

An Attempt To Listen To God On
A Man Walking on Earth But Living in
The Atmosphere of Heaven

By

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A Man Walking on Earth But Living in The Atmosphere of Heaven

Introduction

The scriptures mention three men who walked with God; Enoch, Noah and Levi. Before Adam fell there was no record of either him walking with God or God with he. It was after sin entered the world we read the following concerning Adam and Eve: “They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden” (Gen. 3:8). Six generations passed before we read of a man walking with God, namely Enoch. So important is this that the Holy Spirit caused it to be repeated in quick succession (Gen. 5:22, 24). Many years later it is recorded: “Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9), then right at the end of the Old Testament (Mal. 2:6), it is stated that: Levi “walked with me (The LORD of Hosts v. 4) in peace and equity”.

There can be no doubt that God had fellowship with Adam prior to the fall when he lived in harmony with his fellow man (Eve) was at peace in himself and was in fellowship with his creator. Their daily work was an experience of God working with them. It was the same truth but on a different level as Mk. 16:20 and Heb. 2:4.¹

Concerning Enoch, Noah and Levi certain questions open up:

- 1) What was it about these men that manifested their walk with God?
- 2) When did that walk begin?
- 3) How did it end?

The references to these men manifests the infinite grace of God; so despite them being born in sin, inherently having a sin nature and slaves to sin, God condescended to walk with them and allow them to walk with Him!

The truth of humanity being a slave to sin, a domination he could never break free from, is illustrated by the children of Israel in Egypt (Ex. chs 1-13). They were born under the domination of a God rejecting King who held them under bondage. Their days were a tedious repetition of working, eating and sleeping. A child was born into slavery, not by anything the infant had done, but because it was born. There was no help within themselves but this physical bondage only shadowed the spiritual. It was the spiritual bondage the Lord came to make us free from, and with it comes the release from the habits and weaknesses of sin, i.e. swearing, etc. The Lord longs to liberate us from the slave’s mindset which has us accept that we need sports, entertainment, etc., to give life meaning. True life is knowing God and Christ (Jn. 17:3) and having fellowship with them.

The Lord declared that true freedom can be found only in the Son when he said: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (Jn. 8:36). He is the source of all true freedom, being utterly without sin in nature or activity and never being a slave to sin. He was truly the only free man who ever lived.

The marvellous truth is that sin had no power over Him and never reigned as king in his body. He had a body impervious to disease and a spirit impervious to defilement and sin. His essential perfection and in-depth fellowship with God resulted in Him seeing sin as an obnoxious and devastating intruder, consequently, he never found it pleasurable nor exciting. How could he who lives in the reality of eternity find delight and value in that which was transient and all for the fire? His life was one of zero tolerance for sin therefore, could be no compromising with it. His omniscience made Him aware of every tactic of Satan, consequently, he could never be overtaken unwittingly. It is a supreme tactic of Satan to catch people unawares. Adonijah tried to catch Solomon unawares but failed (1 Kgs. 2:19-22). The rider of the horse (Gen. 49:17) failed to see the serpent and when he thought he was safe it bit the horse’s heels and the rider fell backward. If only he had seen the danger he would not have been caught unwittingly. Christ was never caught unwittingly.

To walk and live on this earth, which is engulfed in a spirit system ruled by his Satanic majesty, it is not an easy life, yet it is God’s desire for humanity to walk on earth and live in the atmosphere of heaven. When living on this level, one discovers this world is a barren wilderness. It is not only bereft in sustaining spiritual life but will seek to choke the word so that the individual becomes unfruitful (Matt. 13:22). One of the wonders of the Lord is

¹ This is an experience we can know for we also walk on earth yet we are risen with Christ (Col. 3:1), and seated in the Heavens (Eph. 2:6), and know the blessedness of being workers together with Him (2 Cor. 6:1).

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the word was never choked in his life, the result being that there was never a moment when his life was out of fellowship with God. Praying to the Lord was not a polite acknowledging of God much less a patronising of God, it was the comforting welcomed quietude from a busy life of spiritual warfare.

The Lord is our example and his spirit was opposite to that of the world. He never sought its approval, prestige, or patronage. Praise God that since the world bestowed none of its earthly temporal honours upon Him, it can never take them from Him. His glory and honour is from God and is eternal.

That which the earth dwellers gave the Lord was mockery of his miracles. They said he did miracles by Beelzebub (Lk. 11:15). “Physician heal Thyself, whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country” (Lk. 4:23). They mocked his Kingship when they cried: “Hail, King of the Jews” (Matt. 27:29).

They rejected Him verbally when as his citizens hating Him said: “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Lk. 19:14). Their attitude of rejection was shown in the parable: “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him” (Matt. 21:38). Their rejection of Him was manifested in their activity by desiring to cast Him down from the hill (Lk. 4:29).

They ridiculed his social life: “John came neither eating nor drinking. . . The son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners” (Matt. 11: 18-19).

The Lord did not fit the mold of man-made acceptability therefore the words of Isa. 53:2 came true: “There is no beauty² that we should desire Him”. None of the accepted authorities wanted Him or be connected to Him.

- 1) To the Pharisees he was too open and they did not want Him.
- 2) To the Sadducees he was too closed and they did not want Him.
- 3) To the Herodians he was too straight laced and they did not want Him.
- 4) To the lawyers he was too honest and they did not want Him.
- 5) To the scribes he was too knowledgeable and they did not want Him.
- 6) To the chief priests and elders he was too contradictory to their traditions.

Day after day he lived among sinful humanity³ yet, even though he saw the evidences of sin, i.e.; when the prostitute came and anointed his feet, he was never defiled. He heard sinful talk, knew the sinful thoughts of man and their motives but he was never defiled. In 3 John 2, John wishes that Gaius prosper in body as in soul. Had he been as well in body as soul he would have been a healthy man. Christ is in contrast for that which he was physically he was morally and what he was morally he was physically. Note that in John’s gospel the Lord never touches, he speaks. Neither do we find others touching him or his clothes, nor requests for others to be touched by Him. This does happen in the other gospels. He could touch the leper and the dead and not be contaminated (Matt. 8:2-3). Just as the sunlight can shine into the dirtiest places, shine upon the most corrupt wickedness and never be contaminated, so our Lord lived surrounded by sin on every hand and yet never was contaminated.

In Gen. 1:8 God created the firmament and called it Heaven. This is distinctly different from the “heaven” of verse 1, for in verse 8 it is what we call environment or atmosphere. It is the space between earth and heaven.

² It must not be thought that the Lord was despised and rejected because he was ugly, having no form, comeliness or beauty v. 2. It was because of his noncompliance with that which they had expected and wanted as the Messiah! They wanted a Messiah who would defeat the Romans, freeing them from the shame of being ruled by a non Jewish King, a king of war and strength who would see the Romans as hated enemies and lead them in a conflict against them. Christ was the opposite, he preached “Love your enemies” (Matt. 5:44). He healed a Roman centurions servant (Lk. 7:1-7).

³ He lived in a world of self will, vice and wickedness, yet he lived unflinchingly for the fulfilling of the will of God and in the purity of God the Moral Absolute and Governor of the Universe.

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Thinking about Adam, we understand that while he walked on earth in this context, the rest of the man was in heaven, he typically lived on the earth but in the atmosphere of Heaven.

When considering the truth of Christ walking yet living in the atmosphere of heaven and combining it with no reference to the priests having shoes; rich truths are seen. The clothing of the priests consisted of two sets. In none of them do we read of Him having shoes! He had two girdles, two head coverings, a robe, a coat, breastplate and trousers, but never ever read of his shoes! (Ex. 28:2-39; Lev. 16:4). When in Fiji and Tonga I often went without shoes. At times on smooth pavement, other times on coarse pebbly roads and sharp grasses, then I noticed something happened to my feet. When walking on course hot ground my feet got calloused, hard and dirtied. When the priest walked in the wilderness, what was it like? Those who have been in a wilderness know that in the morning the sand can be very cold and in the blazing sun it becomes scalding hot. Furthermore, it is not all soft golden sand. There are rough stones, jagged bushes and insects that can injure. With the priest having no shoes, how keenly he would have felt the iciness of the sand in the early morning and the searing heat of it at noonday. Walking on the earth geographically was hard but to walk in it experientially with nothing to ease the harshness of earth's attitude is much harder. It is hard not to retaliate when "pushed and wilfully agitated", yet Peter who saw the Lord in the judgement Hall of Caiaphas said: "When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not" (1 Pet. 2:23), beautiful man. In this, the moral glory of the Lord shines out.

How beautiful our Lord is for he never was callous, hard or dirtied in this world. He was a man who was holy in himself, harmless in his dealings with others and undefiled by others. This world had no time for the Lord yet irrespective of them responding to Him with icy hatred or fierce burning religious passion, he was always holy and always perfect. Here we stand on holy ground, reflecting and contemplating on the Christ of God, a man who in body, soul, spirit, mentally, emotionally and physically was superlatively perfect. At every point he loved the Lord with all his heart, strength, mind and soul, with his life rising before God as a sweet fragrance.

When Adam was created it was to a glorious life, perfectly at peace in himself, having a conscience undisturbed by sin and living in undimmed fellowship with his Creator. He walked on earth as a steward for God and living in heaven (in the context of Gen. 1.8). What a beautiful foreshadowing of our Lord who, despite living in a world of vice and sin, lived in the purity of Heaven. Even though living in a world of self will, he lived for the glory of God by continually fulfilling the will of God his Father.

The devil, using his instruments of fallen men, made sure that it was not an easy life. This was not being shut away in some monastery of seclusion but was a man living in the home with brothers and sisters, working as a carpenter, dealing with hard to handle customers, being watched by the religious leaders as they searched for a flaw and being set up by men expecting Him to make a mistake. In the midst of all this degradation he lived life as God intended man to live. He lived life in the fullest fellowship with God, depending on God, living by God's power and for the glory of God. It meant that he spoke the words of God without modification and he did the works of God without hesitation. His whole attitude to life was summed up in his words indicated at his incarnation: "Lo, I come to do Thy will" (Heb. 10:9); and in Gethsemane: "not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk. 22:42). He loved God with all his heart, strength and mind.

Christ and God is the supreme example of the truth Amos wrote about: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). When the Lord said: "I and my Father are one" (Jn. 10:30), it was not only one in purpose and essential character, but also one in fellowship. In 2 Cor. 6:14 there is a command given followed by a list of total opposites between which there can never be any fellowship.

The command is: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).

The reasons: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (2 Cor. 6:14-16).

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It is the words: “yolked”, “fellowship”, “communion”, “concord”, “part”, and “agreement” which indicate what fellowship is. Fellowship is being “yolked” in “fellowship” having “communion” and a “part” in, to be in “agreement” with. Simply put, these mean being in harness, in harmony, sharing the burden and pulling for a single purpose. That was how Christ and God were, the Lord ever being and living in delighted harmony with God. Never was there the slightest discord between them, compromising toward the other or one making up for the slack of the other. This is that which was so pleasing to God, Christ, a human being, seeking nothing and doing nothing that was out of character with God, but both being one in mind and heart.

What Are The Characteristics Of Such An Individual?

If we are to bear his fruit (Jn. 15) then we need to know the features of the man who walked this earth but lived in the atmosphere of heaven. Such a person is:

- 1) One who is characterized by vocal, conscious dependence on God that is manifested in prayer.
- 2) A workman who will do the job to the very best of his ability.
- 3) An individual who will live in submission to the government of the country of his pilgrimage.
- 4) A person for whom worry is completely foreign, because such a one:
 - a) Knows the fulness of God’s love for them, and rests in it.
 - b) Knows the reality of the sovereign workings of God.

We shall now expound in depth on each of the above listed characteristics:

1) One Who Is Characterized By Vocal, Conscious Dependence On God That Is Manifested In Prayer

The Lord was a man of prayer⁴ for he prayed:

- a) When he was being baptized, and about to launch into his life’s work.⁵ (Lk. 3:21)
- b) When he was about to probe the disciples who the people said he was. (Lk. 9:18)
- c) Before teaching. (Lk. 11:1)
- d) When in the darkness of Gethsemane, when the hour of crisis was approaching.⁶ (Matt. 26:39-44)
- e) When God was silent and he in deep aloneness, his hour of desolation. (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34)
- f) When he was about to enter death.⁷ (Lk. 23:46)
- g) In the Morning.
 - i) In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. (Mk. 1:35)
 - ii) He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear. (Isa. 50:4)
- h) In the evening (Matt. 14:23). At even, he departed and prayed. (Paraphrase)
- i) Twice over we read of the Lord praying alone:
 - i) And it came to pass as he was alone, praying. (Lk. 9:18)
 - ii) He departed again into a mountain himself alone. (Jn. 6:15)

⁴ What is prayer? This can be such a hard exercise and at times seem so futile. It is not me pleading and trying to get God to change his mind, it is me being made to see the greatness of my need, the all sufficiency of God to meet that need and the conscious awareness that what I am praying is according to his will.

⁵ The practical level is when we are about to enter a new sphere of life, marriage, job and work for the Lord.

⁶ The practical level is when we are in the hours of anticipation, the waiting for a major surgery, or the imminent death of a loved one.

⁷ How wonderful it would be if at the moment of death we were following his example as Stephen did and die praying, or like Jacob, worshipping (Heb. 11:21).

- j) He prayed in company: “Father, I thank thee that Thou hearest me always”. (Jn. 11:41, 42)
- k) He prayed before the presentation of food: “Jesus . . . when He had given thanks”. (Jn. 6:11)
- l) He prayed after a time of spiritually giving out. (Lk. 5:16) Cp. verse 15.
- m) He prayed when surrounded by those who hated Him. (Lk. 23:34)
- n) He prayed when surrounded by mockers: “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again”. (1 Pet. 2:23)
- o) He prayed after the hours of desolation: “My God, My God!” (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34.)

2) A Person Of Prayer⁸

This leads to the pondering of what His prayer would consist of, what would be its characteristics?

a) Thanksgiving

This indicates dependence on another and this was not only done by the Lord but done in sincerity. Romans 1:21 is the first major sin of the unsaved, but ingratitude was never found in Christ. It is often said that we become like those we are around, but that could never be said of Christ.

- i) In a world of prodigal son characteristics of “Give, give, give”, our lovely Lord said: “I thank Thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes”. (Matt. 11:25)
- ii) Again: “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me”. (Jn. 11:41)
- iii) When about to feed the 5000 it is recorded: “And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks”. (Matt. 15:36)
- iv) When instituting the Supper it is recorded he said: “And he took the cup and gave thanks” (Lk. 22:17); “And he took bread, and gave thanks” (Lk. 22:19).
- v) At the Sea of Tiberius he gave thanks. (Jn. 6:23)

A man who looked to God alone. Twice over we read of the Lord lifting his eyes in relationship to prayer:

- i) Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid, and Jesus lifted up his eyes. (Jn. 11:41)
- ii) These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes. (Jn. 17:1)

Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven (Dan. 4:34). In Psa. 121:1, while the expression is put as a fact: “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help”, yet, due to the mood it is two questions:

- i) Shall I lift up mine eyes unto the Hills?
- ii) From whence cometh my help? It was on the hills that groves were put for idol worship as Jeremiah 3:23 makes clear: “Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains!”⁹

⁸ There is a need for us not only to realize the need of calling upon God but also the awareness of the satanic dark oppression throughout the world, the opposition to all that is of God, the acceptance of the non activity of the Holy Spirit, the ease of accepting intellectual knowledge as an evidence of spiritually but it can be void of life and the hardness of the human heart. We need to have the tilling of God.

Prayer prevents the dependence on self, the danger of presumptuousness and being unconscious of the presence and activity of God just as we live unconsciously of the activities of our heart, kidneys and lungs.

⁹ “They also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill” (1 Kgs. 14:23). “When upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot” (Jer. 2:20). “When I had brought them into the land . . . then they saw every high hill . . . and they offered there their sacrifices . . . they presented the provocation of their offering: there also they made their sweet savour, and poured out there their drink-offerings” (Ezek. 20:28)

Unlike Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord did not lift up his eyes to God after discipline had been fully executed upon Him. Nebuchadnezzar had known years spent in the fields, living like an animal and only after the discipline of God was fully executed upon him for his own sins did he lift his eyes to heaven. When our Lord lifted his eyes to God, or prayed, it was not merely doing the done thing (like giving thanks for food), it was the sincere out-breathing of a heart of fidelity. Never did he offer a thank offering, for his whole life was a continuous thank offering.

b) Worship

A second characteristic of his prayer would be “Worship”. This would have been done automatically with the Lord having taught man that the Father sought worshippers (Jn. 4:23), and his would have been done in spirit and in truth. He worshipped God in the beauty and delightfulness of acknowledged holiness. David encouraged such an attitude. David prayed saying: “Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name . . . worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chron. 16:29); and again: “O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (Psa. 96:9). What a fragrance that must have been to God. This was the ongoing life of the Lord.

Our Lord would, in the holiness of his own character, have entered the courts of God, even Heaven itself, and in purity of motive and knowing (without a priest how to approach God and lay the offering before God, which he never needed) the fulness of his acceptance with God and the perfection of God, would have worshipped.

What Would That Worship Have Been Like?

In Gethsemane:

- i) It was the bowing to the rights of God thus living in the reality of God being God.
- ii) It was the taking of his place as man before God.
- iii) It was the acknowledging of God’s sovereignty: “Thou hast hid these things . . . and hast revealed them”. (Matt. 11:25)

c) Intercession:

A third characteristic of the prayer would be “intercession”. From this perspective, the Holy Spirit almost automatically brings to our minds two major intercessory prayers of the Lord. That great high priestly prayer (Jn. 17), and his prayer for Peter: “I have prayed for Thee” (Lk. 22:32). In his ministry at God’s right hand he is still making intercession for us (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34).

- i) “I pray for them . . . for them which Thou hast given me; for they are thine.” (Jn. 17:9)
- ii) “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” (Jn. 17:11)
- iii) “That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” (Jn. 17:13)
- iv) “Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” (Jn. 17:15)
- v) “Sanctify them through thy truth.” (Jn. 17:17)
- vi) “I pray. . . for those which shall believe on me through their word, . . . that they also may be one in us.” (Jn. 17:20-21)
- vii) “That they may be made perfect in one.” (Jn. 17:23)
- viii) “That they . . . be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory.” (Jn. 17:24)

His prayer for himself:

- i) "Father . . . glorify thy Son." (Jn. 17:1)
- ii) "Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jn. 17:5)
- iii) Paul and Stephen were both men following this example of the Lord.
 1. Paul:
 - (a) "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." (Eph. 1:17)
 - (b) "I bow my knees . . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts...." (Eph. 3:14).
 2. Stephen:
 - a) "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (Acts 7:60)

With true intercession there is a burden, and this is seen in at least four prayers of the Lord.

- i) The first: when he prayed at the grave of Lazarus: "He cried with a loud voice". (Jn. 11:43)
- ii) The second: when he wept over Jerusalem and those immortal words issued from his lips: "O Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children . . . and ye would not". (Lk. 13:34)
- iii) The third: in the Garden of Gethsemane when the Lord cried with strong crying and tears. It was concerning that experience and it is recorded: "He prayed more earnestly" (Lk. 22:44). This was not an unemotional dead speaking with the same enthusiasm as one asking for salt at the dinner table, this was praying with earnest passion.
- iv) The fourth: in John 17 and the pathos that permeates that prayer is unfathomable. In these prayers we learn lessons of how we ought to be intercessors and how intercessors pray. While the cry over Jerusalem is not in its core a prayer, it is a plea unveiling the pathos of the heart of the Lord.

d) An Appreciation of God's Kingship as the Throne Sitter

In the Garden of Gethsemane we are made conscious of a fourth characteristic of the individual who walks on earth but lives in heaven. There is an appreciation of God's Kingship as the Throne Sitter and in such a position it radiates absolute authority.

In Rev. 4:11 there is the declaration concerning the Throne Sitter that he has created all things and that all has been created for his will and pleasure. Therefore, the only correct attitude toward Him is submission. That submission must not be a coerced submission but that of a willing heart yielding for the greater glory of God. This was the wording of the Lord in John 5:30: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me". Again in John 6:38: "I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me". His attitude when he came into the world was: "I come to do thy will" (Heb. 10:9). Turning to Gethsemane, we listen carefully to his wording: "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk. 22:42). "Be done" is in such a tense that the wording means "keep on being done". Sitting on the side of the well the Lord told his disciples: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn. 4:34). Every work he did and how it was done, was done to the highest point of God's satisfaction.

In this moving prayer there are several points one can meditate upon:

- i) The consciousness of unbroken fellowship with God.
- ii) The recoiling of his holy soul from the punitive execution of divine justice because of sin.
- iii) The gloriousness of his glad obedience to the will of God.

Never in this was there lost sight of the reality of his sonship, but neither was there any easing of the horror of that which lay ahead of Him, a horror only he could experience.

This brings us to the next observation:

Such a one will be the example of that which they teach. Our Lord taught: “Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven” (Matt. 6:10). Knowing all that was demanded in the fierceness of divine judgment, he said: “Not my will but thine be done”. Irrespective of the cost to him he will drink that cup, he will be baptized with that baptism, he will know the fire of divine judgement. The cup of fury which Jerusalem was made to drink because of the sins committed in Isa. 51:17 were never as severe as this which he was about to drink. For those who desire not the knowledge of the ways of God . . . he shall be made to drink of the wrath of the Almighty” (Job 21:20).

e) There Will Be A Fear Of God

A fifth characteristic is a fear of God. The scriptures present to its readers two aspects of fear.

- i) Herod would, had he had his way, put John Baptist to death but he feared the multitude (Matt. 14:5). That is a fear of the unknown with possible consequences that causes a resistance to do as one wants, but not out of respect for the individual.
- ii) The second is concerning our Lord in Gethsemane (Heb. 5:7). When having prayed for resurrection, being saved out of death, he was heard because he feared. It is used again of Noah (Heb. 11:7) in that he moved with fear. The wording indicates: “On consequence of His reverential fear”. Archbishop Trench gives it to mean the “cautious handling of some precious yet delicate vessel”.

f) There Will Be A Living Passion

A sixth characteristic of the prayer is there will be passion in the prayer. Well has Adam Clarke said: “Prayer requires more of the heart than the tongue”, is not cold academic reciting of data but a fire burning within. There is a sincerity that is unmistakable. Heb. 5:7 records such praying of our Lord: “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears”. The words are graphic and all the more astounding when it is understood that this is the Son of God and he is crying. Tears ran down the face of deity due to knowing what it meant for Him to be forsaken by God.

“Strong crying”. This is not loud crying but the lamenting and wailing of unspeakable grief. This was the outcry of one who saw horror unspeakable approaching and after prayer and supplications sees it still advancing and wails.

As hour succeeds hour and the hour approaches when he will be forsaken by God, it comes like waves crashing on the shore. The sorrows of his impending forsaking by God rolled over Him in unceasing fierceness. Not a soul was there to share his grief or comfort Him. He could have spoken the words of Psalm 130:1: "Out of the depths have I cried".

That morning began as any other with the Lord lifting his eyes up to God: "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (Psa. 5:3), but this was different.

That passion is the result of an inconceivable burden. Luke 22:44 will inform us: “being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly”. In “agony” indicates absolute anguish and grief. Matt. 26:37 records that he began to be very heavy. This word was used by the Greeks to indicate extreme anguish of the soul. The man Jesus was facing the affliction of Lam. 1:12: “See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow . . . wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger”.¹⁰

¹⁰ It must be understood that God was never angry at the Lord, indeed how could he be angry with Him when the Lord was doing that which was his will in fulness of love for the Father.

g) There Will Be An Acute Reverence For God.

The seventh characteristic is an acute reverence for God. Being casual with God is not a sign of spirituality but childish immaturity and failure to appreciate the honor that is due to Him. When our Lord spoke to God the reverence exuded from Him. He spoke to and of God as: “My Father”, “Holy Father”, “Righteous Father”, “Abba Father”, and “Father”. Furthermore, how the Lord spoke to God as “Father” perfectly suited the context in which it was used.

Expression	Indicating	Reference
Father	Relationship without particular emphasis	Lk. 10:21
My Father	His personal unique relationship	Matt. 7:11
O my Father	Intensity of supplication	Matt. 26:39
The Father	The personal and unique glory of God	Jn. 14:26
Abba Father	The combination of childlike trust and spiritually mature understanding of what was involved	Matt. 14:36
Holy Father	The moral character of God	Jn. 17:11
O righteous Father	Intensity in view of His judicial character	Jn. 17:25
Their Father	The uniqueness of relationship bestowed on His own	Matt. 13:43
Heavenly Father	The character of God as Father	Matt. 15:13
Your / Thy Father	The personal relationship with God as Father	Matt. 5:16
O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth	The sovereign possessor and distributor of all blessings in Father character	Matt. 11:25

The Lord used each of them in perfection of environment and situation.

- 1) He never said “Abba Father” when at the grave of Lazarus, for he knew all that was involved in the action about to be performed.
- 2) When the context is the keeping of the saints in this world, he addresses God as “Holy Father”.
- 3) The individual who lives in the atmosphere of Heaven will know the character of God and address Him according to the situation at hand.

h) Steadfastness of the Pathway

The eighth characteristic is the individual will know the steadfastness of the pathway when in fellowship with God. As the time came to leave the upper room, that hallowed spot, and go to Gethsemane, the Lord will say: “Arise, let us go hence” (Jn. 14:31). They never said to the Lord that it was time to go as he sat in a corner awaiting the dread moment; they knew virtually nothing about that which lay ahead. In the “goat” like feature of sure footedness and the full knowledge that this was the time of divine appointment, he who had risen once to prepare to wash the disciples feet (ch. 13:4), now says: “Arise, let us go hence”. There was no hesitancy here, only the calm activity of the divine will being consciously fulfilled. En route to Gethsemane and after his prayer of John 17, it is recorded: “When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth” (Jn. 18:1) and when the motley crowd came to take Him, not waiting longer than necessary

but “went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye”? (Jn. 18:4). When the judgment was pronounced, amazing words were written: “And he bearing his cross went forth” (Jn. 19:17). There is no “disappearing” in the crowds now, this is the hour and he moves onward to glorify God on the earth and to manifest the richness of his love to the Father and his own. Praise God there was no rethinking in his mind, no reluctance in his will and no hesitancy in his steps. He will move with steady footsteps on to the cross and ultimately home.

i) The Sacredness Of The Fellowship Of His Prayer

The ninth characteristic will be the sacredness of the fellowship of his prayer

- (a) When our Lord prayed it was always for the glory of God, every priority was correct with God having preeminence. It was a sacred sphere where none dare intrude to interrupt it, and no sudden remembrance of anything could disturb it. When he was praying, such was the sacredness of its duration that the disciples waited until he was finished before asking Him to teach them to pray, “When he had ceased” (Lk. 11:1). This was not just someone speaking to the invisible God, it was so holy that any intrusion would have been a holy sacredness being disturbed. It was without a doubt much more than the words spoken, it was the hallowed communion of the Son to the Father. Such a holy activity must not be interrupted. The very glory of Heaven permeated that blessed spot like an encompassing wall, God and his Son in deep communion.
- (b) He was a man alone with his God, with the Lord speaking to Him face to face in a way much deeper than Moses ever did (Ex. 33:11; Deut. 34:10). God spoke to Moses as a man speaks to his friend and God communed with Abraham who was the friend of God (2 Chron. 20:7; Jam. 2:23; 4:4), but the communion between God and Christ was on a higher level.

Such a Person Will Live a Life Of Transparency

When one is living in the atmosphere of Heaven and in fellowship with God, there can be no shadowy or clandestine activity. It is recorded (Jn. 18:20) that the Lord said: “I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing”. This was the scathing but unjust barb that his brothers cast up to him in saying: “There is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly” (Jn. 7:4). The Lord did go up to Jerusalem to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. It was not to hide but to await the time of his manifestation when at the feast. Later he will go up very openly.

The Throne of God (Rev. 4) has 7 lamps of fire burning before it, unveiling to us that the Throne Sitter is open in all his dealings, nothing is ever done covertly by God (Isa. 45:19; 48:16). For Christ to be in harmony with God then all he does must be transparent.

No false doctrine could even be laid at his feet, nor could any distortion of truth at the cost of “staying in with the platform”. There was never any hint of disturbing the state by rebelling against Rome. A genuine failure could not be laid before Him in either word or deed.

Furthermore, he had told his disciples to speak that which he had taught them and when he spoke to them privately, it was developments of that which he had said publicly.

This can be expanded for never did the Lord speak scathingly about an individual nor want anyone to say he said it.

- a) He openly spoke of Herod as a fox. (Lk. 13:31-32)
- b) He openly told the Pharisees and scribes that they were like whited sepulchers. (Matt. 23:27)
- c) He openly spoke to the lawyers telling them that they had taken away the key of knowledge. (Lk. 11:52)

A Man Walking on Earth But Living in The Atmosphere of Heaven

Nothing was ever said behind closed doors that in any way was offensive or have a hidden meaning.

For the individual walking on earth but living in the atmosphere of Heaven will see the workings of God and Satan in the events of the world, both by nature and fallen man. The Lord knew the ways of God and Satan. It was the will of God for the Lord to ignore all the traditions of human origin and distortions of man concerning the Sabbath. On the other hand, he knew that when Peter was against the Lord going to the cross, behind those sentiments was Satan using Peter's (in this case) misplaced sympathy. He knew when it was time for Him to go to Jerusalem to be crucified and when to leave this earthly scene.

A characteristic the Lord could never have was that of an awareness of sin within and by activity.

He is:

- a) Holy in himself.
- b) Harmless in his dealings with others.
- c) Undefiled from contact with others.

The Lord is in contrast to all other humans, no matter how godly they are. The reality is, the closer one walks in the atmosphere of Heaven the more one sees the sin in their life. Sin, they learn, permeates every aspect of life and even their service for God can be a formality, void of love for the Lord and modification of life.

Such a one will find the effects of sin are a blending of sadness and anger. The Lord stood beside the grave of Lazarus and wept. The beauty of the highest point of his creation, man, is now a corpse that stinks. As he looked over Jerusalem and saw in spirit the blindness of the people and jealousy in spirit hatred of the leaders, it broke his heart. He was enraged and seethed at the anger of the human heart in its deliberate hardening (Mk. 3:5). Yet, in that context it states "Being grieved", that is his anger was modified by his grief. The tense of the words are rich. The word "anger" indicates a momentary attitude but the tense of "grieve" is continual. He was the Man of Sorrows.

Living in constant fellowship with God, loving his law, in purity of heart seeking to do his will and pursuing the pathway of glorifying him meant the Lord never found any pleasure or excitement in sin. There was never in the Lord the attitude of a spoiled child who rebels in heart because they cannot get the thing they find pleasure in.

The individual who walks on earth and lives in the atmosphere of Heaven will be a divinely taught individual. The vital qualification to be divinely taught is having a listening ear ready to do the will of God. It will mean there is no self deciding of what to do. The Lord began his day with a listening ear (Isa. 50:4-5), but it was to be expected for he was the fulfillment of the servant with the bored ear (Ex. 21:6). In that picture the servant says first: "I love my master" and with the words of love upon his lips he then knew the woundings of love. The lovely Son of God on one occasion said: "I love the Father" (Jn. 14:31) and that was when he was about to go to the cross. He listened to God every step of the way.

- a) He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. (Jn. 3:34)
- b) He watched that which the Father did and he did the same. (Jn. 5:19)
- c) He will declare that the doctrine He teaches is his that sent him. (Jn. 7:16)

- d) He will answer: "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works" (Jn. 14:10). One of those works was his speaking the truth of God (Also Jn. 14:10).
- e) As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. (Jn. 8:28)
- f) I speak that which I have seen with my Father. (Jn. 8:38)
- g) He said: "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak". (Jn. 12:49)
- h) I have given unto them the words Thou gavest me. (Jn. 17:8)

A Man Walking on Earth But Living in The Atmosphere of Heaven

The individual who walks on earth and lives in the atmosphere of Heaven will know the hatred of the religious populous. The religiosity of the world has no time for the truth of God because it hates to be shown its error. The result is to stop such a one from their God given activity. This was the experience of the Lord.

The religious leaders and religiously minded people sought to nullify his teaching by:

- a) In pious pretense seeking answers to questions: "Whose wife shall she be?" (Mk. 12:23)
- b) In placing an individual in the synagogue to see how he would react. (Mk. 3:1-2)

They sought to stop his teaching by:

- a) Openly seeking to kill him at the brow of the Hill. (Lk. 4:29)
- b) Seeking a way to take and kill him by craft. (Mk. 14:1)
- c) Spreading lies about his resurrection. (Matt. 28:13)
- d) Accusing him of doing miracles by Beelzebub. (Mk. 3:22)

They sought to discredit him by slurs:

- a) We be not born of fornication. (Jn. 8:41)
- b) Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth. (Jn. 1:46)
- c) Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. (Jn. 7:52)
- d) Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (Jn. 8:48)
- e) He has a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? (Jn. 10:20)

They sought to mock those who followed him:

- a) This people who knoweth not the law are cursed. (Jn. 7:49)

It was not only the religious leaders, it was his own family:

- a) They accused him of being beside himself. (Mk. 3:21)
- b) His brothers did not believe in him. (Jn. 7:5)

When we consider the contrast between man's evaluation and God's, then the chasm is immeasurable. God's evaluation of Christ is shown by words and actions.

God's Words of Evaluation

God says to him:

- a) Sit, on my right hand, until I make thine enemies they footstool. (Heb. 1:13)
- b) Thou art My beloved Son. (Lk. 3:22)

God speaks concerning him:

- a) This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. (Matt. 3:17)
- b) This is my beloved Son: hear him. (Lk. 9:35)
- c) I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. (Heb. 1:5)
- d) Let all the angels of God worship him. (Heb. 1:6)

God's actions of evaluation:

- a) God hath raised him from the dead. (Acts 4:10; 13:30; Rom. 10:9)
- b) His works were by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 10:38)
- c) God hath highly exalted him. (Phil. 2:9)

He had a genuine love for that which was of God: “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity” (Heb. 1:9) and God who opened his ear every morning, who loved whatsoever things were pure found infinite delight in him. Being such, he had a true perception of the obnoxiousness of sin, an accurate definition of what true life is, what authentic riches are and the insight to discern between the doctrines of God and traditions of men.

3) [A Workman Who Will Do The Job To The Very Best Of His Ability. With The Lord This Meant Perfection.](#)

Being God’s perfect workman, the Lord was always ready and suitable to be used by God. The servant of the Lord must always be ready, “in season, out of season” (2 Tim 4:2), must always be a clean channel for the river of God to flow unrestricted through (Psa. 65:9), so that all around is enriched. Consequently, when anyone came to the Lord with any ailment, none was ever too difficult.

- a) With this we have no difficulty, for the Lord healed the lepers, gave sight to the blind, restored impotent limbs, and raised the dead.
 - i) Some were done with their participation which could be:
 1. Going to the priest and the healing taking place en route as with the lepers. (Lk. 17:14)
 2. Going to the Pool of Siloam and washing the clay from his eyes, as with the blind man. (Jn. 9:6)
 - (ii) Some were done without any participation from them:
 1. The widow of Nain’s dead son (Lk. 7:11-15), Jairus’ daughter (Mk. 5:22), and Lazarus (Jn. 11: 43).
 - (iii) Some cried out for help:
 1. The two blind men. (Matt. 20:30)
 2. Blind Bartimaeus. (Mk. 10:46)
 - (iv) Some recognized his sovereignty:
 1. The leper who said: “if thou wilt”. (Matt. 8:2)
 - (v) Some made an appeal on behalf of others:
 1. The woman of Canaan who pleaded for her daughter. (Matt. 15:22)
 2. The man whose son was a lunatic. (Matt. 17:15)
 - (vi) At least one was done in two distinct stages:
 - i. The man who was blind. (Mk. 8:24)

It is easy to miss the multiple miracles in a miracle. When the man at the pool of Bethesda was healed after 38 years, immediately he got up, lifted his bed and walked. For these things to happen a series of other miracles had to occur:

- 1) There had to be the restoring of balance.
- 2) The restoring of muscles to strength from a state of entropy after long years of non use.
- 3) The restoring of mind / muscular coordination.

All these the Lord did perfectly, but this also applies to that which he said, for he knew that: “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver” (Prov. 25:11).

4) [An Individual Who Will Live In Submission To The Government Of The Country Of His Pilgrimage.](#)

When considering government there are several that are relevant:

- a) There is the government of God to be considered along several avenues:

- i) One is his passive submission to the law of God relative to the religious observances by his parents. They will bring the Lord to be circumcised when he was eight days old (Lk. 2:21-24), thirty-three days later he will be brought for his presentation to the Lord as the firstborn and the sacrifices for the purification of Mary, so keeping (Lev. 12:3-4; Lk. 2:22). When growing up Joseph went up to Jerusalem at the Feast of Passover, and in Lk. 2:41, Mary and Joseph did this every year.
- ii) Another is his active submission to the law of God as an adult, no longer under his parents, but as a free man. As such, obedience to the Father was paramount for he came not to do his own will, but the will of the One who sent him (Heb. 10:7). He stated unequivocally:
 1. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me. (Jn. 4:34)
 2. I do always the things that please him. I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things. (Jn. 8:29, 28)
 3. I can of myself do nothing..... I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (Jn. 5:30)

His submission to God was a deliberate act of obedience: "By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19)¹¹; "I have power to lay it (his life) down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from my Father" (Jn. 10:18). And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day". (Lk. 4:16).

b) The fulness of his obedience

- i) Existing in the form of God he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:6, 8)

c) The results of his obedience

- i) Resulted in his being qualified to be a perfect High Priest
 1. It became him (God)..... to make the author (captain) of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (Heb. 2:10)
 2. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb. 5:8), which resulted in a life of perfect conformity to God.
 3. It is only by perfection of the will, work and words of God (Jn. 12:49) being manifested in him that there could be a perfect revelation of God and the Father, and this he did (Jn. 5:19). The outcome of this was he could pray saying: "I know that Thou hearest me always" (Jn. 11:42). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9), and "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (shown him out) him". (Jn. 1:18)
 4. Because of his unreserved obedience to God, no matter what the temptation or trial was, he was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15), "who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21).
 5. Without a fear of anything ever been forgotten or failed he could say: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (Jn. 8:46)
 6. His enemies must acknowledge the reality of his profession resulting from his obedience by the fact that they could not truthfully accuse him of anything.
 7. He was ever the fulfillment of the servant with the bored ear. (Ex. 21)
 8. Resulted in righteousness made available for the whosoever. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous". (Rom. 5:19)
- ii) His active submission to his earthly parents.
 1. "He went down with them..... and was subject unto them" (Lk. 2: 51). The tense indicates a continued subjection to them. "He humbled himself, and became obedient even unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

¹¹ While this has primarily to do with the cross, yet it was the characteristic of his entire life.

2. This would have necessitated assisting in the chores in the home and the learning of the carpentry trade.
- iii) His submission to the religious formalities of his religion.
 1. The incident of the tribute money. "Therefore the sons are free but, lest we cause them to stumble," etc. (Matt. 17:24-27)
- iv) The recognition and submission to the political government of Rome.
 1. Pilate was the governor representing Rome.
 2. When asked about tribute to Caesar the Lord not only acknowledged Caesar but declared that which was his dues.
 3. There were times when it would have been wrong for the Lord and the people of God to submit to any level of government and that is when it violates the government of God. This is illustrated in Dan. 3 with the three Hebrew servants and Dan 6:7-316. Or the traditions of the Pharisees.

5) A Person For Whom Worry Is Completely Foreign

Placing the words “fretfulness and anxiety” together with the person of our Lord is an inexplicable contradiction, for how could he, the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6), ever know a furrowed brow due to apprehension.

- a) Knows the fulness of God’s love for them, and rests in it.
 - i) It was the night of his betrayal that the Lord said: “My peace I give unto you” (Jn. 14:27). Our Lord lived his life in the blessedness of: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee” (Isa. 26:3). Despite the storms which roar, the quietness of God permeates the heart and mind (Isa. 57:19; Mk. 4:39). While Phil. 4:6-7 was not written yet, he lived in the truth of it: “Be careful (anxious) for nothing but in everything by prayer, and supplication and thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds”.
- b) Knows the reality of the sovereign workings of God.
 - i) Not being used to this attitude of apparent indifference and silence of the Lord, one can almost hear the condescending voice of Pilate: “Speakest thou not unto me”? Then using the tactics of fear and prospect he saying: “knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee” (Jn. 19:10); it was evident that he had to be corrected. How beautifully the Lord does this by saying: “Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above”. Pilate had tried to intimidate the Lord by parading his office, but the Lord lived under a higher authority and knew not only who was in control but also what was happening. Pilate knew neither. The Lord was living in the truth of Rom. 13:1: “There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God”.
 1. When our Lord was brought before Caiaphas and asked: “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” (Mk. 14:61). Things could not get more unbelievable, but the Lord knowing the sovereign workings of God answered: “I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of Heaven” (Mk. 14:62).
 2. How quickly he would have longed for rest but there was never anywhere he could rest. This world was a howling waste wilderness and void of sustenance. His rest and sustenance came from fellowship with God. Christ did something that we know little of physically and emotionality. He lived in this world but in spirit he lived in the bosom of the Father. Christ did

not learn what it was to live in the atmosphere of Heaven, it was as automatic to him as a babe with milk. His lifestyle and purposes were totally opposite to this world hence (as said before), he never sought its approval, its prestige or its patronage.

- ii) The father loveth worshippers in spirit and truth.
 - 1. The varied levels of what worship is but in this case it is:
 - (a) All that the Lord did in word and deed being done.
 - 2. Worship is an activity of work, an activity which declares by what I do, why I do it, and how I do it, the worthiness of the Lord.

In this lovely man we see one in whom everything he spoke, everything he wrote, everything he taught, and everything he thought was always by the power of God and for the glory of God.

The profound wonders of these truths are that Christ was a man of prayer and the man who prayed was God!

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by his Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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