlasting praise of our blessed Lord.

The Wave Offering

Following this, they were to take bread and the bisected parts of the ram, and wave them for a wave offering before the Lord. The breast and shoulder are mentioned, speaking of the affections and strength of the Lord. Later, in verses 31 to 35 we read, "And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seethe his flesh in the holy place. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy. And if ought of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it is holy. And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all things which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them."

In this we see Christ in all His perfections waved before the face of God, for Him to delight in. As priests, this is our privilege, yea our responsibility to intelligently present Him to the Father. Let us go beyond history reports of His sojourn. Let us avoid worn-out memorized sayings. Let us fill our hearts and minds with fragrant and fresh truths concerning His Person, His attributes, His essential, intrinsic, and moral glories that radiated from Him, and offer heartfelt and valuable truths of Himself, to our Father. Ask yourself, does Christ possess, absorb, and control your soul? Christ is desirous to possess us wholly, and if the Spirit is ungrieved, He will dwell in our hearts by faith, and will become the only objects of our lives, and this will be expressed in our walk and words. Our worship betrays our intelligence of Christ

The Ram Eaten

The ram was to be eaten by those consecrated. What joyful moments that must have been. They feasted on that which made it possible for their consecration. We too feast on the One who made it possible for us to be priests. Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat

the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Feasting on Christ is fellowship with Christ. There's an old saying, "You are what you eat." Priests that feast daily on Christ, become like Christ. A stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy (vs. 33). This teaches us that no unsaved person can fellowship with and enjoy Christ. All was to be eaten the same day (vs. 34) "Their priestly food must be eaten in connection with the altar. In like manner you cannot feed upon Christ if you dissociate Him from the cross. It is because of His work on the cross He accomplished, that He is our food, and is fed upon in fellowship with God." (E. Dennett).

The consecration of Aaron and his sons lasted seven days. That would amount to seven bullocks and 14 rams slain, involving 78 gallons of blood shed. Blood permeated the whole area. Seven is the number of completeness, and also perfection. During our complete life here from salvation's day to our home-call, we are priests, perfectly equipped to function as such.

In closing, let me mention two solemn occasions. No sooner had these five men been made priests than Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD (Numbers 3:4). No sooner was the Church born, when Ananias and Sapphira were slain by God for lying to the Holy Spirit. This impresses me with the fact that God is very jealous over the priesthood. Let us be careful how we function.

Forbidden Mixtures

John Dickson

Deut. 22:9-10—John 15:1-5—2 Cor. 6:11-18; 7:1

A valuable reminder of the truth of separation and its abiding importance in the lives of believers today.

To older Christians, these verses and the truths contained in them are by no means new, because they have heard them again and again from the earliest days of their Christian life; indeed, likely some can say, "Yes, it was through these very precious verses that years ago we were led to see our place outside the camp, and the world's religion, to become strangers and pilgrims in the world." But these are verses and truths that need to be brought again and again before the young folk, the old ones too, because there is just as great a danger of the older ones letting the truth of God slip as the young.

We notice in Deuteronomy, that Moses is writing to Israel, guided by the Holy Ghost, some of the instructions how they were to do in the land of Canaan, that land flowing with milk and honey. "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with diver seeds." That is very plain and simple. There they had vineyards, and God instructed them not to sow different seeds in the vineyards. We read of vineyards in connection with Noah. He became a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard and drank of the wine from it. So that the vineyard is by no means new. I believe you get the Scriptural sense of what a vineyard is in the 5th chapter of Isaiah, "My well

beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill." The man who is going to plant a vineyard would not take a piece of barren land. He takes the very best, the most productive in growing the grapes. The vineyard in Isaiah 5 was in a very fruitful hill, and it was fenced. We read in another place about a hedge around the vineyard that kept everything outside. Then all the stones were gathered out from the vineyard. Every obstruction was taken away. We then see a fruitful piece of ground, cleared and fenced all around. And the vineyard was planted with the choicest vines and the husbandman expected to receive the fruit by and by in its season.

God gives us the description of the vineyard, but He had something else in view when speaking about it. That vineyard is a type of something that God intended *planting*. In Psalm 80, we read, "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt." That makes it very simple and plain, and in the 5th of Isaiah we read, "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel." God brought that people out of Egypt's darkness, through the Red Sea, into the wilderness, and by and by into the land of Canaan. And He looks upon this people as a separated people with a hedge round about them—this is a vineyard. He wants these people to bring forth fruit unto God. They were not to sow divers seeds in their vineyard, they were to keep it pure with only the right kind of seed in it. It would remind them of that great nation—God's vineyard. He doesn't want a mixture.

Israel went after mixtures from time to time. God says not to sow divers seeds, no mixture in their vineyards. We look at Israel. Instead of them bringing forth fruit as God had intended (for it says He made a winepress, He expected to receive fruit from that vineyard), when we turn to Psalm 105:6, what a description we see there. They mingled themselves with the heathen nations—a people to whom God had given His Word to keep in their homes; it was to guide and regulate their private life, their home life, their relationship to one another, and their relationship to the nations round about them. But they began to mingle with the people of the land, began to run after the nations round about them, and instead of being a people separated to the Lord, bringing forth fruit continually, we find them mingling among the heathen. And by and by, God's judgment fell upon that wonderful people, and we see them carried away into captivity, and hanging their harps upon the willows, weeping when they remembered Zion, and saying, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

In the New Testament

In the N. T. we have One coming forth in John 15. He says, "I am the true vine and My Father is the husbandman." Israel was a vine but it was a disappointment to God. But here a true vine is brought before us. He never was a disappointment but ever brought forth fruit to God. He could say, "I delight to do thy will, O God." But what about those saved by sovereign grace today? He says, "Ye are the branches." We see the Lord Jesus now as the true vine and those of us saved and on the way to heaven are the branches, and, as such are to abide in the vine and bring forth fruit. Now the vine is of no use whatsoever unless it bears fruit. God has saved us for one great purpose, that we might bear holy fruit, but we can only do so as we abide in the vine.

Abide in Christ, and let His Word abide in us, and then we are going to bring forth precious fruit unto God.

There has always been a tendency to let the Word of God slip. In the early days of the church's history, we read those solemn words, "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged; be ye also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" To Israel, they were not to sow divers seeds; they were to be separated from the nations round about them. Here are some instructions for us as we journey on the way to Heaven. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." These, just like the days of old, when there is a drifting from the plain, simple Word of God, and the Lord speaks again and again to brace us up to let the Word of God into our hearts. Here is a people that God has saved. We have been delivered from the wrath to come, sheltered under the blood. God has made us new creatures in Christ Jesus and His desire is that we might show forth the virtues of Him that called us out of darkness into light. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

And then we have that great contrast brought before us, unrighteousness, on the one hand, righteousness, on the other, and what communion can these two have together? "What fellowship, or partnership, hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" One can scarcely imagine a greater contrast than light and darkness. You dear young men, saved, the Lord says, "Ye are the light of the world," and "among whom ye shine as lights."

You dear young sisters, born again, you are those now who are in the light, and the light itself, and what fellowship or communion now can light have with darkness? We think of all the different things in the world today that appeal to children of God, unequal yokes of every kind. What communion hath light with darkness? Now we think of the religious world and how many unequal yokes there are in it. Yokes of all kinds in the world today, and voices are heard calling to the saint of God telling him how much he would gain by going to this place or to that; but here's God's Word to His people down the ages, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." I know these are trying days we are living in, I am not overlooking that. I know many of God's children and they have had a severe test. But it is the saint of God who can come and look into this precious Word, and although tested very severely, this is a Word from heaven, "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." And that is the only place in the New Testament where we have this precious Word, "the Lord Almighty" brought before us. And God has promised to be a Father to us, and "ye shall be my sons and daughters." He says, "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" What part can a person who is saved have with an unbeliever?

In the days in which we are living, these unequal yokes spread over the various departments in life. These words which we have read are usually spoken as a word to

the young people about not marrying the unconverted. Now that is there, and we are not going to make light of it in any sense, because we have seen again and again many a bright young life spoiled. We think of many a bright young Christian and we have seen them singing, "When we reach our peaceful dwelling," singing it with joy, young men who prayed, and young women who seemed, to be godly. But Oh! these unequal yokes, the part with an infidel. Think of a child of God "going to the altar" as it's called, standing before one who put that solemn question to them, will they take such and such a person to be their lawful wedded husband or wife. What are they marrying? An unbeliever. On the one hand, is light, on the other hand, darkness, and the two are joined together. The Word of God says distinctly, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." How can God bless? Oh the tears that we have shed over these very things. But there are other unequal yokes. Every unequal yoke that God looks down upon, He is displeased with, and calls to His people, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Now we have been describing Israel, how they mingled among the heathen, ate the sacrifices of the dead, how they lost their pilgrim character, and God had to bring them down into Babylon for seventy years until they learned to know something, and then He graciously brought them up again- But I would like you to notice a little about the Church's history. Think of the era beginning shortly after the day of Pentecost—assemblies here and there, God's people separated unto the Lord. We read, "Of the rest durst no man join himself to them." But oh, how quickly they began to let the Word of God slip! Man's ideas were brought in, and it made room for man and less room for God's truth, till by and by, just as Israel was carried into Babylon, so the children of God, or the Church, went down into spiritual darkness. Think of the Dark Ages, very little light, very few preaching the Gospel of God's Grace. But God came in and saved some men, among them John Wycliffe and others. These men, were giants in spiritual things. We think we know a tremendous lot in these days, but think of those dear men coming out of the darkness of Rome. God gave them light, they preached the Gospel, and sinners quailed under the mighty preaching and were led to the Savior. Then they began to preach about a crucified Christ. Then they began to read the Word of God, and they came to those wonderful chapters, Revelation 17 and 18, which speak of that great whore sitting upon the many waters, the one called "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots." And how did it appeal to them? They saw a system they had been in bondage to for years. They saw the wickedness, the iniquity, and their eyes got opened to the truth concerning that awful system they had been in. Then they saw the truth of God concerning the freedom which God had given them. They were mighty men, and did not mince matters. They came out publicly, boldly, preaching against that awful system. Many of those noble men went to the stake and sealed their testimony with their life's blood. But oh, how soon things began to drift again! God's people saw the evil on one hand and came out, but they didn't see the truth concerning the gathering of the saints together.

By and by about a hundred years ago, there were a number of noblemen, and God began to stir their hearts. God began to speak to these men. They discovered one great

truth, the priesthood of all believers. It caused one man to take off his robe that he had worn so long, and lay it down in the street. Then they learned from Holy Scripture, the calling of the Church and her heavenly character—something blighted by man's traditions. Then they learned that the Lord was coming. Then they came out to remember the Lord Jesus Christ How sweet and how savory it was to God as they gathered once again according to the Word of God to show the Lord's death till He come. And that sweet feast was precious to those saints of God: And then they preached the Gospel, and thousands of souls were saved. By and by the truth began to open up more and more. They learned the truth, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Some of them suffered much, they learned it by experience, they learned it in the presence of God. It was very precious to them.

To some of us, it hasn't cost much. I sat down with a few saints not long ago in Nova Scotia, not very many of us, all young believers. One managed to get up and give out a hymn, his voice trembling; another managed to get up and say a few words in prayer to God, just a little handful. Outside was a mob, ringing bells, making mockery. Why? Because there were a few that God had saved, and they had seen the truth of gathering to His blessed Name. And it seemed as if all hell and the devil were raging without. I thought if some of the large and well-established assemblies could look in and see that little handful, it wouldn't appear a great thing; but it was just like getting back to the truth of God's Word.

Oh that these precious truths might become more precious to our hearts! You know, when we look at the children born in Christian homes, there is great rejoicing when they get converted. When a young girl gets saved, her people rejoice, and no wonder. And she is kissed and hugged and everyone is happy. But the night that God saved me, there were no kisses for me, I can tell you. I was saved in the first series of Gospel meetings I ever sat in, and when I went home and told them all, they looked at me with astonishment and suspicion and one of them said, "What in the world will you be after next?" But I trusted Christ, and I was saved, and I was watched. And you know, a little persecution is the best soil in which a young Christian can grow. After a few years I saw something from the Bible. I saw believers' baptism and the night I was baptized was the first baptism I had even seen. The next thing I saw was the precious truth of God's children coming on the first day of the week to show the Lord's death till He come. It was very precious to me. And this is very precious too, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

God has given us this great heritage. You young Christians, let this be the motto of your life, no matter what pressure is brought upon you, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" May the Lord bless these lines for His Name's Sake.

"Man must have some delight, some supreme pleasure. His heart was never meant to be a vacuum. If not filled with the best things, it will be filled with the unworthy and disappointing."

Spurgeon