

# THE BREAD OF HEAVEN

Peter Hay, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 30 January 2022

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## **The bread of heaven is living in one Spirit with Yahweh**

Our subject today is 'The bread of heaven'.

We will look at what the bread from heaven is; how it is fed to us; how we eat it; and then, what its implications are for us as we eat this provision from God the Father.

Up front, it is worth making the point that the bread of heaven is *our provision for deliverance* from the iniquity and sin that separates us from the life and fellowship of Yahweh.

That is the first expression of the bread of life to us. It is a provision for deliverance from iniquity, and cleansing of sin.

That is absolutely vital, and if that is not happening in your life, then you are not getting the 'more than this' bit.

But, more than that, it is the means by which we *live in one Spirit*, and by *the one life of Yahweh*, as sons of God.

## **The seraphim had an atoning work**

To open this subject, I will re-cap some of the things that we talked about last time, particularly to do with the seraphim.

We remember that the account of Isaiah's commission as a prophet revealed that one of the responsibilities of the seraphim under the Old Covenant was *the ministry of atonement*. This ministry was the means by which a person was delivered from their iniquity and cleansed from their sin.

The first account of this was not actually Isaiah's commission. The first account of this process was in the wilderness, where Moses made a bronze seraph and placed it up on a pole that the children of Israel were to look at, because of their iniquity.

It was their *iniquity* that this atoning work was dealing with.

## **Rejection of God's provision of the bread from heaven**

The iniquity of the children of Israel was manifest, or exemplified, by their complaints against God and Moses, as they said, 'Why have You brought us

up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.' Num 21:5.

They rejected 'the worthless bread', which was the manna, and the rejection of that provision required them to engage with the seraphim.

So the Lord sent 'fiery serpents' - that term literally means 'seraphim' - into the camp to bite those who spoke in this manner, and they became weak and sick, and began to die.

## **'Another' word leads us into iniquity**

This 'weak, and sick and dying' effect is exactly what Paul spoke about when he said that where we do not discern the body, as we come together to eat and drink, those who do not judge themselves, or examine themselves, rightly, become weak, and sick, and may die before their time. 1Co 11:30.

Now, that can refer to being physically weak, but it also means being *weak in faith*.

The evidence of this in a person will be fearfulness, disbelief, suspicion or complexity.

Those who are sin-sick or physically sick may also be *beset* by sin, in that they cannot find deliverance from it.

Those who are weak and sick, and are then spiritually dying, are those whose minds have been *corrupted from the simplicity and purity* that is in Christ.

Remember, Paul said, 'I'm afraid, lest you would be deceived by Satan in the same way that Eve was, from simplicity.' 2Co 11:3.

The Israelites accepted 'another word', and it is the other word that leads us into iniquity.

They became weak and sick, and were dying, because they had been bitten by a seraph, because of their complaints to do with the bread from heaven.

## **Prayer connects us to the conversation of the tree of life**

The response that they made was to *ask Moses to pray for them*. Num 21:7.

That is amazing, because today I am going to speak about the connection between *prayer* and *eating from the tree of life*.

They asked Moses to pray for them, and this is an important point to understand. Moses' prayer was not intercession on their behalf, in relation to this point.

It was not the case that they were weak and sick and dying and Moses prayed for them, and that, as a result, they were healed.

The *answer* to Moses' prayer was to join the children of Israel to a *context*, or a ground, where they had to go and meet, or interact with, this fiery serpent, *for atonement*. The prayer joined those people to a 'conversation'.

The answer to his prayer was the instruction for the people to *present themselves to look upon the seraph lifted up on the pole*. Num 21:8.

We note that Moses' prayer *established the context for their recovery* and, on this ground, and through this interaction, they were healed. Num 21:9.

Moses did not go between them and the Lord, but they needed to come to him so that he could pray for them and *connect them to the right conversation*.

### **Prayer is foundational to a conversation that can lead to deliverance and cleansing**

Now, the same thing happened with Isaiah.

When Isaiah heard the message, 'Holy, holy, holy' - and we learnt that that message is 'God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all' - which was proclaimed by the seraphim, his response was to confess that he was a man of unclean lips, whose interactions with others were also unclean. Isa 6:3-5.

It was not simply what had gone *into* his mouth or what came *out* of his mouth. It was the fact that the *nature of his connections with others was also unclean*.

He said, 'Woe is me, a man of unclean lips. And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.'

The seraph used tongs to take a coal of Yahweh's fire from the golden altar to anoint the lips of Isaiah, removing his iniquity from him, and purging him of his sin. Isa 6:6-7.

This is an amazing picture because, in the same way that Moses prayed for the people to connect them to a conversation through which they could

find atonement, that golden altar from which the coal was taken symbolised prayer in the true tabernacle.

The prayer was fundamental to the operation of this atoning work through the seraph. It symbolised prayer in the heavenly temple.

Obviously, prayer is foundational to the conversation through which a person finds deliverance from iniquity, and cleansing from sin.

We will consider, albeit briefly today, that this principle is also true in the New Covenant.

This same interaction and conversation is a process that we must join if we are to be delivered from our iniquity, find cleansing from sin, and be connected to the works that belong to our name as sons of God.

### **The atoning work of the seraphim was given to Christ**

Drawing on, or leaning on, this point about prayer and the golden altar, the golden altar was the piece of furniture that was just in front of the curtain separating the holy place from the most holy place.

It had cherubim woven into it, like the picture of the garden of Eden, where two cherubim barred the way to the tree of life.

The golden altar was the piece of furniture that represented, or symbolised, prayer, like incense going into the most holy place.

The golden altar of the true temple was revealed when Jesus began to pray to the Father, by the Spirit, as the Father made Jesus an offering for sin. This is an amazing point.

'And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

'Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly [He received a capacity to pray, and He did not pray by that capacity before He received this grace]. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.' Luk 22:41-44.

It is amazing that it was an *angel* which came and strengthened Him with the capacity of Eternal Spirit so that, as He was praying, He began to sweat great drops of blood.

This interaction describes *the re-ordering of the angelic hosts*. So you can see why we need to understand what the angelic hosts looked like and how they operated under the Old Covenant.

A fundamental and critical change was happening. The atoning ministry that the seraphim ministered – it was not *their* atoning work; they were revealing the atoning fire of Yahweh, through their obedience – was *given to Christ*, who had become a man.

The angelic ministry was given to Jesus, not because He was Yahweh's Son, but because He was *the Son of Man*. It was given to a man, who has been made lower than the angels, under this Law Covenant.

### **Prayer marked the commencement of Christ's offering journey**

At this point, He began to pray more earnestly, interceding for us as our great High Priest. And then His blood began to flow over the whole of His body.

As the angels laid this down to Him, and that atoning work now belonged to the Son, the atonement no longer worked by a seraph taking coals from a fire to put on lips; it was now working by *blood being shed on His body*.

A new process was being revealed. It is not that prayer was no longer the atoning connection; prayer marked the *beginning* of this process. In other words, no-one joins this process without joining that prayer.

Prayer marked the commencement of Christ's offering journey, through which He progressively descended into the lowest parts of the earth, and then progressively ascended, as a new creation, right to the throne of the Father.

In the course of this journey, Jesus was bringing the old creation to an end, and was establishing the new heavens and earth.

This was 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world', establishing a beginning.

He was also multiplying His life so that it would become the new creation life, which is the divine nature that belongs to the sons of God.

### **Christ fed His flesh and blood to us as the bread from heaven**

Something had been laid down to Christ, and He was walking this pathway.

It is a pathway that reveals the judgement of God, deals with iniquity and brings cleansing of sin, as part of that work of the cross. At the same time, it multiplies His own life to be given to those who are joined to this process.

Through this offering, He was feeding His flesh and His blood to the world as 'the bread of heaven', and it was either the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to a person or the fruit of the tree of life to them, depending on how they received the word of the cross.

That is amazing! *Every* human being must go and eat from that tree.

It will either be the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to them, condemning them to eternal separation; or it becomes the tree of life to them, where they are finding deliverance from iniquity, cleansing from sin, and are being connected to a will that is not their own.

### **The bread of heaven belongs to sons of God**

We will take up this point on 'the bread of heaven' to understand what it is; and to understand the connection between the bread of heaven and how Jesus is feeding it to us from the cross. That is the connection we have to understand.

The first description is probably the tree of life in the garden, but the first reference to the term, 'bread of heaven', was the deliverance of Israel from their captivity in Egypt.

The Lord Himself, when He was speaking through Moses to Pharaoh, described the children of Israel, or this company of people, as His 'firstborn', and His 'son'. 'This is My son. The whole company of people are My son; My firstborn son.' Exo 4:22.

This is important to understand. Sonship is fundamental to the bread that we eat; or, another way of saying it is that *the bread of heaven belongs to the sons of God*.

He called them, 'My son; My firstborn.' When He came to Mt Sinai, and desired to make a covenant with them, He said, 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself [there was an invitation to come and fellowship with Yahweh].

'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' Exo 19:4-6.

That is *the initiative of Yahweh for fellowship*.

### **Manna was the provision for a kingdom of priests**

Now, between these two declarations of 'Let My firstborn go', and 'Israel, I want you to be a special people to Me; I want you to be a royal priesthood', about a month after they left Egypt, He began to feed them with manna, the bread from heaven.

This is what the Lord said about the bread of heaven, the manna. Remember, they were complaining that they were hungry.

'Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain [as in the 'gentle rain'] bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out [so, they have to go and get it] and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.' Exo 16:4.

He didn't say, 'I am raining down bread from heaven so that they won't be hungry anymore.' He said, 'I'm raining bread down from heaven *to test them*, to see whether they will *walk in the light*.' That is what 'walk in My Law' means; to walk in the light.

Remember, last time, we noted that the seraphim were like 'lightning from His hand'. The Law was called 'flashes of light'.

He fed them this bread to see if they would walk in the light of the flashes of lightning.

'So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground.

'So when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was.' Exo 16:13-15.

Before we continue, I want to bring some summary points, to establish some waypoints out of these passages.

The first one is that the Lord Himself described the manna as 'bread from heaven'. This was not food

that was produced, or brought forth, from the ground, by men.

In the first instance, it was not natural food. It was not brought forth through natural means to service a natural appetite.

He said, 'I'm feeding this to test you, not to satiate your hunger.' The food was given by the Lord to a company of people who identified as being His corporate, firstborn son. That bread belongs to the sons of God.

If they were not rooted and grounded in love, that bread would kill them. It belonged to those whom He identified as being His 'firstborn son', and who had become a kingdom of priests.

That means that they *lived to make offering*. It was the provision for their *expression* as a kingdom of priests.

### **God's provision of His word**

Furthermore, the bread from heaven was provided in the dew every morning.

'Dew' is the water of the word that belongs to those who live in unity together. That is how the manna came. Psa 133.

The dew is likened by the psalmist to *the unity of God's covenant people because of the word*, which is ministered line on line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, and which also happens to be the sword of the word, called 'the word of the cross'. Isa 28:13.

### **Faith was needed to receive what the Lord provided**

This is my next point. The bread came in the word, symbolised by the dew, but the people had to go out and collect it.

It would not do anything for them in the sense of feeding them, just because the Lord had rained it down on the ground.

They actually had to go *and collect it* and, more than that, they had to go and bake it, or boil it, or whatever else you do with manna.

It was *provided* for them, but they actually had to *demonstrate faith* towards it, and *do something*. They had to go and prepare it, and eat it in their houses.

### **Manna was a provision to establish the people in His covenant as His sons**

My last point is that the reason for the provision of this bread was *to test the people*.

He was not testing them like in an exam to see if they were going to be a 'good' people or an 'evil' people. That word 'to test' means 'to prove' them.

It is the same sense as 'I beseech you' or 'I'm pleading with you, brethren, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service, that you may prove, or come to know, or be established in, the perfect will of God, which is your sanctification.'

That is why He fed them. He wanted them to be established, or proven, as the sons of God whom He was calling them to be.

He was feeding them to *establish them in sonship*; not to test them to see whether they were going to be 'good' or 'bad'. They were all bad!

He was taking them through a process to bring them to their inheritance. The proving was to prove, or to establish, or to settle them, in His covenant.

That is what the word was to do. That is what the bread of heaven was coming to them to achieve. Notably, it was not to first satisfy their natural hunger.

### **Believing is fundamental to eating the bread of life**

It is really interesting to note the way in which the psalmist Asaph spoke about this interaction, because he described the bread of heaven as 'angels' food'.

This has caused some confusion in the past, particularly as we have been explaining that angels' food, or the food that angels eat, is from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The implication would be that the Lord was feeding them from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but I will explain how that is not true, and what angels' food actually means.

Asaph referred to the complaining of the children of Israel.

'Therefore the Lord heard this [complaint] and was furious; so a fire was kindled against Jacob [This is going to connect to fiery eyes, and a fiery

seraph], and anger also came up against Israel, because they did not believe in God.' Psa 78:21-22.

They hated the manna, and it was the evidence that they didn't *believe*. So, *believing* is fundamental to *eating*.

### **Angels' food is the bread that belongs to Yahweh**

'Yet He had commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven, had rained down manna on them to eat, and given them of the bread of heaven. Men ate angels' food; He sent them food to the full.' Psa 78:23-25.

What, then, did the psalmist mean by 'angels' food'? Importantly, Asaph didn't mean that the children of Israel were fed the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, although it *became* that to them, depending on their response to the Lord.

Those people who died in the wilderness were not eating from the tree of life. They were condemned to eternal forgetfulness, in the lake of fire.

But they still ate the manna, didn't they! It became *judgement* to them.

Simply, angels' food is the bread, or food, that *belongs to Yahweh in heaven*.

The Lord said, 'This is the food which is coming down from heaven', so it is *bread from heaven*. Its source is in heaven, and angels' food is a description of what *belongs in heaven*.

### **This food enables the administration for God's will to be done**

This food is the resource that enables, or gives energy to, *the administrations of the throne*, through which *the will of God is done*.

We eat food because we need it for energy to do the things that are in front of us to do. This provision from heaven is the energy, or the capacity, of the administrations of God's throne for His will to be done.

This resource that enables these administrations is the Spirit of life *from the Father*, which is *in Christ Jesus*, and is *ministered by the Holy Spirit*.

The Father is the source of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, and is ministered by the Holy Spirit.

### **The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus – the resource of the Godhead**

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is *the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, symbolising the creative initiative of Yahweh *Elohim*, and that is what angels fed on.

But the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is also *the fruit of the tree of life*, symbolising the multiplication of His life through offering by one Spirit.

So, it is the Spirit of life in Christ, which is both fruits.

But for one, it is the expression of the creative initiative of Yahweh *Elohim*; and for the other, it is the expression of the multiplication of the life that belongs to that creation.

It is the same resource, but it has two different expressions.

### **The word establishes relationship with Yahweh**

In this regard, the nomination of manna as angels' food marked Yahweh's initiative to establish Israel in *relationship* with Him as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, *through His word*.

This word was ministered to them through the disposition, or through the communication, of angels. And it was a 'tutor' to lead them to Christ. Gal 3:24.

This is what Moses had to say about it just before he died, and just before they were about to go into the Promised Land.

'So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but *man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.*' Deu 8:3.

That is the principle of manna, and gives us some useful, foundational understandings to be able to comprehend what Jesus said about the bread of heaven, when He ministered during His earthly ministry.

### **The Father is the source; the Son is the substance and the Holy Spirit feeds us**

Jesus explained to the Jews that God the Father gave the Israelites the bread from heaven, and He identified *Himself* as being the bread from heaven, who gives life to the world.

The bread comes *from the Father*, but Jesus is given by the Father to us, to eat of Him, of His substance.

In this regard, Jesus said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven [Moses prayed, but he was not the source of the bread], but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

'For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' Joh 6:32-33.

So, the Father is the *source*.

The Son's body is the *substance* of the word that we are to eat.

But it is *fed* to us by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that it is the Spirit who gives *life*.

The Son is the One who says, 'I have come down from heaven and given My life to the world.' But it is the Holy Spirit who gives that life to us.

We are not to pick and choose what bread we will eat. If we do that, we are then judges of the evil or the good for ourselves.

It is *the Spirit who is speaking to the churches*.

### **Feeding the 5000 was the sign that revealed His administration to the people**

Jesus addressed the subject of 'bread from heaven' on the day after He fed the five thousand.

At the end of this miracle, He had not only fed the five thousand but, also, they collected up all the remnant pieces of the five barley loaves, and it filled *twelve* baskets.

On the very next day, He had this conversation about the bread of heaven.

John recounted that Jesus perceived that, because of this miracle, the multitude were about to take Him by force and to make Him king. They all recognised this amazing miracle.

For this reason, He departed from there and crossed over the sea towards Capernaum.

And the following day, determining that He had crossed the sea, all these people got into boats and went over to find Him.

They were absolutely on a winner! They said, 'He took five loaves of bread, and fed five thousand of us, with leftovers! He's the guy!' So, off this great multitude of people went in their boats, pursuing Him to make Him king.

That would have been quite a sight, wouldn't it? Many, many boats, rushing over the sea to find Jesus; just like the Sydney to Hobart yacht race!

When they found Jesus, He perceived that they were going to take Him by force to make Him king.

He said to them, 'Most assuredly [I am speaking this firmly and clearly to you, and what I'm saying is absolutely true.], I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.' Joh 6:26.

Now, that is an amazing statement! You would think the fact that they were fed from five loaves was 'the sign', wouldn't you? But He was saying, 'That is not why you are pursuing Me. You are pursuing Me because your natural hunger was satiated.'

The sign that they should have been coming to Him for was *the twelve baskets* that were filled with the fragments of five barley loaves, because it revealed the administration through which His word would be light to them.

That was the sign.

### **Labour for the food which endures to everlasting life**

We can think of their natural hunger as being what *they believed they needed for life*. Their natural hunger was not only that they needed some food. It was everything that they thought that they needed to *sustain their natural life*.

In their eyes, Christ's validity was viewed through this natural prism. This was deluded sight.

At this point, they only followed Jesus because of what He had provided for their natural lives or for what they thought He could provide, because He demonstrated that.

Jesus said, 'You seek Me because you ate of the loaves and were filled.' So there was a following and a belief that was based on the satiation of their natural needs.

Jesus addressed their *expectations* of natural provision. 'Do not labour for the food which perishes [this was the food that they ate, and by which were filled], but for the food which *endures to everlasting life*.'

This is *the fruit of the tree of life*. Remember, the Lord barred the way to the tree of life, 'Lest they live forever.'

'Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.' Joh 6:27.

### **Believing is fundamental to eating the right food**

When He said, '*Labour* for this food', He was saying, 'There is *work* that you have to do to get it, like the dew that comes down, and you have to go out and collect it and do something with it.'

So the people asked the obvious question, 'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God the Father, so that we can get this bread that leads to everlasting life?'

Jesus said to them, 'This is the work of God [this is the labour], that you *believe* in Him whom He sent.' Joh 6:28-29.

So, to get the bread from heaven which grants everlasting life, we have to do the works, or labour, of the Father.

And what is that labour? It is to *believe in the Son!*

So believing is be fundamental to eating the right 'food'.

### **To believe is receiving the faith to speak**

To believe in Jesus is to receive the faith that comes by hearing His word, and then to *speak*. 'Having received the same spirit of faith, I believed.'

The work of God is that you believe. You have to receive the faith that comes by hearing that word and, having received that faith, you believe.

But that is not the end, is it? It is not only that I've believed that there is a Jesus.

It continues, 'I believe and therefore *speak*.' 2Co 4:13.

The mark of believing, which is the evidence of eating, is a specific kind of speech. This speech is a *conversation of faith*, which we are learning about. And, honestly, we are only just 'scraping the surface' of this conversation.

We are only just aware that there is another conversation. We are merely at the cusp of the conversation from the tree of life that belongs in our marriages.

**The conversation from the tree of life involves our speech, conduct of obedience, work, offering culture**

So it is a specific type of *conversation*, and it is a specific *conduct*.

The bread of heaven belonged to a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, so the conversation that belongs to that kingdom is a *priestly work*.

The conversation is a type of conduct. It is an *offering culture*, which is the evidence of *understanding*. This conduct is described in the Scriptures as '*obedience*'.

To believe it is to *receive faith*, which enables speech that is not imbued with our knowledge of good and evil, but is demonstrated through the obedience of faith.

But that is not even the beginning point of the conversation, because you cannot join that conversation, or walk in that way, if you are full of iniquity, because your iniquity will make you go your own way.

That is what it means to be a person of 'unclean lips'. And unless we are delivered from that iniquity within us, we will be able to do nothing but to go our own way. And everything that we take from the word will be killing us.

It will become the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for us.

**We cannot define our own iniquity**

The first point of believing, which is the evidence of 'eating', is to come to Him who is lifted up like the seraph in the wilderness.

Jesus said, 'Eating means to come to Christ, who searches our hearts with eyes like a flame of fire.'

Remember, the fire was kindled against them.

He searches our hearts with eyes like a flame of fire, to know the thoughts, the way that we think, and the intentions, or motivations, of our heart.

Our iniquity is to go our own way. The only way we are delivered from that is if His eyes search our heart and reveal to us, or make known to us, *our iniquity*.

You can't define your own iniquity. That is, by definition, iniquity. We actually need *illumination* to see where we are becoming weak and sick, and

may be dying. Otherwise, we will perish in our own goodness.

**He reveals our iniquity so that the impediment to obedience can be taken away**

Now, the eyes of a flame of fire reveal, firstly, what is in our hearts – remember, this is iniquity.

But He does not reveal it to us so that we know that we are a bad person. Most of us know that!

The reason why He is revealing that iniquity to us is so that everything within us that *impedes our obedience* is firstly revealed, and then can be taken away.

That is the first action of eating the bread of heaven.

Now, remember, Jesus said that the work of God is to *believe in Him*.

Before this, Jesus said to them, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness [or lifted up the seraph to deal with the iniquity and sin of the people who were complaining against the manna, the word], even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' Joh 3:14-15.

Can you see that to eat the bread, you have to believe. But the first point of believing is to *look on Him who is lifted up* like the seraph, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life?

So you cannot eat the food to everlasting life unless you have interacted with Him lifted up in that manner. To believe requires us to look on Christ in the same way that the Israelites looked on the seraph in the wilderness.

That is, we can only believe if we are *joined to a process* through which we are being delivered from our iniquity, and are being cleansed from an evil conscience through the sprinkling of Christ's blood.

**We draw back with an evil heart of unbelief**

It is right at that point that we draw back, through an evil heart of unbelief.

Our drawing back occurs right at the confrontation of where the word comes and says, 'You are iniquitous.'

Immediately, something rises up in us and says, 'Who are you to tell me my speech is other than



godliness? Who are you to tell me that my interactions are a different conversation? That is 'an evil heart of unbelief'.

That is where you are drawing back from the eyes that are coming to deliver you of the impediment that is stopping you from obtaining your precious inheritance.

Your sonship is the greatest treasure in the entire universe!

In fact, the universe was created so you could have that treasure!

And yet, we won't let go of our own way! We hold on to the belief that our way is right, and choose our iniquity over the light of the truth, which is revealing to us an unfathomable treasure.

### **Lifting our eyes to see Him whom we pierced**

We have to lift our eyes up to see this, don't we? The first thing we see, when we lift up our eyes, is Him whom we have pierced. We look into His eyes, which are as a flame of fire.

Jesus was portrayed as a sin offering to the Jews, and to the whole world, when He was crucified on the cross.

This whole conversation, which is the prayer, the context of the golden altar of the true tabernacle, began in the garden.

It is a prayer that is happening, establishing an atoning process, which is marked by seven wounding events.

That prayer continues right through, and each one of those seven wounding events is a sprinkling.

They sprinkled the blood on the ark of the covenant while the cloud of incense mingled with Yahweh's presence, so the atoning work is happening where the prayer is happening.

The seven elements of Christ's offering journey culminated in Him being lifted up on the cross.

Everything that He experienced as He went from Gethsemane, down to Caiaphas' house, to Pilate, to Herod, to the Praetorium, to the cross – all of that is gathered up and lifted up on the cross, like a seraph.

Another way of saying it would be that all the atoning work that happened through that journey is now manifest and made available to be fed to us.

It culminated in Him being lifted up on the cross as a living sacrifice, showing that the cross has become the tree of life, and Christ Himself is its fruit.

The journey that He took is the way that leads to life, and to eat His flesh and to drink His blood is to join you to that way. However, you don't join that way until you realise that you need to be on it.

### **Through His word, our hearts are laid bare**

Eating the fruit of the tree of life, which is the bread from heaven, begins with receiving the word of the cross, proclaimed by those through whom Christ is being publicly portrayed as crucified among us.

'Christ has been publicly portrayed as crucified through my ministry to you.' That is what Paul said to the Galatians. Gal 3:1.

This is eating the fruit of the tree of life, which begins with receiving that word of the cross.

Then, through grace and supplication, which accompanies the blood that speaks, we are caused to look on Jesus, whom we have pierced.

Through this word, our hearts are laid bare before the eyes of the Lord.

'For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor [it is revealing something] of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

'And there is no creature hidden from His sight [these are eyes, as a flame of fire], but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account.' Heb 4:12-13.

### **Recognising the effect of our iniquity on others**

The first work of believing is to recognise the effect of our iniquity upon others, and ultimately upon Christ and the Father.

This is the conviction of sin.

For many, this illumination will reveal that they are weak in faith, sin sick, and are dying spiritually, because of their iniquitous expectations of God, of His messengers, and of the Christian life.

It will reveal their desire for the satisfaction of their natural appetites.

In these instances, fellowship in the light of the word requires a request for prayer.

Those who were dying, becoming weak and sick, in the wilderness, went to Moses, asking him to pray.

Isaiah had seen the throne, and recognised his iniquity, and it is from the fellowship of prayer that this atonement was touching his lips.

If you are being illuminated to your condition, you need to ask for prayer.

### **Call for the elders to pray**

In these instances, fellowship in the light of the word requires the request for prayer, in the same way that the children of Israel requested prayer from Moses, and the seraph ministered atonement to Isaiah from the conversation of prayer in the true tabernacle.

‘Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray [It is not ‘Call for your special elder’. He’s saying, ‘Come and find fellowship’] over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.’ Jas 5:14.

Now, what is that doing? The prayer is joining that person to the conversation that belongs to the name of the Lord.

They are not mediating on that person’s behalf. That would be a sacrament, wouldn’t it?

So, what happens when you are established in the name of the Lord? You are finding your name.

‘And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up [This is resurrection life in the blood of Jesus, that is shed on His body, which we are now joined to, because that is where His name is being found]. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

‘Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.’ Jas 5:15-16.

### **Finding fellowship at the tree of life**

We will say some more on this point in coming weeks.

We have actually been writing a fair amount on this, and there is a lot more to say, because this has been pretty mixed in the broader Christendom, and in our fellowship, where we have had a sacramental approach to dealing with sin, and

interacting with elders, which has been completely wrong.

But, some people have swung the other way, and they have simply defined their own process with their own ‘mates’, as though that is where the blood of Christ is being shed. That is no more efficacious than absolution!

We have to find the fellowship at the tree of life, that comes through prayer.

That is where deliverance from iniquity will be found. That is where cleansing from sin is obtained.

That is what John said. ‘If we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin.’ 1Jo 1:7.

I had better stop there. There is more to say, but we need to go and eat some bread together, and to walk in the light of the word together, and find fellowship together today.