

Chapel Flock



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

[www.chapel-flock.com](http://www.chapel-flock.com)



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## Worship Music

[We Believe-Newsboys](#)

[Restart-Newsboys](#)

[Disaster-Newsboys](#)

## Prayer

Lord, I admit that I've allowed some bad memories to paralyze me and keep me from taking the step of faith I need to be taking right now. I forgot to consider how You saved me, delivered me, and rescued me from the events that caused those painful memories. I only reflected on the bad part, failing to recognize how faithful You were to help me in that situation. Today I am making the choice to turn my memories around. Holy Spirit, help me see my past bad experiences in the light of God's goodness and faithfulness. Fill my mind with the good things God has done for me and the knowledge that He will continue to be faithful to deliver me, no matter what opposition comes my way. Thank You God for You loving me first, just as I was, and for also allowing me to love You back. In Jesus' name. Amen.....

Gems from the Greek.

## Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

" The Call"

Charles Stanley

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

(316) 247-3623

Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

[chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net)

## Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOVE](#)

## Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith Through The Bible](#)

[Bob Coy/Teachings](#)

[Mike MacIntosh](#)

[Jon Courson](#)

[Biblos.com](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

[Charles Stanley](#)

[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-  
Cathe Laurie](#)

**Psalm 6:1-10 (AMP)**

1 O LORD, rebuke me not in Your anger nor discipline and chasten me in Your hot displeasure. 2 Have mercy on me and be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am weak (faint and withered away); O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled. 3 My [inner] self [as well as my body] is also exceedingly disturbed and troubled. But You, O Lord, how long [until You return and speak peace to me]? 4 Return [to my relief], O Lord, deliver my life; save me for the sake of Your steadfast love and mercy. 5 For in death there is no remembrance of You; in Sheol (the place of the dead) who will give You thanks? 6 I am weary with my groaning; all night I soak my pillow with tears, I drench my couch with my weeping. 7 My eye grows dim because of grief; it grows old because of all my enemies. 8 Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. 9 The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord receives my prayer. 10 Let all my enemies be ashamed and sorely troubled; let them turn back and be put to shame suddenly.

**Psalm 7:1-17 (AMP)**

1 O LORD my God, in You I take refuge and put my trust; save me from all those who pursue and persecute me, and deliver me, 2 Lest my foe tear my life [from my body] like a lion, dragging me away while there is none to deliver. 3 O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there is wrong in my hands, 4 If I have paid back with evil him who was at peace with me or without cause have robbed him who was my enemy, 5 Let the enemy pursue my life and take it; yes, let him trample my life to the ground and lay my honor in the dust. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]! 6 Arise, O Lord, in Your anger; lift up Yourself against the rage of my enemies; and awake [and stir up] for me the justice and vindication [that] You have commanded. 7 Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered about You, and return on high over them. 8 The Lord judges the people; judge me, O Lord, and do me justice according to my righteousness [my rightness, justice, and right standing with You] and according to the integrity that is in me. 9 Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the [uncompromisingly] righteous [those upright and in harmony with You]; for You, Who try the hearts and emotions and thinking powers, are a righteous God. 10 My defense and shield depend on God, Who saves the upright in heart. 11 God is a righteous Judge, yes, a God Who is indignant every day. 12 If a man does not turn and repent, [God] will whet His sword; He has strung and bent His [huge] bow and made it ready [by treading it with His foot]. 13 He has also prepared for him deadly weapons; He makes His arrows fiery shafts. 14 Behold, [the wicked man] conceives iniquity and is pregnant with mischief and gives birth to lies. 15 He made a pit and hollowed it out and has fallen into the hole which he made [before the trap was completed]. 16 His mischief shall fall back in return upon his own head, and his violence come down [with the loose dirt] upon his own scalp. 17 I will give to the Lord the thanks due to His rightness and justice, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

**Psalm 8:1-9 (AMP)**

1 O LORD, our Lord, how excellent (majestic and glorious) is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory on [or above] the heavens. 2 Out of the mouths of babes and unweaned infants You have established strength because of Your foes, that You might silence the enemy and the avenger. 3 When I view and consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained and established, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of [earthborn] man that You care for him? 5 Yet You have made him but a little lower than God [or heavenly beings], and You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yes, and the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatever passes along the paths of the seas. 9 O Lord, our Lord, how excellent (majestic and glorious) is Your name in all the earth!

Other Scripture references for each specific book of Psalm....

**Psalm 6:8** Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.

**Matthew 7:23 (AMP)** And then I will say to them openly (publicly), I never knew you; depart from Me, you who act wickedly [disregarding My commands].

**Luke 13:27 (AMP)** But He will say, I tell you, I do not know where [what household—certainly not Mine] you come from; depart from Me, all you wrongdoers!

**Psalm 7:9** Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the [uncompromisingly] righteous [those upright and in harmony with You]; for You, Who try the hearts and emotions and thinking powers, are a righteous God.

**Revelation 2:23 (AMP)** And I will strike her children (her proper followers) dead [thoroughly exterminating them]. And all the assemblies (churches) shall recognize and understand that I am He Who searches minds (the thoughts, feelings, and purposes) and the [inmost] hearts, and I will give to each of you [the reward for what you have done] as your work deserves.

**Psalm 8:2** Out of the mouths of babes and unweaned infants You have established strength because of Your foes, that You might silence the enemy and the avenger.

**Matthew 21:15-16 (AMP)** But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did and the boys and the girls and the youths and the maidens crying out in the porches and courts of the temple, Hosanna (O be propitious, graciously inclined) to the Son of David! they were indignant. 16 And they said to Him, Do You hear what these are saying? And Jesus replied to them, Yes; have you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and unweaned infants You have made (provided) perfect praise?

**Psalm 6**

The sixth psalm is to the chief musician on this stringed instrument and upon the Sheminith. Now the Sheminith is a word that means the eighth, and so it was to be played in octaves. So on a stringed instrument played in octaves. So David, no doubt, made these notations on the psalms as he wrote them, and wrote it as a hymnal for the people.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure (Psa 6:1).

Now here is where David is, I am certain, carrying over a human characteristic to God. For we as parents are often guilty of rebuking our children in anger and chastening them in hot displeasure. That is a human characteristic, and it is a failing many times on the part of us as parents. We are angry, and we sometimes over discipline because of our anger.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul also is sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long? Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake. For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks? (Psa 6:2-5)

Now this is David crying out of a soul that is vexed. According to the words of Jesus, these words of David are not correct. He is expressing, as did Job, his own ideas, his own thoughts of death.

For Jesus tells us that when the rich man in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment and seeing Abraham afar off and Lazarus being comforted in Abraham's bosom, said unto him, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to me that he may take his finger and dip in water and touch my tongue, for I am tormented in this heat." And Abraham said unto him, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime had good things and Lazarus evil. Now he is comforted while you are tormented. Besides this, there is a gulf that is between us, and it is impossible for you to come over here or those that are here to go over there." "Then I pray thee, if he cannot come to me, send him back that he might warn my brothers lest they also come to this horrible place."

There is a consciousness, there is awareness, there is a memory. It isn't an oblivion as some people would like to think. That is from the word of Jesus, and I would say that He probably knows more about it than anybody else. And I'll take His opinion and His word for it above anybody else. I think that is prime when you can get the word of Christ on an issue. Especially issue of death and after death and what lies beyond the grave. Man may speculate, but Jesus speaks.

I am weary with my groaning; all night (Psa 6:6)

Of course, I would have to say that David is exaggerating. He said,

I make my bed to swim [with my tears] (Psa 6:6);

That is a lot of crying, David.

I water my couch with my tears (Psa 6:6).

So this is what is known as speaking in a hyperbole. It's writer's license. David is just talking about... and David must have been a melancholy, I guess. He speaks a lot about crying. "I am weary with my groaning."

My eye is consumed because of grief; it waxes old because of all of my enemies. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping. The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer. Let all my enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly (Psa 6:7-10).

So David's prayer unto the Lord, out of a spirit that is vexed, that is downcast. But it is interesting how the psalms always seem to end on a high note. "The Lord hath heard my supplication. The Lord will receive my prayer."

**Psalm 7**

The seventh psalm is Shiggaion. Which means the loud crying of David which he sang unto the Lord concerning the words of Cush, the Benjamite.

O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me (Psa 7:1):

Now David had his share of enemies, poor fellow. Always crying out against the oppressors, against the enemies.

Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver. O LORD my God, [if I have done this; if I am guilty of his accusations,] if there be any iniquity in my hands; If I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:) (Psa 7:2-4)

Now, evidently this is the accusation, that David had rewarded evil for a guy that was at peace with him. David said, "That isn't true. I actually delivered him, who without cause has become mine enemy."

Let the enemy (Psa 7:5),

If it's true, if the accusations are true, then,

Let the enemy persecute my soul (Psa 7:5),

Remember in Job, Job said much the same thing, "If I have done these things, if I have committed adultery or sin with my eyes, then let my wife be unfaithful. I deserve it." But Job was protesting his innocence, "I haven't." And David is much the same as did Job, "If I am guilty, then let this thing happen, let the enemy persecute my soul," and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust. Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded. So shall the congregation of the people encircle thee about: for their sakes therefore return on high. The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me (Psa 7:5-8). Now, that is far from what David prayed in the fifty-first psalm. Here it is on this particular issue, and he felt that he was righteous in this particular issue. "I am not guilty here, so Lord, judge me here concerning my righteousness." But where he was guilty and knew he was guilty, in the fifty-first psalm, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies. Blot out my tra "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, according to mine integrity that is in me." Now, David knew that he was innocent of the charges that Cush had been making and so, "God, You know and You judge." Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and the reins (Psa 7:9). And God is gonna try the hearts; our motives will one day be judged. Actually, our works are all to be judged by fire to see what sort they are, and those that remain after the test of fire we will be rewarded for. But much of man's work will be destroyed. God judges the heart. God knows the motive, something that we are not even always aware of. My defense is of God, which saves the upright in heart. God judges the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword [or sharpen his sword]; he has bent his bow, and made it ready. He has prepared for him the instruments of death (Psa 7:10-13); That's sort of a heavy scripture. God has already for the wicked the way by which he is going to die. "He's bent his bow, he has sharpened his sword, he already has planned the method of the destruction of the wicked." Behold, he travaileth with iniquity and conceives mischief, he brought forth falsehood. He made a pit, he dug it and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate. I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high (Psa 7:14-17).

So, again, ending on a high note, as he tells of the judgment of God against his enemy. "I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, sing praise to the name of the Lord most high." nsgressions." He wasn't crying for justice there; he was crying for mercy. I have never cried for justice.

Psalm 8; is to the chief musician upon Gittith. Now Gittith means wine press, and so you have the thought of the harvest in the sense, actually, of judgment. The time of harvest has come. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! (Psa 8:1) The first Lord, all capital letters, signifying that it is a translation of the Hebrew name for God. That name which we do not know exactly how to pronounce. Perhaps it is Yahweh; perhaps it is Jehovah. Nobody really knows for sure. People have taken sides on the issue, but it is a mute question. We really are not certain of the pronunciation of the name. The Jews felt the name was so sacred that they would not write it in their script. They would only write Y H V H, the consonants, so it remained unpronounceable. They didn't want a person to even pronounce it silently as they were reading, so when a Jew would come to this particular verse to read it, "O Lord, our Lord," reading it out of Hebrew, he would just say, "O," and then he would bow his head and then he would say, "The name." But he would not try to pronounce the name, just, "The name," for it was the name of God. It is a Hebrew verb which means, "I am that I am." Or more literally, "the becoming one." It is a name by which God describes His desired relationship to you. As God desires to become to you whatever you may need. He is become our peace. He is become our righteousness. He is become our healer. He is become our provider. God becomes to us whatever we need. And so it is a beautiful name, because it is a name by which God describes His relationship to you. He wants to become to you whatever you need. The second Lord here, "Our Lord," capital L, small ord, signifies that it is the translation of the Hebrew word adonai, which means master. And thus, it is a title, and thus, it signifies our relationship to Him. The first one signifies His desired relationship to us, the Becoming One; the second indicates our relationship to Him, Master. "O Jehovah, our Master, how excellent is Thy name." You see, the name Jehovah, how excellent is that name in all the earth. Now we are told in Philippians, chapter 2, that Jesus, even though He was in the form of God and thought it not robbery or something to be grasped to be equal with God, emptied Himself, or made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a man. And coming in likeness of a man was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God has also highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jehovah Shua, the compound name of Jehovah, for He has become, in Jesus Christ, our salvation. The angel said to Joseph when he was worried whether or not to expose Mary or put her away privately, the angel said, "Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. That which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to bring forth a son. Thou shalt call His name, Jehovah Shua, (or Yashua in Hebrew). For He shall save His people from their sins." A name that is above all names. "How excellent is Thy name." The name of Jesus, the most excellent name in all of the world. Yashua, Jehovah has become our greatest need, our salvation.

Now in the Kingdom Age He is going to have a new name, Jehovah-Tsidkenu. I would just assume stick with Yashua, cause Tsidkenu is hard to pronounce. But Jeremiah tells us that is the name in the Kingdom Age, which is, "He has become our salvation, Jehovah, our salvation." How excellent is Thy name, a name which is above every name in all the earth.

who has set thy glory above the heavens (Psa 8:1).

Now the heavens are glorious. The heavens declare the glory of God. They are not the glory of God; they declare the glory of God. His glory is even above the heavens, or higher than the heavens. And yet, perhaps the most glorious thing that we as man can observe are the heavens. But God's glory is even above the heavens.

Out of the mouth babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger (Psa 8:2).

It is interesting to me that that glorious God has revealed Himself in such simple terms that even a child can comprehend and begin to know God and have faith in God. And to me the purest faith probably that we can find is that faith within a child. How beautiful is that faith of a child. When our kids were growing up, I always wanted them to pray for me when I wasn't feeling well. Such pure faith, the simplicity. As Jesus took a child and put it in the midst of all the scholars, and He said, "Unless you become like a little child, you are not going to catch on. You are not going to enter the kingdom of heaven." Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise; He has ordained strength.

Then David said,

When I consider thy heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man (Psa 8:3-4),

Now the philosophers and man today is seeking to understand, "What is man?" That is the basic question of the philosophers, "What is man?" But the mistake that the philosophers make is that they start with man, rather than, as with David, starting with God. "O LORD, our Lord, when I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon, the stars, which Thou hast ordained, what is man?" If I start with God, then I have man in his proper perspective. If I start with man, I have no perspective. I have no place to go. I don't know where to go. I have no perspective. I can't see man in any perspective unless I start with God and then I see man in his proper perspective.

"When I consider the heavens, the work of Your fingers the moon, the stars which Thou hast ordained,"

what is man, that thou art mindful of him? (Psa 8:4)

How often I have sat at the seashore watching the sun go down when I was a child. I lived in a seacoast town, Ventura, north of here. I used to love to get my fishing pole and go down and dig for soft-shelled sand crabs and I had a neat corbina hole. And I'd cast out there, and I would watch the surf and I would watch the sun as it would go down. And I would be all alone in the sandy beach, and I felt so small as it was getting dark. I felt so small as Venus would start to come out. And then some of the other stars, and I would look up and I would think, "Wow! I am alone here on the beach, looking out at that portion of the Pacific to the horizon seeing the sun go down." And thinking how vast the Pacific Ocean was, how vast the world was. I knew just to ride my bike the two miles back to my house seemed like a long way at that point. And to realize, you know, just how vast the earth is. And I felt so small in relationship to the earth. But then I thought of the earth in relationship to the sun that had just set, and then the relationship to the earth to the stars that I saw coming out. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" Here I am, a speck of dust down on this little planet, and yet, God thinks about me. All the time He thinks about me. And sitting there in the sand, it was exciting, 'cause I would look up the beach and see all of the sand dunes. And my mother had taught me the scripture concerning, "Thy thoughts concerning me, if I should number them are more than the grains of sand in the sea." And I would think of the greatness of God, and I would just sit there just over awed that God, the One who created this vast universe that I was looking at, was mindful of me. This little kid sitting on the sand on a beach by myself.

"What is man that thou art mindful of him?" God is thinking about you all of the time. And His thoughts concerning you are good, not evil. He isn't thinking how He can give you a bad time this week and make it really tough on you. See how much He can make you squirm. God is thinking, "How can I show them how much I love them? How can I show them that I care? What good thing can I do for them this week, that they will know that I am there, that they'll know that I am concerned, that they know that I love them?" He is thinking about you all of the time.

and the Son of man that thou shouldst visit him? (Psa 8:4)

What is man that God should come down to visit him? Who am I that God should seek to visit with me? And yet, He desires to visit with me. I don't always have time for Him. Sometimes He has called to me and said, "Chuck, come, let's have a little visit." And I say, "No, Lord. I don't have time. I'm so busy, Lord. Can't You see how busy I am? Catch you later, Lord." But you know what? He has never once said to me, "I am too busy for you." In fact, He seems always so happy whenever I come around. So glad that I came, as though He was longing for my fellowship. When I had everything to gain from it, and He has so little to gain. O, how excellent, Lord, is thy name in all the earth. Who is a pardoning God like Thee? Who is the God that is so merciful and so kind and so loving, and so concerned as our God? What is man that God should visit him? And yet, He did.

Thou hast made him (Psa 8:5)

Man is not the product of accidental circumstances. Man is not the product of a series of chance, random chance, through billions of years. But the psalmist declares, "Thou hast made him." But brilliant men who don't want to acknowledge God, because they don't want to keep God in their minds, have had to create theories by which they have sought to explain the existence of man, in quote, "scientific terms." And these brilliant men tell us that God was created by man in man's own image and after man's own likeness. That because man needed to believe in something, he created the idea and the concepts of God. But God is only the figment of man's imagination; he was created by man. But the scriptures said, "Not so." "Thou hast made him." God created man in His image and after His likeness. So you have the choice to believe that man created God, or that God created man. But to me, if I am going to have any kind of a logical base for existence, I must believe that God has created me, otherwise life is without purpose. I am living in a puzzle in the middle of a muddle, and there is no reason, rhyme, purpose for existence or being. I came by an accident; I'll go by an accident. Tough! Life becomes completely empty, dehumanizing, if you try to take away from, "Thou hast made him."

Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels (Psa 8:5),

Now the angels are God's ministering spirits. They have been sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation. We see the order now of beings in the universe. It is: God, angels, man, animals, plants. "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,"

but you've crowned him with glory and honor (Psa 8:5).

I look around the earth in which I live, I see all of the life forms upon the earth, and I realize that I have been crowned with glory and honor. I am the highest order of God's observable creation here on the planet Earth. And I see the accomplishments of man. Think of what the world would be if man wasn't here. Both good and bad, isn't it? If man wasn't on the earth, they wouldn't have polluted streams, polluted skies, and threat of destruction by nuclear warheads. And yet, also, if man wasn't here, there would be no music, no poetry, there would be no beautiful paintings, there would be, the earth would miss so much as God has placed in man the music and the beauty of expression.

"You have crowned him with glory and honor."

You made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands (Psa 8:6);

God has given us dominion over that work of His hands. "The earth showeth forth His handiwork." So we have dominion over the plants, we have dominion over the animals, over the earth. God gave it to Adam, "Have dominion over it." Now, that is dominion in the sense of dressing it, keeping it, taking care of it, developing it. It isn't dominion in the sense that I can destroy it if I please, I can waste it if I please, I can recklessly, carelessly destroy the natural resources if I please because I have dominion. Not at all. The idea is to dress it, to keep it, to take care of it. "You have given him dominion over the works of Thy hands."

you have put all things under his feet (Psa 8:6):

Crowned him with glory and honor. Now this in a broader sense, of course, applies to Jesus Christ and is used in application to Jesus Christ in the book of Hebrews, the second chapter, verses 6 and 8, and has been made to apply to Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. You see, He was God, not Michael the archangel. If He was Michael the archangel, then He wouldn't have had to have been made a little lower than the angels. He would have been an angel, and He would not have had to be made a little lower than the angels. But He made Him a little lower than the angels, and crowned Him, for the suffering of death. As an angel He could not die; as God He could not die. And thus, He had to be made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. And God has put all things in subjection unto Him, but the author of Hebrews said, "We do not yet see all things in subjection unto Him, but we see Jesus, made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor."

So all those things that God has put under man,

The sheep, the ox, the beast of the field; the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the sea (Psa 8:7-8).

A sea captain was one time in the hospital, and the nurse was reading to him the psalms. And when she came to the eighth psalm, she read the eighth psalm, and when she read that last verse, or the next to the last verse there, verse 8, he said, "Read that again." She read it again. And he said, "Read it again!" And she read it again. And he said, "That is interesting, paths in the sea. If God has declared that there are paths in the sea, there must be paths in the sea." And so he began to put out bottles and he began to chart the sea currents, and discovered that there are definite paths in the seas, the sea currents. And from that time on the shipping industry began to follow the sea currents, saving thousands upon thousands of dollars in fuel, because they go with the currents. There are paths through the sea. O LORD [O Jehovah, our master], how excellent is thy name in all the earth! (Psa 8:9)

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries, 1979-1986)

**THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST : By Chuck Smith**

Death is not the end of human existence. The Bible states that it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that comes the judgment. After the judgment every person will find themselves forever in heaven or in hell. Your eternal destiny will be determined by whether or not you believe the claims of Jesus Christ.

In John 12:44 we read, "Jesus cried and said, 'He that believes on Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. He that sees Me, sees Him that sent Me. I am come as a light into the world, that whosoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. If any man hears my words and believes not, I judge him not, for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. Whoever rejects Me and receives not My words has one that judges him; the word that I have spoken shall judge him in that last day. For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He commanded Me what I should say and what I should speak. I know that His commandment is life everlasting. I speak whatever the Father said unto Me to speak.'"

Let's look at the radical claims that Jesus has made concerning Himself in these few verses.

He said believing upon Him was equivalent to believing the One who sent Him, or upon the Father. Over and over, He avowed that God sent Him.

To believe on Him was equivalent to believing in God.

He said to see Him was the same as seeing God.

He claimed to come as a light into the world.

Those who believe in Him do not abide in darkness.

He stated that He came to save the world.

He claimed that those who do not believe in Him will be judged by the word that He has spoken.

He claimed that His teaching did not originate with Him, but that He spoke the words that the Father commanded Him to speak.

He declared that His words are life everlasting.

These are the claims of Jesus. There is no denying the fact that they are quite radical. The extreme nature of Jesus statements concerning Himself presents every person with a choice to be made. We must either accept or reject His claims. We must either believe or disbelieve Him. It is not an option to simply ignore or try to evade such radical statements. What Jesus said demands that we form an opinion, and our opinion will ultimately fall into one of two camps. He was either telling the truth or He was lying. He was either the Son of God and the greatest person who ever lived or He was a deceiver and a fraud. You may be more kind and say, "I believe that perhaps He believed those things, but He was deluded and if He were living today, He would probably be institutionalized." But the issue remains, are His claims true or false? Jesus is who He claimed to be, or He isn't.

In the New Testament, we read of many signs that Jesus did to substantiate the claims that He was making. In the fourteenth chapter of John, Jesus reiterates some of these things that He has claimed here, but also adds a few more such as, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no man can come to the Father except through Me."; "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father"; and "Believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me, or else believe for the very works sake." In other words, Jesus not only claimed to be God in human flesh, the perfect source of truth and the One who grants eternal life, but offered conclusive proof through the miraculous deeds or "works" He was doing. In the Gospel of John, Jesus said that John the Baptist bore witness of Him, but that there was a greater witness than that of John. This greater witness was the works that the Father had given Him to do. Among these authenticating signs was Jesus' power over the elements. He turned the water into wine, He walked on the water, and He calmed a raging storm by His word. He showed His power over disease for He healed the suffering with a touch. He cleansed those with leprosy. He caused the lame to walk, opened the eyes of the blind and even raised the dead. He called upon these works to verify that His teaching was true. At another time when huge crowds had gathered around Him, Jesus said, "A faithless and perverse generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given, except that of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Thus His resurrection would constitute the basic sign to an unbelieving world, that He was all that He claimed to be. When Jesus cleansed the temple of the money changers, He was asked by the Jews for a sign of authority to do what He had done. His response was, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will rebuild it." John tells us that He was referring to His own body as a temple thus the resurrection from the grave three days after His death.

In Acts 1:3 we read that Jesus showed Himself alive after His death by "many infallible proofs." The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is one of the most factually verifiable events in history. It is confirmed by the testimony of many eyewitnesses such as Mary, Peter, the other Apostles and more than five hundred people at one time. If there is any validity to our system of jurisprudence, which establishes fact on the basis of eyewitness testimony, then the resurrection must be accepted as fact. "But," you may argue, "there was no cross examination of the witnesses!" Are you certain of that? Let it be noted that the vast majority of these witnesses were violently killed for their testimony, and none recanted, though doing so could have spared their lives. (For more information see Foxe's Book of Martyrs) So many gave their lives for what they had seen and heard that the Greek word "martus" (which meant one who bore legal testimony) came to mean those who suffered death for the Christian witness.

But along with His miraculous works and His historical resurrection from the dead, we have to also take into consideration the multiplied prophecies concerning the Messiah that Jesus fulfilled. Throughout the Old Testament, there were more than three hundred predictions concerning the Messiah that were fulfilled in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ. What would be the odds of one person fulfilling those prophecies by chance? The number is so astronomical, that it puts chance out of the picture. In his book Science Speaks [1], Peter Stoner estimates the odds of one person fulfilling just eight of these Messianic prophecies as being one in ten to the seventeenth power. How overwhelming is this probability? Stoner illustrates this by "supposing that we take ten to the seventeenth power silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them come true in any one man, from their day to the present time. It is clear that chance had nothing to do with the fulfillment of these three hundred predictions. It is also important to note that the design spelled out in prophecy was far beyond any one person's ability to control. From the place of the Messiah's birth to the amount of money offered for His betrayal, we find factors that were out of any person's ability to arrange. Jesus could not by chance or by His own personal effort have fulfilled those three hundred predictions. It had to be by God's design.

Peter lived in close association with Jesus for three years and was with Him on some of the most momentous occasions of His ministry. Many times when the other disciples were excluded, Peter was brought in to see the special work of God. When they came to the house of Jairus, whose little daughter had died, Jesus put all of the people out. Yet He took Peter and John into the room that they might be witnesses of His power to bring her back to life. When He was in the area of Caesarea Philippi, and was transfigured on the high mountain before His disciples, it was Peter, James and John who were selected by the Lord to witness the event. In his second epistle, Peter writes about this experience and describes Jesus with His raiment shining like the sun, and seeing that glory of the eternal God coming forth from Him. He said, "We were not following cunningly devised fables when we declared to you the glory of the Lord." It wasn't some cunningly devised story. He said, "We were actual eye witnesses of His glory when we heard the voice of God there on the Mount." But even as significant as this experience was, Peter pointed to "the more sure word of prophecy" as the secure foundation of our faith.

When predictions are made about the future, there is a governing principle known as the Law of Compound Probabilities. This principle states that the more conditions placed on a prediction, the greater the chance that it will not come to pass.

Let us say that Newport Beach in California is shaken by an earthquake on an average of once every two years. If I should predict that there will be an earthquake in Newport this year, my chances are 1 in 2 of being right. If I said it will happen on June 13th, then there being 365 days in a year, the chances of it happening the 13th of June would be 1 in 365. If I said it would happen this year on June 13th, the chances would be  $2 \times 365$  or 1 in 730. If I then declared it would happen this year, on June 13, at 2:05 in the afternoon, there being 1,440 minutes in a day, the likelihood of accuracy would then be  $2 \times 365 \times 1,440$  or 1 in 1,051,200. Now if I wanted to be very daring and say that the quake would strike at 2:05 and 15 seconds, I would increase the chances tremendously, for there are 86,400 seconds in a day  $\times 1,051,200$  and thus the chances of it happening as predicted are 1 in 90,823,680,000. This is just considering 4 factors. If I added more factors to the prediction, such as magnitude, epicenter, and the money needed to repair the damage, until I had 300 conditions, can you imagine what the odds against such a prediction being fulfilled would be? If they all came to pass you would have to conclude that I was either a true prophet, or else had inside information. This is exactly the situation we face with the prophecies concerning Jesus. He fulfilled over 300 conditions prophesied of Him. No wonder Peter called it the more sure word of prophecy!

There is certainly sufficient evidence and proof that the claims of Jesus were true. If you do not believe these claims, it is not because they are unbelievable, or because they are lacking in evidence, but because you don't want to believe them. Why would a person not want to believe the glorious claims of Jesus? He is claiming that He came to save you. He is claiming that His words will bring you everlasting life. But He is also declaring that if you don't believe, one day you will stand before God in judgment. He would not judge you, but you would be judged by the words that He spoke, because you didn't believe them. He said that He came that you might have life, and that more abundantly. Why would a person not want to believe that? Jesus loves us and died to save us from the penalty of sin, which is death. He loved us and died in our place that we might have eternal life. Why would a person not want to believe that? Many times a person doesn't want to believe because faith in Christ would require that they change their lifestyle. They are living after their selfish desires and they love their way of life. The commandments that Jesus gave are not pleasant for a person who wants to live after his fleshly lust. Jesus said if you would come after Him, you should deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Him. He condemned adultery, but many desire to have affairs. He condemned stealing, but so many want to steal. He condemned immoral sexual expression, but so many desire to throw off any and all moral restraints.

This world says, "Indulge yourself!" There is so much emphasis today upon self indulgence. People don't like to hear that they have to deny what they may want at a given moment. Thus, they don't want to believe on Jesus because it would require a change of lifestyle. Jesus said that people will not come to the light because one of the characteristics of light is exposing that which is in darkness. The secret hidden things are covered by darkness. Thus He said they will not come to the light because their deeds are evil. They hate the light and don't want to be exposed by the light. Have you ever noticed how places like bars are kept purposefully dark? People there want to hide. They really don't want to be seen. They love the darkness rather the light because their deeds are evil. Jesus said that was the reason many will not believe in Him. If you do not believe in the claims of Jesus, I would be very interested in hearing the reasons why. Why don't you believe them? Some will say, "Well, I don't believe those things because if salvation was such a wonderful thing then everyone would be saved." That sounds rather logical, yet does that mean you don't believe in soap, because there are a lot of dirty people in the world? Would you like to make an argument that soap is of no value at all? Look at all the dirty people in the world. If soap was so good, why isn't everyone in the world clean?

Some have said they believed until God failed to answer their prayers. In fact, Ted Turner claims that at one time in his life he was a Christian. His sister was very sick when he was a boy and he prayed that God would heal her, but she died. After that incident, he no longer believed in God. There are many people like Ted Turner, who have been disappointed because God did not answer a particular prayer. When God did not answer, they concluded that He did not exist. Of course, God is not obligated to answer our every prayer. In reality, I would not want God to answer any prayer of mine that wasn't according to His will. I wouldn't want to force God to do something that He was reluctant to do. So often we think that God is like a Santa Claus that is suppose to respond to our every whim. To reject God because He didn't answer a prayer is as childish as saying, "Well if I can't be the chief of police, I'm not going to play with you anymore! I'm going home! If you don't do it my way, then you won't have me for a friend." This is at best an immature basis for a relationship.

Yet that is the kind of relationship many people try to have with God. "As long as God plays along with my wishes and my desires, I'll believe in Him and I'll play along with the game. But let Him cross me once and that's the end. I won't believe anymore. I'll take my marbles and go home." Ignorance can also be a factor in rejecting Christ. I heard of a man who said he believed in God and in the Bible until one day he read a section in Leviticus concerning the animals that were unclean to eat. It was telling the factors that determine whether a species was clean or unclean. Mentioned in this section was the hare (which he interpreted to be a rabbit) which according

to the passage was a cud chewing animal. Believing that rabbits don't chew cud, he concluded that the Bible contained an error of fact and was therefore not trustworthy. So he quit believing in God after he read in the Bible that the rabbit chews the cud. Interestingly, a bit of research could of cleared up this problem.

Some Hebrew scholars question whether the word in this passage actually refers to a rabbit. The Hebrew word arnebeth (translated hare) is of uncertain derivation. Biologists have also come to the conclusion that rabbits do exhibit a behavior very similar to chewing cud. But the more important point is to note how easily some people will dismiss the entire message of Scripture based upon the misunderstanding of a relatively insignificant particular. Imagine what it would be like to stand before God on Judgment Day with this kind of attitude. "Well, I used to believe in You until I read in Your Bible that the rabbit chews the cud." Could you imagine hearing God reply, "That's not a hare. That's an arnebeth. It's not even in the rabbit family."

I have encountered many people who have tossed out the faith based upon some supposed contradiction or error they have found in Scripture. Many of these problems can be avoided by an understanding of certain rules of biblical interpretation that we need to know and follow. First of all, let me say that I don't pretend to understand everything that is in the Bible. There are a lot of things in the Bible that I quite frankly will confess to you that I don't understand. If I were smarter, I might. However, if my interpretation of a passage is blatantly contradictory to another verse of scripture, then my interpretation is wrong. The scripture isn't wrong, my interpretation is wrong. So many people are ready to say, "Well, the Bible is wrong, because look..." No, the Bible isn't wrong. The interpretation is at fault.

I have encountered many people with faulty interpretations of scripture. If your interpretation of a scripture would cause it to seem ridiculous or foolish, then your interpretation of that scripture is wrong. God didn't say anything that was ridiculous or foolish. Rather than pointing the accusing finger at Scripture, it is more helpful to identify the basic problem with my limited understanding. It is far more productive to confess that the meaning of a passage eludes us than to throw up our hands and cry out, "Hopeless contradiction!" We must make every effort to understand what God is saying. We can be assured that when we discover the proper interpretation of a verse it will be reasonable and rational and will not contradict the rest of the Scriptures.

It is crucial to remember that many of our problems with Scripture are a result of our own personal assumptions and biases. For instance, the Bible says, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." That means that if you don't spank your child, you'll spoil him. It's just a statement of fact, if you spare the rod, you'll spoil the child. When he was young, my son interpreted that as a commandment. He said, "You're supposed to spare that rod and spoil me." Wrong interpretation, son. So there are many passages that can have a dual interpretation based on one's point of view. We may be looking at it in too limited a fashion, rather than considering the verse in its context. When a person comes up to me with a question about a passage, I immediately read the context. Most generally, I catch in its context the correct interpretation and show them that it reads in an entirely different way than what they were thinking.

Jesus declared that in the last days, those who don't believe in Him and do not believe His words will have to stand before God to be judged. He said He's not going to judge them. He didn't come to judge the world. He came to save the world. This brings to mind His conversation with the religious leader Nicodemus. Jesus told him, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned." He reiterates the same point here, "I didn't come to judge the world, I came to save it." He affirms His mission was that of saving the world. He said in another passage, "I've come to seek and save that which was lost." To believe on Him is to have everlasting life. It is to be saved from the penalty and the consequence of sin. It is to be saved from the judgment and the wrath of God that is to come against all the unrighteousness of men, even those who have held the truth of God in unrighteousness. "He that believeth on Me," Jesus said, "is not condemned." Paul the apostle said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Jesus Christ" It is important to note that Paul did say to the church, "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." But the kind of judgment Paul speaks of is one of rewards for the things we have done while we are in these bodies. It is like the judge's seat at the Olympics, where the various participants come up to receive medals for the victories they have won in the particular event. So we will stand before Christ to receive our rewards.

For those who don't believe in Jesus, it is a different story. They will stand before the judgment seat of God to receive sentencing for their failure to believe the words of Jesus, and for their failure to receive the forgiveness that God offered them through Christ. I am certain that God will give each person a chance to plead their case. But I'm sure at that time every excuse that people might seek to offer will sound so totally ludicrous, most will be unable to even say a word.

So we have seen the claims of Jesus Christ, radical, spectacular, and glorious. He has claimed that He has come to save you. He has claimed that you can have eternal life through believing His words and following His commandments.

The longer I live and the more I see of what the world has to offer the more vain it seems. I see the emptiness that people experience who seem to have attained more worldly goods than the rest of us. In light of the hopelessness of even the best this world has to offer, Jesus' offer of life is too good to turn down. I have no intellectual problems with this whatsoever. In fact, I would have great intellectual difficulties in not believing Jesus Christ, because somehow, I would have to rationalize His miracles. I would have to come up with an explanation for His ability to walk on the water, to raise Lazarus from the dead, and His own resurrection. I'd have to explain how one Man could, by accident, fulfill all three hundred of the Messianic prophecies. I would find myself very hard pressed to try to rationalize these things away. I would have tremendous difficulty giving some kind of an explanation that would be rational or plausible.

Many years ago, I, like most people, experienced a time of doubt. I thought, "Well maybe I'm an atheist. Maybe God doesn't exist. Maybe it is all just the figment of man's imagination. Man needs something to believe in, so he invented a god, and the Bible is simply a collection of stories expressing man's concepts and ideas of a supreme being." That lasted for around a half hour until I started to critically evaluate this point of view. The moment I started thinking, and tried to explain the existence of universe apart from God, I

had to yield to reason. To hold on to an explanation of life apart from God would require a mindless state akin to idiocy. I couldn't put myself in that kind of unreasonable state of mind. I would have to believe all kinds of absurdities. I would have to believe that such patently miraculous features of life such as the marvelous ability to see, were created by thousands of fortuitous accidental circumstances. I would have to buy the idea that the perfect structure and function of the eye began with the sun beating down on a little worm and creating a mutation on its forehead. (I don't know how a worm would know what was his forehead and what was not.) But gradually over a process of time, through billions of years and countless mutations, this aberration formed into an eye. So then living things gained the ability to see. This same little worm scraped its tissue so often that it formed scar tissue that became legs complete with fully developed feet. Now our worm is a salamander and can see and walk. Is that rational? Give me a break!

The fool has said in his heart there is no God. A person must take a very mindless position to try to argue away the evidence of design in creation. In my own experience, I found it was easier to believe in God than to deny His existence. Not to believe in God brought forth too many difficulties. I believe in the existence of God, which according to scripture proves I'm not a fool. But every man has to make the choice to believe or not to believe. Jesus has made the claim that if you've seen Him, you've seen the One that's sent Him. If you believe on Him, you believe on the One who has sent Him. He claims that He came to save, that His words are eternal life and that they are not his words, but the words of the Father. The Father is the One who told him what to say and what to speak to us. If you don't believe, you're abiding in darkness and one day you will stand before God at the great judgment. I want to believe! I do believe! I have no problem with my belief.

Father, we thank you that you have provided such an abundance of evidence that any thinking, rational man can be completely satisfied in having faith in Jesus Christ. We can easily believe that He is the Son of God who came to save the world from sin. He came as light into this darkness, and those who hear his words and follow Him, do not walk in darkness but have the light of life. Thank you Lord for the many infallible proofs that confirm the claims of Jesus. Father, we pray for those who have been wrestling with this issue. Help them to see, Lord, that there is no neutral ground. They either believe or they don't believe. I pray, Father that you will bring them to a solid, strong faith and you will confirm in their hearts that position of faith by your Holy Spirit bearing witness of the truth. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

**Footnotes:**

[1] Stoner, Peter W. Science Speaks. Chicago: Moody Press, 1963.

( Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 810-812)

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