

Gaining the Heart of Wisdom

There is the little phrase in the hymn we just sang that says, “The Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word,” and as we come today that is the spirit in which we gather. We are thankful for what He has shown us, but we have a desire that He would show us more and more of Himself as we consider His Word.

Let’s pray:

Lord, we are thankful for the great revelation we have of this so great salvation and the price that You have paid—so great a love, and Lord, the richness of what we have been brought into. We are thankful, too, for the greatness of Your Word. We are thankful how throughout the ages You have been speaking to man through Your Word and encouraging us. Lord, we are thankful that Your Word is so relevant today, just as relevant today as when it was spoken, so relevant today as when it was written. And we offer ourselves to You that we can come in a spirit of an open heart to receive from You and allow You to reveal more and more of Yourself unto us. In Your precious name. Amen.

I sent out in the email last night to read Psalm 90, but we are not going to be looking at the fulness of that psalm today. There is one verse in particular that I would like for us to look at.

Psalm 90:12: “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

The Darby version reads, “acquire a heart of wisdom.” NAS says, “present to You a heart of wisdom.”

I like the translation that says, “We may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90 is very precious, so I want to ask a question: Tim, who wrote Psalm 90? His answer: “Moses, the man of God wrote Psalm 90.” This psalm, written by Moses is actually the oldest psalm that we have recorded, and it was 400 years before David lived. So we could say that this is the first psalm. I do not know why they put it 90; it should be number 1. It was written toward the end of Moses’ life. The nation of Israel was getting ready to go into the Promised Land, and Moses, at the age of 120 years, was beginning to prepare them to enter in. Now a lot of times when you think of somebody who is 120 years old, you do not think of them as being too bright, and they are just tottering along. What does the Holy Spirit say about Moses when he was about that age?

In Deuteronomy 34:7 it says, “Although Moses was 120 years old when he died, his eye was not dim nor his vigor abated.”

What a precious testimony! His eye was not dim. I love how it says, “His eye was not dim.” It does not say, “His eyes were not dim,” speaking of singleness of vision. There was one thing he had upon his heart, one thing. He saw the Lord and His wonderful purpose. That is what he had seen, and that is what kept him.

Also it says, “His vigor was not abated.” I believe this is speaking far more than just a physical testimony. This is speaking of a spiritual testimony of the life within him. And we are thankful that the vigor he had, that freshness and zeal for God’s heart and purpose, really continued on throughout His life.

He wrote this psalm even before the people of God were getting ready to go into the Promised Land. He reflected back, and as he looked with that singleness of eye, he saw the greatness of God. He saw the Almighty, he saw the Creator, he saw His majesty, he saw His great faithfulness. And with the same clarity, he saw the people of God who had come up short. He saw their frailty; they were like the grass that flourishes in the morning, but by evening it was gone, was nothing. They had not really been the faithful ones that God had desired them to be. So as Moses was penning this psalm, a prayer came forth which was really for the next generation. It was for a people that were getting ready to go in and possess what God had prepared for them. God had a great inheritance for the people of God who were in that wilderness. And Moses was there, desiring that they would enter into the fulness of all that God had for them, that they would come and respond in such a way that they could enter in and possess their full possession. It is a great psalm and a great prayer with the burden for that next generation.

He prayed: "Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Sometimes we focus so much on the first part of that verse: "Lord, teach us to number our days," and that is good, but I do not think that was really His burden, His reason. Why does he want us to number our days? Why does he want each day to count? So that we can gain a heart of wisdom, a heart that knows the Lord, a heart that knows Him, a heart that knows His desires, a heart that knows His purpose.

Who has been made unto us wisdom? It is Christ. Who is in God's heart? Our Lord Jesus. It is a jealousy that we know more of God's heart, more of God's purpose, everything related to His Son because He has created, He has done everything for His Son, and His Son is what He desires, that there would be a total wrapping up of all things being found in Him. So we are thankful that just as it was so vital in those days for the people of God to know everything that is upon God's heart, it is just as vital for us today. And when we talk about knowing God's purpose and knowing His heart, what are we speaking of? We are speaking of how He is looking for a relationship with us. You see it from the very beginning in the Garden. God had a desire to have that relationship between God and man. His desire was to be at home and dwell among His people. Our Lord Jesus came, and He tabernacled amongst us, full of grace and truth.

Also, He desires we see the corporate expression, people gathered unto Him, a people set apart unto Him, a people who will one day eventually be the precious bride of His beloved Son. That is what is upon the Father's heart. And He desires that the people of God, as we make each day count for Him, would gain this heart of wisdom, of seeing all that is upon His heart.

We often hear about God's eternal purpose. We hear it, and oftentimes we can just allow it to go over our heads or just say, "I have had enough of that." I remember for years going to conferences and hearing Brother Kaung and Lance speak about God's eternal purpose, and I kept sitting there with my pen waiting, "Okay, tell me what it is." They would be describing it, and at the end of the message I still did not get it. Next time, "Tell me what it is." They were speaking in the Spirit, and I was trying to comprehend it with my mind, but they kept pouring it out. At times I would get pretty frustrated because I could actually talk about it, but I knew it was not real in my heart, and it continued to frustrate me over the years.

Then I was reading Daniel, chapter 12:8-9, it was so helpful to me in my Christian walk, not only with His purpose but with many things. We know that in Daniel's life the Lord revealed so much to him. He revealed the future with so many events, dreams, and interpretations of dreams. Particularly, in the second part of Daniel which is all related to the future, he says in chapter 12:8, speaking to the Lord: "As for me, I heard, but I could not understand." And I said, "Amen!" You hear things, but you do not understand them. And what did God say to Daniel at that point? He did not say, "Daniel, you are a prophet; you should understand." "Mac, you have been in this fellowship twenty years, you should understand. If you do not understand, I cannot use you anymore." He did not throw Daniel out nor did He rebuke him.

What did He say to him? In the first part in verse 9 He said, "Go your way; just continue going on. Go your way and as you go on your way with Me, I will show you more of My heart."

And I am thankful that within Daniel's life he did not let his lack of understanding hinder him from serving the Lord. He knew the Lord. He might not have had full understanding of everything going on, but he knew the Lord and he continued faithful.

That is what we see in Moses' life also. He gained a fuller understanding as he walked with the Lord faithfully day by day, and the Lord opened his heart. They did not stop following because they did not fully understand.

I think that is encouraging for us because at times we hear things, and we know they are true, we know they are in the Word of God, but we do not fully understand them. Does that hinder us from going on? No, we keep going on, and the Lord shines that light brighter and brighter. As you continue to go on, realizing there is so much more of Him to see and understand, He brings us into that 'so much more.' He shines that light brighter and brighter, as it talks about in Proverbs 4:18: "The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn that shines brighter and brighter until the fulness of day." As we go along, the Lord shows us, but it is that continuing to go on in Him.

That is why as Moses was praying this prayer for the people of Israel, he wanted them to continue going on, making each day count. "You live for Me this day, and you can go on, and then live for Me another day." If we will keep going on, that light will be shining brighter and brighter. Moses grew in understanding as he continued on with the Lord, and that is why I believe it is so relevant for us today.

How did Moses grow in understanding? How did he gain a heart of wisdom? If you look at Moses' life, there are a lot of Scriptures related to him. There is one in Hebrews chapter 11 that in one way captures a real great turning point within Moses' life.

Hebrews 11:24-26: "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure the ill treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."

This was a precious revelation that Moses had in verse 26: "Considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." What a choice he made there!

Now at this point in time in his life, and it is also in the book of Acts, Moses was about forty years of age. We know Moses' life was divided into three sections of forty years each. He was in Egypt forty years, in the desert forty years, and the wilderness forty years. This is coming to the last part of the forty years when he was in Egypt where he was raised.

He was not a naïve youth in any way. He was a man of experience; he was a man of the world. He grew up in the palace and knew all the worldly ways. He was educated in all the learnings of Egypt; he was mighty in words, as it says in Acts. Also, he was a great military leader. History records some of his great victories. He was mighty in deeds, and literally he had the whole world before him. Many believe that he would probably have been the next pharaoh of Egypt since he was raised as Pharaoh's daughter's son.

Moses had everything set before him, but there came a point in his life when he had a sensing that he could not go that way anymore. He had a sensing within him that he could not possibly follow this path, and he made a choice. This sensing within him I personally believe was instilled within him by his mother. We know that in the sovereignty of God when Moses was born, God provided a place of salvation in an ark for him. And through his sister his mother was brought in, and while he was there, he was raised by his mother until he was weaned, which may have been six or seven years because weaning then was a lot longer than now. But we believe that his mother instilled within him the Word of God during the time she had with him, and that was within him.

Then there came a point in his life where he had to make a choice. He knew, on one hand, all of this power that he had, he knew of his position and prestige that he had in Egypt. Every fleshly desire that he had, whatever it might be, was at his finger tips, along with all of the great riches of Egypt. He was greatly respected, a man that people looked up to.

On the other hand, he saw his brethren being ill-treated. He saw those reproaches of Christ, and he made a choice, an absolute choice, and it will be the same for us. It was a choice that revolutionized his life; it was a choice in which he forsook the position he had in Egypt which was greater than any position we have on earth. He forsook all the power he had within his life. Moses literally had the power of life and death; he had power over everybody in Egypt except for a handful like Pharaoh. Nevertheless, he had great power, and he forsook it.

He had great prestige. He was so respected as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but he could not be called that anymore. And he had so many possessions. Moses was in a place that whenever the latest iPhone came out, he got it before Jack Cox. He had all of this stuff, but he said, "I forsake it all." There was something within him that had captured his heart. Even though he did not fully understand it at this time, he knew he had to make a choice, and he did. He said, "No!" to all the world, no to self and yes to Christ. It says, "He was refusing and choosing." The refusing is saying, "No," and the choosing is saying, "Yes."

Sometimes we can say "no" to the world, but are we really saying "yes" to the Lord? We may be saying "no" to this, but are we fully yielding ourselves to saying "yes" to the Lord? And sometimes we can say "yes" to the Lord, but we are not saying "no" to the world, and we get a mixed life. But he said, "Absolutely no to this and yes to that," and that is the life that He is looking

for in us in these days. He was saying, “That is the key for us as the people of God to go in and possess our possessions, making these choices. And it is said that it dramatically revolutionized his life.

Moses prayed this prayer for them; he prayed that the Lord would teach them to number their days. Again, this teaching is not something natural. Any child can count one, two, three, four, five, six, seven; they can just count, but this is a spiritual instruction. The Lord is not so much interested in the quantity of days, but the quality of the days. Hopefully, there will be a lot of the quantity, which will be great, but He is looking for that quality of days because that is the only way that they are going to be able to fully go in and possess what He has for them.

This prayer is actually showing us one of the secrets of his life. It says, “Teach us to number our days.” Moses was sharing with them one of the secrets of his life, and it is one of the keys within our lives. It is teachableness; Moses was teachable. Are we teachable? Do we come to a place of thinking, Moses had all the wisdom of the world at his fingertips. He knew all of these things, but there was a teachableness from the Lord and His ways. In fact, it says in Numbers 12:3: “The man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.” He was the most humble person upon the face of the earth. And we see how, as many have shared, another way of saying “teachable” is “humble.” The pride of life says, “I know everything, I do not need to be taught anything.” But somebody who has humility, that humbleness of heart is an open heart to receive what the Lord has for them. And this is one of the keys of Moses’ life because he wanted the Lord to teach him; in fact, he even prayed for this.

Exodus 33:13: “Now therefore I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know (teach me) Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight.”

We might be unfamiliar with this prayer of Moses at this point in his life because this is right after the golden calf incident, and the journey is getting ready to begin. We are maybe more familiar with the two requests that Moses had: “Lord, if Your presence does not go with us, we are not going to go.” We hear sermons on that. “Lord, we need Your presence to go with us.” And the Lord assured him. Also, Moses prayed, “Lord, show me Your glory.” And the Lord said, “I am going to hide you in the cleft of the rock, and My hand is going to hold you there. If you see the glory on My face, you will die, but you can see My back.” We are familiar with that, but this is the same prayer that was so important to him at this point. Now why was he praying it? He says, “Let me know Your ways that I might know You.” He wanted to know Him; he wanted to know the heart and purpose of the Lord.

Was this prayer answered, “Lord, teach me Your ways?” Actually, in Psalm 103:7 it says, “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel.” He made known His ways to Moses. The Lord answered that prayer. This is the way I look at the difference between His ways and His acts. To know His acts is to know what He does; it is looking at the outward. To know His ways is knowing why He does it; it is seeing His heart. For example, on the day of Pentecost, everybody in Jerusalem could see the acts of God. The Spirit came down, and the people were speaking in tongues. That was the act of God on that great and glorious day, but there were a few who knew why He did it. They knew He sent forth His Spirit to dwell in man and do that

transforming work, to birth the church upon earth. That is the “why” because the church could be used by God to fulfill His purpose. There was a why behind all of the acts of God.

It is interesting in the last month or two, I have gotten so many texts and conversations with various young people about artificial intelligence. How does artificial intelligence do this and that? And you actually read stories about certain pastors who are using artificial intelligence to write their sermons, and counseling groups within Christianity are using it to answer any questions you might have. Artificial intelligence can maybe copy the acts of God, the “what” He does. But to enter into the why, the Spirit of what He does, it can never capture His heart or His ways. The very word “artificial” tells you right there what it is. There is an essence of God’s heart that is Spirit to spirit, and that is how He captures us. And this is what Moses prayed.

It is interesting that there was someone else who prayed this. David prayed it in Psalm 25:4, “Lord, make me know Your ways. O Lord, teach me Your paths.”

It is the same Hebrew word there, “Make me or teach me Your ways, Lord.” It is having that teachableness. When we come to the New Testament, we find that believers are called disciples, learners, students, and that is what being teachable is. One of the things that caught my heart about this is that the two men who prayed about knowing God’s ways were Moses and David. They were burdened for the dwelling place of God; Moses with the tabernacle and David with the temple, but they both had the same prayer. And what did God show them? He showed them the same thing. He showed them how He wanted to have that relationship. He wanted to have a dwelling place. He wanted to have that corporate expression of His people upon this earth. That is what He is after. We see God’s ways, we see God’s heart and His purpose, and there is always that end in view. Recently, we looked at that little booklet, “Why Do We So Gather.” Even in that little book, we could look at the acts of gathering, but do we know God’s ways? Do we know the why? It is not so much about the what of gathering which is the outward, but the why. Why are we gathering? That is God’s heart; that is God’s purpose. That is what He is after within all of our hearts and lives, that we can enter into living the reality of that and it impacting our lives. One of the things about reality, one of the things about knowing the ways of God is that it impacts our lives. We can know about things, we can know the what of what God did, but it might not impact our lives at all. But once we see those ways of why He did something and what is going on within His heart, it will impact our lives. And we are thankful how this was such a desire within Moses.

But how did the Lord go about teaching Moses His ways? This is the real popular answer that we all love. He taught Moses by the way of the cross. Sometimes we like to find the easy way, but He taught Moses by the way of the cross, and as Moses learned of the Lord in this He gave him a fuller and greater revelation. We shared how when Moses made that choice, it was a hard choice, it was an absolute choice and it cost him everything. But when he made that choice to go and be with his brethren, how did it go for him? We know the story of how he went down one day and he saw an Egyptian treating one of his brethren bad. So he killed the Egyptian and buried him, and he thought that he had gotten away with it. He went back the next day, and he saw two Hebrews fighting. When he broke them up, they said, “Are you going to kill us too?” He realized that he had been found out.

Then they challenged him, “Who made you ruler over us?” We see such a challenge there, and in fear he flees to the desert. He is in that desert for forty years, and it was a disaster. Why was it a disaster? Because Moses did it in his own natural strength, in his own timing. He had not learned the ways of God. He did not know God’s timing at this point. And Moses was unprepared, so the Lord had to literally take him out into the desert, put him among those sheep, and keep him there for forty years to learn of a new Master. He had been the master of his old life. In Egypt he was the self-sufficient one, he could do anything. He had to learn that he had a new Master that was in charge of his life. Moses made the right choice, but he did it the wrong way; he did it in himself.

David did the same thing. We are in good company when we do that. When David finally brought all of Israel together and captured Jerusalem, what did he see? He said, “We have to get the ark here to Jerusalem. We have to bring it in.” So they made a nice cart for it, and as they were bringing it in, the cart stumbled and the ark began to fall. Uzzah reached up to steady the ark, and the Lord slayed him just like that. The ark was left at the house of Obed-Edom, and David was afraid; he feared the Lord. He went back upset and fearful, and then he asked, “How can we bring the ark to Jerusalem?” Then he learned the right way with the priests bringing it in. It was God’s way, not man’s way. Thank the Lord, there is a lesson there.

We can have our ways, we can have our good intentions, but we do them with the wrong way and wrong timing. Sometimes we will see a need within the house of God or somewhere else, and immediately we say, “There is a need; I will do it, I will help.” Is that really coming under the headship of Christ? There are certain ones of us that are Mr. Fix Its. We see a need, and immediately we are going to do it. But do we even pause to say, “Lord, do you want me to take care of that need?” “Do You want me to come alongside this one?” Now I am not talking about seeing a child in the street that needs help. Obviously, you go out and get the child. But just in the normal days and we see brothers and sisters going through things, do we pause and say, “Lord, am I the one that You want to use in this way?” Sometimes, He will say, “Yes.” And sometimes He might say, “No,” I want to use someone else. Nevertheless, we can still pray for that particular need, for that particular situation. That is coming under a new Master. Our old master might love to do this or do that. No, it is coming under that new Master who says, “This is the way, walk ye in it.”

We said that Moses was in the desert for forty years caring for those sheep. We are somewhat familiar with the end of those forty years in which day by day he had been taking care of those sheep. Now I wonder what it was like when he first went into the desert. He was still full of himself, and he says, “Okay, I am out here in the desert; now let me see. Plan A did not work; I will develop a plan B.” So he was working in his mind planning another way that he could go and deliver his people. Now this is imagination and not scriptural, but it is the way a lot of people think: “Plan A does not work; we are going to go to plan B.” So he is thinking, “How can I do this?” But the time goes by, and he is there longer and longer. The Lord is working with him, and he is having to learn to lay his ways aside and come under the new Master. Finally, maybe he came to a point of giving up totally, never expecting to go back at all. “Lord, I know You want to deliver those people because you gave Your promise that You were going to deliver them; maybe You are going to use someone else.” Maybe he was praying for that one. We do not know.

But all of a sudden one day he saw a burning bush, which was a pretty common sight in the desert. Because of the heat and dryness they would combust and catch on fire and burn out, but this one kept burning; it was not consumed. Moses stopped, he turned and looked at it. All of a sudden, a voice came out of the bush, and he realized that it was the voice of God. It was the call of God upon his life. And Moses was beginning to see more and more of the ways of God. He saw Life in a dried-up old thorn bush, and that was impacting him. When he was in Egypt, he was utterly self-reliant. So when he went out to the desert, he was strong, he thought he was like the cedar of Lebanon. The cedars of Lebanon are always the strongest trees in the desert. He thought he was going to be that strong, mighty one, but when he came back after those forty years, he saw that he was simply a dried-up old thorn bush. However, there was a life within him; He knew God. "In myself this thorn bush cannot do anything, but there is a powerful life within me that can do all things." He had learned from his new Master, "It is not I but Christ," which is the way we would phrase it. He saw that. There was a great divide in Moses' life between the old Moses, the self and the new Moses, the man in Christ, and he was able to go back to Egypt in a mighty way. We would describe Moses at that point in what he saw as very similar to what Paul said, "There is a treasure in this earthen vessel." When he left Egypt, we used the cedar of Lebanon as indicating his strength, or he could think he was some great golden vessel. Now, he saw that he was just a simple old earthen vessel, but he had a treasure within.

That is what we have, brothers and sisters. Sometimes we know the treasure within, but sometimes we do not realize that we are just an old earthen vessel. And would that the Lord show us His ways in that because as Moses had gone through that desert walking daily in the light of the Lord, the Lord did show him. He went back to Egypt in a whole different spirit and a whole different way. We are not going to go into all that occurred in Egypt with the miracles and the deliverance of the Jewish people, but when he left Egypt this time, it was in a very different way. It says in Hebrew 11:27: "By faith he left Egypt." The first time he left Egypt it was not by faith; it was in fear. This time when he left Egypt, it was not fearing the wrath of the king. "By faith he left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king." Why was that? "For he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." He saw His ways; he saw the Lord in a very marvelous, precious light.

God had trained Moses those forty years, and He trains us in a similar way. God has a very unique way of training us. He trains us every day, day in and day out. Many of us do not really see the significance of daily life, but we need to see each day as a gift from Him. If we could capture the essence of Moses' prayer it would help us to really value more and more the daily life.

We focus a lot of times on the first part of this verse which is "teach us to number our days." However, the purpose in that is "to gain a heart of wisdom." What is the heart of wisdom? It is Christ; it is gaining more of Christ. That is what we are seeking after, and He does that day in and day out. Often, we do not really appreciate these days because they become routine, they become monotonous. Sometimes you wake up in the morning, and you are on autopilot. As you go through the first part of the day, you are not even awake. All of a sudden you are dressed, your teeth are brushed and everything is falling into place, but there is a monotony in your day, and we do not even think it is significant. Maybe daily life is too simple for us, but God wants us

to really value it. If we were to stop and count our days, over ninety percent of them are very routine. There are really only a few significant days in our lives.

As we consider Daniel, we always think of him as this great prophet who lived eighty-five or ninety years of age. How many days in Daniel's life were out of the ordinary? In the book of Daniel, chapter one, they did not want to eat the palace food, so for ten days they would not eat it. That was ten days out of ninety years, and it went on daily. Then the king had a dream, and they looked for one who could interpret the dream. They knew if they did not find one to interpret the dream they would all be killed. Daniel went in and interpreted the dream and went back out. That was another day which would be up to about eleven now. Then there was another dream, a handwriting on the wall, and a few more days have been recorded for us.

Later on in his life, as he continued to faithfully pray toward Jerusalem, the officials tried to catch him in anything they could accuse him of to the king, but he was so faithful they could not find anything. You might say that he was under a microscope in his life. But they managed to find a way to trick the king into signing a decree which said that everyone had to bow to King Darius or they would be thrown into the lions' den. Daniel would not bow to the king, and they threw him into the lions' den, but the Lord saved him, and he came out unharmed. That was another day or so of significant days.

Brothers and sisters, in most of our lives there are not that many significant days. The vast majority of them are pretty routine, and that is where the Lord does His work. It is the day of small things, not the day of big things when He works within us, day in and day out. Sometimes, if we know we have to do something we get more focused on that. Do we get up and have our morning's devotions when we have nothing set before us that day? Do we do our morning devotions just as faithfully then as when we, "Oh, I have a big meeting, I have to do this, I have to do that, I really need to do my devotions this morning." There is that dailyness of feeding upon Him.

I think of Moses when he was there in the desert for forty years caring for those sheep every day. It was very monotonous, day in and day out. He probably did the exact same thing every day while taking care of those sheep.

Sometimes within the house of God, as we are caring, walking with brothers and sisters day in and day out, it can get monotonous; it can also get challenging. Are we caring for one another day in and day out? May we get a glimpse into God's heart of how much He wants to make each day count for Him. The Lord shows us all through Scripture both His acts and His ways. This is the way He trains us day in and day out.

The Work of Creation

Going back to the very beginning in Genesis 1, I will pick a few examples, not just focusing on the "what" but the "why." In Genesis 1 we find the creation. How did God do the work of creation? He did it one day at a time. The first day He created this, the second day He made that, the third day He did that, and at the end of the day He stopped, but there was another day. That is the "what." But why is He doing that? The "why" is that He is trying to show us how He works. "I want you to see this picture; this is how I work in life. This is how I work in your life. Do you see

it? I am showing you from the very beginning. I work in your life every day.” Now I have no doubt that if God had wanted to He could have created everything instantly, just like that. Now I am not talking about the big bang theory, but He could have created everything in one day. But He wanted us to see that is not how He works. “I am going to work in your life this day, and the next day I am going to work a little more in your life, and the next day I am going to be working a little more in your life.” It is day by day. Do we see the value of it? Do we see that is the way we can grow?

Manna Was Provided

Later on in the wilderness after they had gotten out of Egypt, all of a sudden they were complaining about the food. So God said, “I will provide manna.” I think we are familiar with the story of manna, and how He provided it every day. He said, “Okay, each day you go out and collect the manna, that will be enough for today. On the sixth day you collect a double portion, and that will be for that day and the next day.” Again, the act was provision for their food every day.

What is the “why” of it? The “why” of it is that He wants us to become more and more dependent upon Him. He wants us to be dependent upon Him in life, living a dependent life in Him by faith every day. It is not a matter of trying to be independent, but every day we are to be dependent on Him. Again, He could have made manna that would have lasted one week. You would not have had to use preservatives or anything like that. He could have just said, “Bam! Here is this manna; get it once a week and it is done.” But no, He wants us to see that day by day we need to come to Him for all our provision. Even in the New Testament in the so-called Lord’s prayer it says, “Give us this day our daily bread.” He is teaching us that His way is for us to live a dependent life upon Him.

It is sad that today some people think that God just provides manna once a week. They show up on Sunday, they get their manna for the week, and they try to make it last for a whole week. But He wants us to be feasting upon Him every day.

Taking Up Your Cross Daily

Moses learned God’s ways, and he knew the significance of the daily life. He knew that is how you gain a heart of wisdom. That is why in the New Testament Paul writes so often about taking up your cross daily, dying daily, being transformed daily. Moses saw God’s heart and desire, and as he was trying to pass this on to the next generation, he prayed for them that they would enter into this. This was going to be the secret for them as they went in to possess the land. This was the real purpose behind Psalm 90; it would teach them to gain that heart of wisdom.

And that is so valuable for us today. If you look throughout the Scripture, there is a persistency in God, there is a jealousy in God for His people to really see His purpose, to know His ways and to enter into it. We saw the value at the very beginning of daily living, but you see the value at the very beginning of the “why,” knowing His heart, knowing His ways. From the very beginning you see how He wants to have that relationship with man. He wants to have that corporate expression with man. In the garden when God created man, He created them male and female. He did not give them a choice of what they wanted to be. He said, “You are a male,

you are a female.” When we see how He created them, that was the act. We can see the creation, but it was with a purpose; He created Adam and Eve together. In Ephesians we are getting a glimpse from the very beginning of God’s desire for Christ and the church, that desire for a bride, that desire for this love relationship. This is what He is after, and He is revealing to us His heart continually over and over.

Then Abraham came along, and through him we see the family of God. It is not just about Abraham, that great man of faith, but it is about the family which is God’s way of working. And then through Moses we see how God had a holy nation, a people set apart unto Him. It is not about Moses but about that corporate expression, that testimony of God expressing His life and being that testimony upon this earth.

We see David who was raised up and united the people of Israel into that one kingdom. And we know that within a kingdom the King is what is important. It is not about David; it is about our King of kings and Lord of lords. That is the expression.

Each one of these men, Abraham, Moses, and David gained that heart of wisdom. They knew what God’s heart was, and it kept them going regardless. For each person in Hebrews 11 saw Him who was invisible, and it kept them going. They saw God’s ways.

And to accomplish this God wants us to come into that greater and fuller revelation of His Son. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been made wisdom unto us, because that is what He said, “I am the way, walk ye in it.” And do it according to His way. And we are thankful that His way which we have been brought into today is the church. It gets described in many different ways—the body of Christ, the family of God, the house of God, but it is that corporate expression of His life. We can see how God is working, the ways He is working today. And He is jealous for reality; He is jealous for the reality of the life of His Son to really be expressed and lived out in His people. In a day when truth is relative, and there is so much evil out there being called good. The church on earth, that true church on earth, is the visible testimony of His life upon this earth. And would it be recovered, and there could be a truth in the midst of the darkness, that light shining forth, showing His ways to a world that is perishing, and without any hope at all. There is a way, and would that God raise up ones to be faithful to walk in His ways and testify of His ways. If we could see that, we could be a people that would be used to hasten His return.

One of the things I appreciated about our Brother Stephen in the last years of his life was that call, “Are you ready, being prepared?” And the way you get prepared for anything is you practice daily, you study daily. There is a dailyness to it that you really have to come into. This whole matter of preparing for the coming of the Lord, being made ready is living it every day. Sometimes in the world we make it so complicated today, but there is a simplicity in Christ that He is calling us to, of numbering our days and allowing Him to really teach us His ways. As we go on in the Lord or we hear about the coming of the Lord and being made ready, we think, “Oh, I have to do something special. I have to do some extra work, I have to gain some fuller knowledge of prophecy.” That can be okay, but that is not the real issue. The issue is our hearts; the issue is our lives being fully given and surrendered to Him. There is nothing further from God’s way than complexity. There is a simplicity in God’s ways that only the Holy Spirit can teach us and bring us into, that we can be those who are really being prepared for Him.

If you look at the parables of the Lord's return as we find in Matthew chapters 24-25, what is the issue? It is not their great knowledge of prophecy. It was simply that they were faithful to what the Master put in their hands. They were faithful with what they were given. And because of their faithfulness they were rewarded. And that is what He is calling us to.

Think of ones who were ready when our Lord came the first time. What were they doing? None of them were doing anything out of the ordinary. They were doing what God had called them to do. Consider Elizabeth and Zacharias. At that point it was his turn to go serve in the temple so he went and served. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was in her house just taking care of her house; Joseph was a carpenter day by day fixing or making things. Anna and Simeon, in their older age were in the temple day by day praying for the Lord's interest. The shepherds were in the field watching and taking care of the sheep. None of them were doing anything special; they were being faithful.

Sometimes we can look at the size of the task, but that is not how God measures it. It is not the size of the task; it is our faithfulness with it. That is what He calls us to do every day, to be faithful with what He puts in our hands. Today, who is being called to be more faithful? I am up here speaking; am I supposed to be more faithful? We have ones working the audio visual equipment, we have ones teaching classes, ones preparing for lunch, everybody is here listening. Who is called to be more faithful? Actually, each one of us is called to be faithful to what God puts in our hands. He put in my hand today to share, next week someone else is sharing. He puts in ones' hands to share in music. The issue is faithfulness day after day, that daily being faithful unto Him. He is wanting us to learn how to make each day count for Him. Most of you know I like church history, so I have to get one history story in today.

This is about John Wesley who travelled throughout England on horseback. It is recorded that he travelled over 250,000 miles on horseback, which averaged twenty miles a day throughout his life. He gave over 40,000 sermons because he would give several a day.

One morning at a home he stayed in, he woke up for breakfast and the sister in the home said, "John, if you knew you were going to die tonight, what would you do today?" He said, "Well, first I would finish this wonderful bowl of porridge, then I would go down to the church and give my morning sermon, then I would get on my horse and ride to the next town. The sister there always fixes a wonderful lunch for me. I would lay down and take my nap. Then I would share my afternoon sermon and then get on my horse and ride to the final town of the day. I would have dinner, then share my sermon that night. I would come back and go to bed, go to sleep and wake up in glory."

He would not change a thing. He made every day count. If we were honest and somebody said that to us, how would we change today? In my honesty, I would say, "I have to settle this, I have to settle that." But Wesley made each day count in a quality way that he could really be ready. Why was he able to do that? Because he had gained a heart of wisdom. He had that heart that knew what was upon God's heart and he was being faithful with what was put in his hands.

So I pray that the Lord would continue to teach us to number our days, making them count in a quality way, always with that purpose in view of gaining that heart of wisdom, and that we

could see more and more of that experience of Christ as the way and be able to like Moses come under the new Master. As we walk daily in His light our old master, which is self, decreases, and the new Master, who is Christ, increases. That is what He is after.

A lot of times we talk about recovering, and one of the things that has been lost is the preciousness of daily life. Would that the Lord recover daily life within each one of our hearts, within each one of our lives. Again, it is with the purpose of gaining His heart of wisdom, knowing His purpose, being a people who are sold out to Him, trying to hasten His return.

Let's pray:

Lord, we are thankful that Your heart's desire is to show us Your ways. You have a heart's desire to teach us Your ways. We pray that in our own hearts we could come into a greater teachability, that we would allow You to teach us, that we would allow You to show us where we are trying to be in control of our own destiny. But Lord, we want You to be in control of that. And so Lord, we do want to ask You, that we could be those with a simple request to teach us to number our days that we could really gain that heart of wisdom, a heart of knowing You as the way, a heart of knowing Your end in view, and a heart that can be used of You in this late hour. In Your precious name. Amen.