

Walking in Truth

The second epistle of John speaks of the apostle's delight to a certain woman (representative of the ecclesia), whose children who followed the way of righteousness:

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children *walking in Truth* as we have received a commandment from the Father” (2Jno. 2:4).

The same sentiment is echoed in verse six:

“this is love, *that we walk after his commandments*. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, *ye should walk in it*” (2Jno 1:6).

The emphasis then, is to do with our walk in life: we must be found “walking in Truth,” as did holy men of old. For our exhortation today, we propose to consider this aspect of *walking*, as expressive of the principles of our spiritual journey towards the Kingdom to come.

The first example to consider is that of Enoch. Genesis chapter 5 writes of him:

“Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch *walked with God*: after he begat Methuselah three hundred years ... And Enoch *walked with God*: and he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:21-24)

There would seem to be a particular relevance in the birth of Methuselah, for it was after this event that it is testified that Enoch *walked with God*. There may be a clue in the name that Enoch chose for his son. “Methuselah” is said to mean “when he is dead, it shall be sent” (Jones Dictionary of Old Testament Proper Names). But what shall be sent? It would appear from the time periods described in Genesis that Methuselah died the same year that the Flood came upon the earth. So it is, that Methuselah's name would appear to be a prophecy of the judgments that were to come upon the earth immediately following his death. This naming by Enoch was expressive of his faith, and from that point onwards, he “walked with God”.

This suggestion is supported by Jude, who tells us that Enoch spoke of the coming judgments:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all ...” (Jude 1:14-15).

So it was that Enoch spoke of the coming judgments of his day, yet which foreshadowed the judgments that will come to pass when Messiah returns to subdue the earth under his righteous reign.

Another holy man of old, who walked after the manner of Enoch is Noah:

“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah *walked with God*” (Gen. 6:9).

Again, Noah, being a “preacher of righteousness” warned of coming judgments, and his building of the Ark was the ideal visual aid to express his faith. By contrast to the world at large, which was worthy only of death and destruction, Noah “walked with God,” and built the ark to the saving of his house. Interestingly, Hebrews chapter 11 speaks of Noah’s faith:

“By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which *he condemned the world* and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Heb. 11:7).

Notice this point: his building was not to the saving of his house only. True, this was the first and most significant aspect, but also associated with it was the condemnation of the world. The building of the ark was a tremendous sign of Noah’s expectation for the flood to come, and the world’s rejection of that sign brought condemnation upon themselves.

A third example which is particularly relevant is that of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful. Genesis chapter 17 recounts how that:

“When Abram was ninety years old and nine, Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am Almighty God: *walk before me*, and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17:1).

Notice again, how that the Scriptures emphasize Abram’s walk in life: it was to be before his God, the implication being, it was to be in the way of righteousness.

In each of these examples, the individuals are portrayed as being on a journey – but they were not alone, for they each were led of Yahweh, and so “walked with God”. The prophet Amos spoke of this aspect:

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

The implication then, is that by walking with God, these men were agreed with Him, and He with them. They were his Sons by faith, and walked together with Him to guide, guard and encourage them on their journey to the inheritance of his providing.

We briefly referred to the example of Abram above. His “walk” is a most interesting case to consider. Genesis chapter 13 describes the “walk” he was commanded to engage himself in:

“... all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever ... arise, *walk through the land* in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee ...” (Gen. 13:15-17).

It was a token of Abram’s faith then, that he was to walk through the promised land, trusting that at some point it would be given to both he and his Seed for an everlasting possession. Indeed, when we consider

the Bible narrative concerning Abraham, we see how he spent the rest of his life walking throughout the land, as a stranger and sojourner. What is particularly interesting is how the New Testament speaks of him as:

“the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also **walk in the steps of that faith** of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised” (Rom. 4:12).

The footsteps of Abram’s faith were all over the Promised Land. He spent his life walking through it, in faith that one day it would be given to him. And we share that same faith: seeking to walk with our God, in the hope that we might receive the inheritance as the spiritual seed of that righteous man.

There is an example in Scripture of a man who did just that. Deuteronomy chapter 1 describes how that 12 spies were sent out to survey the land, before Israel were to enter, and take it. But ten of the spies, once they realized that the obtaining of the land involved significant effort and faith, undermined the faith of Israel as a nation. They were afraid of the Anakim, a great and tall people, and so rebelled against the commandment of God to war against them. They walked throughout the land, but did not share Abraham’s faith.

Caleb, and Joshua however, were of a different spirit. As a Gentile and a Jew, these were both faithful, and recognized the Divine Power that was with them, to save. Of Caleb particularly it is written:

“... Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land **that he hath trodden upon**, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Yahweh” (Deut. 1:36).

He, like Abram walked through the land in faith. This aspect is again emphasized elsewhere, where Caleb himself spoke to Joshua that he might be given his inheritance:

“... Moses sware on that day, saying, surely the land **whereon thy feet have trodden** shall be thine inheritance, and thy children’s for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Yahweh my Elohim ... now therefore give me this mountain, whereof Yahweh spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: **if so be Yahweh will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out**, as Yahweh said” (Josh. 14:9,12).

Notice the implicit faith and trust of Caleb, that Yahweh would help him overcome the mountain of opposition presented by the Anakim. This is a faith which is most instructive to us: sometimes the problems of life become great, and seem ready to overpower us. Yet through faith in our Heavenly Father, we can overcome, if we but walk in the steps of Abraham and Caleb. There is no power upon earth that can take our inheritance away from us ... except our own selves, if we grow weary and faint in

the way. We must therefore walk with God, as did these men of faith, with confidence that what God has promised, He is able to give.

Associated with this idea of walking, is the idea of *following*. Accordingly, we read of Caleb (above) that “thou hast wholly *followed* Yahweh my Elohim”. In the walk with Him, He takes the lead, and guides us where to go. So we read: “a man’s heart deviseth his way: but Yahweh directeth his steps” (Prov. 16:9). Again, the Psalmist wrote: “He restoreth my soul: *he leadeth me* in the paths of righteousness for his Name’s sake” (Psa. 23:3).

LEAVING THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

So long as we are led by Yahweh, and follow His Ways, it is guaranteed that we shall reach the promised destination. However, one of the central themes of the book of Proverbs, is that there are two ways: the way of Truth, and the way of Folly. Accordingly, Proverbs chapter 2 speaks of the “evil man” “who leave *the paths of uprightness*, to walk in *the ways of darkness*” (Prov. 2:13). By definition, to walk in the ways of darkness is not to walk “with God”. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and *walk in darkness*, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we *walk in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jno. 1:5-7). Notice the development of the idea implicit in the description of walking together: being agreed, there is fellowship between the Children of Light, and their Father who begat them. Again, by definition therefore, if we forsake the Light of the World, we walk in darkness, we do not have fellowship with the Almighty, and the shed blood of His son will not cleanse us from all sin.

Proverbs chapter 4 is all about these two ways:

“enter not into *the path of the wicked*, and go not in the way of evil men” (Prov. 4:14).

Again:

“*the path of the just* is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. *The way of the wicked* is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble” (Prov. 4:18-19).

These are the Narrow and Broad ways that Messiah spoke about (Mat. 7:13). The Way of the Wicked is a broad way, and most of humankind walk blindly in darkness towards their destination of destruction. The way of the Righteous is a narrow way, not being designed to accommodate the swinish multitudes, but only the “few” who choose to follow, and walk with, the Lord.

There is a tendency in the world in which we live, to constantly be looking for new things. That which is “old” is lightly regarded, as men and women are encouraged to be progressive, seeking to develop beyond their forbearers. When we preach the principles of the Truth to them, particularly in terms of the covenant of marriage, and personal conduct, we are regarded as being “old fashioned”, not keeping up with the times. However, the reverse is true: we seek to live by the principles that will govern the life and kingdom to come – we are therefore, ahead of our times! The paths that we walk along are both old and

new: they are the paths that the patriarchs walked along, and they are the paths that shall pertain to days yet future: principles by which the World shall be compelled to live by. So Yahweh spake by his prophet:

“Thus saith Yahweh, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and *ask for the Old Paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein: (Jer. 6:16).

Such was the refusal of Israel to turn back to the ways of their Fathers. But in real terms, our position is the same as theirs – do we walk in the counsel of the ungodly (Psa. 1:1), or do we seek after the “old paths”? These Old Paths lead us back to the promises made to the Patriarchs many centuries ago, and they are life eternal.

Israel, though they dwelt in the land upon which Abram walked, did not walk in the steps of his faith – and so they, and their land were to be trodden underfoot of the Gentiles:

“... they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be *trodden down* of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Lu. 21:24).

Again, Daniel 8 describes how “both the sanctuary and the host” would be “trodden under foot” (Dan. 8:13). Though they were to be the “salt of the earth”, they proved themselves to be unworthy of preservation, and fit only to be trodden down by men.

When we consider examples of faithfulness: men who “walked in truth”, we think more particularly than any other, Messiah himself. Jesus, as the seed of Abraham, has gone before us, and laid down footprints for us to follow. So it is written:

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, *even as he walked*” (1Jno. 2:6).

And again:

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, *that ye should follow his steps*: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (1 Pet. 2:21-22).

The steps of Messiah take us through tribulation into glory. Christ gave us an example of suffering for righteousness' sake, and although his heel was smitten (Gen. 3:15) and his walk in life was interrupted for three days and three nights, he rose again to life eternal. Between him and his Father, there was perfect harmony: they walked together in agreement. United in love, and in one mind, when we behold the Father and Son, we see a unity in which believers should strive to walk. Even as Christ prayed: “neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee*, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (Jno.17:21).

Let us therefore, walk in the Light, even as He is in the Light, that we might be one with Messiah, walking in the steps of Abram, Caleb, and Messiah himself – that at the time appointed we will reach our destination, and take up our inheritance with them.

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