

## Deeper understanding 1 of 3, What day, what He wrote

Hi all,

This is a fun series about verses and passages you thought you understood, but maybe didn't understand in context. When put in culture of first century Judaism, a whole new meaning appears.

### **This is the day the Lord has made; Psalm 118:24**

I got to know the Father and the Lord in the 1970's, and 'This is the day the Lord has made', was a popular song back then.

Besides singing it, I've also heard it said when something goes wrong: "Oh well, this is the day the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it (anyway)."

The context of the verse is Psalm 118, a prophetic Psalm about the Messiah. In v17 He says; "I will not die, but will live and declare the works of the Lord."

Then in v22-24: "The stone which the builders refused has become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. *This is the day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.* **Save now, I beseech you O Lord. O Lord I beseech you, send now prosperity (let it and us be a success).** Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord..."

This Psalm 118:22-26 passage is quoted in Mark 11:8-10 on what we call Palm Sunday. It's when the people laid their garments and branches along the road way welcoming their King into the city. The phrase in Psalm 118:25, 'Save now I beseech you' is one word in the Aramaic: Hosanna. (Literally, 'save me please!')

All these years singing and saying 'hosanna', did you know it meant 'Save me now I beg you' or 'Save me now (urgently) please'?

As Jesus entered the city that Palm Sunday, the people were quoting Psalm 118: "Save us now we beg you, Save us now we beg you, Send salvation, let it and us be a success (in this)! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."

The context is about the Lord headed to His death for us. THAT is the day the Lord made, for us, that we might be blessed in every area. In context, it isn't talking about any day in our time, it is about THE day the Lord went to His death for us, and became the cornerstone of salvation. THIS is the day the Lord has made, and we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Don't feel bad if you have one of those days where you shrug your shoulders and say, "Oh well, this is the day the Lord has made and I will rejoice and be glad in it" - that works too.

But the context is what adds depth, that the people in Mark 11:9-10 were crying out, begging, for their salvation. The trouble was, it didn't come like they expected. They expected Jesus to use His miracle power to kick the Romans out and make Israel great again. When that didn't happen, they turned against Him and crucified Him.

### **What He wrote in the dust**

John 7:2 tells us the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. It is the last of the festivals God gave to Israel, and celebrates God living with man. It is going to be celebrated annually in the Millennium for Jesus will be living with mankind as King of the earth. Zechariah 14:16-20

The Feast of Tabernacles has another name, 'The Feast of Living Waters' and involved a 'water drawing' ceremony called 'Living Waters'.

It is during this feast, on the last day of the feast, that Jesus stood up and cried out v37 says: "If anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink. He that believes in me will as scripture says, have living water flowing out of his belly. This He spoke of the Spirit, which those who believe on Him would later receive. For the Holy Spirit was not yet given to man for He was not yet glorified.)"

### **Chapter 8:1-2 tells us the next morning...**

...the day after the 7 day feast, the 8th day, is when Jesus met the woman caught in the act of adultery.

The significance of it being the day after the Feast is that this was called 'the 8th day' and is celebrated to our time. It is called 'shemini atzeret'. Shemini means 'eighth' and 'atzeret' means 'to close or pause'. The 8th day was known as 'the celebration of the Word'. The final reading of passages that had been read all week long were read for one last time.

The oral law of adultery required both the man and woman be brought to the temple to the Nicanor Gate (east side of the city which led to the 'court of the women') to determine if adultery had actually taken place. They did it so they could test Jesus.

#### **Technically,**

They would have brought the man and woman to the temple to a priest to be accused. There had to be 2 eye witnesses as well. Then the priest would write in the dust on the floor the sins committed with the names of the accused, as their accusers listed their sins one by one.

Most likely, following the custom of the day but with a twist, Jesus wasn't writing the woman's name and sins, but the sins and names of the men standing there accusing her.

The custom is based on Jeremiah 17:13: "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be ashamed, and those who have departed from you will have their names written in the dust of the earth, for they have rejected the Fountain of Living Waters."

#### **I personally believe**

Jesus was writing their names (and sins) in the earth, for they were convicted and left John 8:9 tells us, the oldest first, then the youngest. Considering the oldest men would have had the most experience and would have heard Jeremiah 17:13 read at the festival for decades, it seems reasonable.

Why written in dust? Because the dust represented the temporary nature of sin before a loving and gracious God, who would with one request for forgiveness, wipe away sin as a man would clear the dust with a wipe of his hand.

The men could have asked forgiveness, but they walked away. The woman was forgiven, but commanded to break it off with the man: "Go, and sin no more." The dust was wiped clean. What a lesson for that woman to see! What a lesson for the men!

There is so much to contemplate in these 2 examples I'll leave it there. More next week, until then, blessings,

John Fenn

<http://www.cwowi.org> and email me at [cwowi@aol.com](mailto:cwowi@aol.com)

### **Deeper understanding 2 of 3, Why Peter walked, Standing up**

Hi all,

Some more fun today of passages that when set in context, provide a deeper meaning.

#### **Why Peter walked**

Jesus walking on water is recorded in 3 gospels: Matthew 14:22-34, Mark 6:45-53, and John 6:15-21.

In most translations the key exchange between Jesus and Peter, as seen in v26-29 picture the disciples afraid they are seeing a ghost walking on the water to them. Then Jesus saying 'It's me, don't be afraid', to which Peter replies something like, 'If it's really you command me to walk on the water to you.'

#### **But that's not what was said**

The Greek (and Amplified Bible) brings out the exchange was this: "Take courage. I AM. Now stop being afraid." "Lord, if you are, then command me to walk on the water to you."

That changes everything. The fear may have originally been they were seeing a ghostly apparition, but when Jesus said: 'I AM, now stop being afraid', it both confirmed it was Jesus and asserted Who He really was.

When He said He was I AM, their minds would have gone immediately to the burning bush and Moses in Exodus 3:14-15. When Moses asked who was speaking to Him, the Lord replied: "I AM that I AM is speaking to you."

Jesus also claimed to be the I AM in John 8:58: "Truly, truly I tell you. Before Abraham was, I AM." We see Him state the claim again at His arrest, to show He was allowing Himself to be arrested, in John 18:5-6:

"Who are you looking for?" "Jesus of Nazareth." "And Jesus answered them, I AM....and when He had said 'I AM'; immediately they were moved backwards and fell to the ground."

Additionally, in John 6:21 it says: "Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going." In other words, Jesus transported the boat with them in it roughly 2-3 miles across the lake (5km).

The summary is that He wasn't just calming them, He was stating that He is the Great I AM who spoke to Moses from the burning bush. Is it no wonder that 2 chapters later, in Matthew 16:16 when Jesus asked who they believe Him to be, Peter blurts out: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!"

### **Standing up**

The whole of Acts 7 is about Steven's defense before the Jewish leaders. We learn some things from his defense. He makes 2 main statements that are accepted as true, common knowledge to his accusers, but they are new to us. Though they aren't our focus.

The first is in 7:2-3 when he says the Lord appeared to Abraham to tell him to leave his homeland. Genesis 12:1 doesn't say He appeared to him, it merely says the Lord told him to leave. Steven adds that important detail which again, was common knowledge back then.

The second is in 7:22-25 where we learn Moses knew he was God's deliverer when he was 40 years old. Most Christians think the revelation came when he was 80 years old at the burning bush, but that is not the case.

Steven says in v25 that Moses killed the Egyptian (when he was 40) "For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them. But they understood not."

### **I teach on this often on the subject of being led of the Lord.**

Moses had the revelation, but due to his education and experience, tried to help God make His promise come to pass. He killed the Egyptian thinking he would start a civil war, and he was capable of that due to his education and military experience. That mistake of trying to 'help' God, cost Moses 40 years of wilderness living before he saw the burning bush; a full 1/3 of his life.

The burning bush merely told him the timing and the way it would be done. Not by Moses's experience and war, but by God's miracle power. That will preach, as they say.

### **But our interest is at the end of the chapter, in vs 54-60.**

Steve has given a history of the Jewish people, 2 points which I just covered.

What sealed his fate was v56: "And (Steven) said, 'Behold, I see the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.'" It was only then that they rushed him, took him out of the city and stoned him to death. We see his good heart in v60 asking the Father to forgive them of the sin of murdering him, and then he died. The first martyr.

### **Why the sudden rush to execution?**

Steven said he saw the Son of man standing - standing - at the right hand of God. We miss this due to time and unfamiliarity with first century Judaism. But they believed God stands up when judging people.

It's based on Isaiah 3:13:"The Lord stands up to plead (accuse, contend with), and stands up to judge the people."

He saw Jesus standing next to the Father God - standing to judge Steven's accusers. Jesus was standing, waiting to see what Steven would do. Would he want them to be accountable for their sin of murdering him, or would he ask their sin to be forgiven? Jesus stood in judgement. Waiting.

Steven stood before the leaders accused of heresy, but when he said in fact they were being judged by the Lord, it was too much for them - and they executed him.

**What is amazing is that when Steven asked:**

"Lord (saying to the one standing), lay not this sin to their account", the Lord would have granted that forgiveness and sat back down. No judgement would be forth coming, at least not for that moment. For instead of judgement, Steven asked for forgiveness.

Jesus stood up ready to judge them if Steven wanted them to be held accountable. Had he been silent, that would have been the case. But he spoke up and asked for forgiveness for that sin - not their salvation, just on that one sin. Paul asked the Lord to forgive his friends who were afraid to appear in court with him. (II Timothy 4:16).

Again, lots of depth in each of these. Will close it out next week, until then, blessings,  
John Fenn

<http://www.cwowi.org> and email me at [cwowi@aol.com](mailto:cwowi@aol.com)

**Deeper Understanding 3 of 3, law of the trespass**

Hi all,

Perhaps the single largest doctrinal error in Christian culture today revolves around the concept of forgiveness. What Jesus taught within the context of Jewish culture and Old Testament law is completely twisted by the modern church.

Paul stated in Ephesians 2:1:"And you has He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Trespasses AND sins. They are not the same.

**A trespass is one person sinning against another. It is horizontal, person to person, and deals with injury. A sin is against God, it is vertical and deals with the guilt.**

Our inner demand for justice is built around the injury. They did wrong, we want them caught. We want to hold them accountable. Church culture says 'forgive them' which takes care of the guilt, but it doesn't address the injury they inflicted on us. That is our conflict. We will forgive, but we want an apology. We want them to admit what they did. We want them to make it right.

Our inner demand for justice agrees with the Law of the Trespass. Everything Jesus and Paul taught on the subject is based on the Law of the Trespass.

**Law of the Trespass:Leviticus 6:1-7**

"If anyone is unfaithful to the Lord by making a trespass against his neighbor in something entrusted to him, or something left in their care or something stolen, or if they cheat their neighbor, or find something lost and then lie about it or not return it. If they sin in these ways and realize their guilt...

"They must return what they stole or got by deceit or lying. They must return the lost property they found to their neighbor, and in anything like this that they lied about or did to their neighbor, AND add 20% of the value when they return it to the person they trespassed against.

"Then they (with the other person) will take all this to the priest who will make a sacrifice for them, and they will be forgiven of these trespasses."

**Notice they have to make it right with the person they trespassed against BEFORE they can be forgiven by God for that trespass.**

That doesn't threaten their salvation for the law is specific to each particular trespass. It means if they keep that which was stolen, or they never admit to the person they lied about something, or any trespass, and they never reconcile by admitting their trespass, when they stand before the Lord they will be held accountable.

The victim may forgive them, but they haven't done what is right to be forgiven by God, which is to apologize to the person they trespassed against. For that trespass they will be held accountable by Him.

#### **What does this look like in modern times?**

How do you add 20% interest in our day? In their day, if someone found a lost leather coat that was worth \$500, they would have to return the coat and add 20% or \$100, and give the person they trespassed against the \$100 and the coat, THEN go to the priest to receive God's forgiveness.

Today, if we trespassed against someone and wanted to make it right, we would apologize to them, then that "20%" could be taking them to lunch, or meeting them for tea or coffee which you pay for. It could be sending a card or note after you reconciled, just to be sure all is right between you once again. That 20% would be doing something just to be sure you two are okay again.

**BUT....**If a person keeps the found coat instead of returning it, they become guilty of that sin of stealing before God. They won't go to hell, but they will be held accountable for stealing.

Jesus spoke of the Law of the Trespass in Matthew 5:25-26: "Agree with your adversary (the person you trespassed against) quickly while you are on the way with them. Or they might deliver you to the judge, who will turn you over to the officer and from there to prison. I tell you the truth, you won't come out from there until you've paid every penny you owe."

Christians have misunderstood this for years, thinking this is heaven or hell. It is not. It is simply an exhortation to reconcile with the person you trespassed against, for if you do not, you will be charged with theft, fined the 20% and sent to prison. That was the custom in that day.

The larger passage is about anger without cause, and 'leave your gift at the altar and go and be reconciled to your brother.' It's about being willing to make it right when you've trespassed against someone.

#### **This is the big one**

Mark 11:25-26: "And when you stand praying, forgive if you have something against another so that your Father in heaven may forgive your trespasses. But if you don't forgive (their trespasses against you) neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

This is not heaven or hell, this is the Law of the Trespass. First, forgiveness is a decision, not an emotion. It is a decision to forgive that person who injured us. You don't have to feel good about them or what happened for you were injured. They remain guilty before God unless they come to you and reconcile.

**That said, both Jesus and Steven asked the Father NOT to charge their executioners of their trespass of murdering each.** We have that option of asking the Father to forgive them anyway, even if they don't account for their injury to us or seek reconciliation.

Jesus said at His resurrection: "Whosoever sins you forgive, they are forgiven. Whosoever sins you retain, they are retained." We are given the authority to use His name against demons, to use His name to lay hands on the sick. We can come before the Father in His name to seek mercy and grace to help in time of need. We can also ask the Father to forgive a person's trespass even if they don't reconcile first with us and add that 20%. OR...we can ask Him to deal with them.

Paul in II Timothy 4:14-16: In v16 he says when he was first indicted in Roman court none of his friends went with him to court, and he said: "I pray God that it won't be laid to their account."

But just before, in v14 he wrote this: "Alexander the Coppersmith did me much harm. The Lord will reward him according to what he did."

**In the case of Alexander the Coppersmith**, Paul chose not to release him from the injury he did to Paul. I'm sure Paul forgave him the guilt, but he didn't release him from the harm he did to Paul. Paul chose to let the Lord deal with him. That meant if Alexander never repented, he would stand before the Lord to give account on that harm of which Paul wrote.

There are some people who will not apologize for the injury they did to us, and we forgive them vertically, but we want them to face the consequences of their action. That is what Paul did - let the Lord deal with Alexander the Coppersmith. That isn't unforgiveness. It is forgiving them vertically, but because they won't do what is right horizontally, we release them into the Lord's hands and go about our business.

Next week a follow up: Working through the emotions (the injury) when forgiving someone. Until then, blessings,

John Fenn

<http://www.cwowi.org> and email me at [cwowi@aol.com](mailto:cwowi@aol.com)

### **Working through the emotions of forgiveness**

Hi all,

Remembering that trespasses are the injury against a person, and sins are against God, it means the struggle to forgive is two-fold:

First, we must make the decision to forgive their guilt towards us, for Jesus said 'As you stand praying, forgive.' This means forgiveness is a decision, not an emotion. That decision clears the person of guilt towards us, but does not clear them of their guilt before God nor the injury they inflicted.

### **As Paul demonstrated**

When he said of Alexander the Coppersmith, 'God will deal with him according to what he did', it shows there are some people you forgive their guilt towards you (trespass), but want the Lord to deal with them for their guilt before Him and their injury they did to you.

Look at this example from The Revelation 6:9-11, where the apostle John sees thousands in heaven who had been murdered for faith in Christ: "How long O Lord holy and true, before you judge and avenge our murders from those still alive on earth?"

These Christian people are already in heaven, and they were still wanting the people who murdered them to face justice. That's not unforgiveness, that is expecting accountability for their actions, which is just and right.

### **Our choice**

When Steven was being stoned to death at the end of Acts 7, he asked the Lord not to hold those who killed him accountable for that sin. When Jesus was on the cross He asked the Father not to hold the men who crucified Him responsible, for they didn't realize what was truly happening.

There may be some you asking the same thing - Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. But there may be others like Alexander the Coppersmith where you like Paul or the martyrs in heaven: The Lord will deal with them according to what they've done or asking how long until He judges them.

Either way you choose, you still must make the decision to forgive. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." "As you stand praying, forgive, if you hold something against anyone." (Luke 11:4, Mark 11:25-26) That's their guilt, but it doesn't resolve the injury. Some people we want God to deal with them about the injury they inflicted on us and their guilt before Him.

Make the decision to forgive. But it may take years, decades, to work through the injury they caused. Your emotions are hurting due to what they did. Being angry or feeling hurt is not a sign you haven't forgiven, because forgiveness is a decision.

### **This is how you work through it**

I was 3 months away from 12 years old when my dad sat we 4 kids down and told us he and mom were getting a divorce. Not knowing what that meant, my 5 year old sister said she didn't understand. He said: "I'm divorcing your mom, and I'm divorcing you kids. I won't be here for Christmas or holidays or birthdays or ball games or school events." He wasn't trying to be mean, but in 1969 and in our world, none of us knew anyone who was divorced. He was just direct.

I was the oldest at almost 12, then we were 10, 7, and 5, and I had seen a growing distance between them for the last year or so, but didn't know what it meant. Dad as it turned out, married a woman with 2 children of her own, with the condition he would raise her two as his own, having nothing to do with his own 4 children. He kept his word to her for the most part.

My next youngest brother and I kept track of the broken promises up to about 23 before we lost count: "Be ready after school I'll come by and take you for some ice cream" or "Look for me, I'll be at your ball game today" and such. He didn't keep a single promise.

I am thankful to my heavenly Father for He provided several fathers of friends my age who included me in their family events. But I was searching for a father that whole time. With the divorce I dropped out of everything I was in ages 12-16. I dropped out of art class, swimming, Boy Scouts, SCUBA lessons, flying lessons, flunked the first semester of 9th grade algebra - I just didn't care. When I believed on the Lord at age 16 and got to know Him and the Father, my apathy towards school and life disappeared in an instant.

By the time I could drive dad had a rule. The rule was when we'd meet to talk of college and to talk through the divorce, I could only meet him secretly at his office. I had to park in back and come in the back employee entrance.

He would start and end every meeting saying this: "Remember, \_\_\_\_\_ (his wife) must never know about this meeting. If she ever finds out I will deny it, so this is between us." I shared the Lord with him nearly every meeting, but he had a response for why he didn't believe.

That's a horrible burden to put on a 16 year old, meeting dad in secret, but the Father helped me. Even with those conditions, I made the decision to forgive my dad for everything when I was 16. I watched mom struggle to pay the bills. I watched our priest discreetly give her cash or quietly pay our utility bills now and then. But I would bring my thoughts and emotions back to my decision.

### **How I worked through the emotions**

Between the time he left when I was almost 12, and the time I believed on the Lord, was 4 years or at that point, 1/3 to 1/4 of my young life. To me, dad had been a great dad. He taught me how to shake hands, how to polish my shoes, how to handle money (what little there was for a kid in the 1960's), about manners when a guest in someone's home, and how to talk to adults.

He was grooming me to either take over the family business or be a success in business. He also taught me to sail, entrusting me at age 8 with a Sunfish (small sailboat) way out on the lake where our summer cottage was. He taught me to handle a pocket knife, how to handle basic tools and such. He taught me that if you borrow something you always return it in at least as good a shape as you received it. He taught me to leave a campsite or motel room as good or better than when you than you found it. When we were camping and it was time to go home, he trained me to walk the whole camp site picking up trash, even if it wasn't ours - leave it in better condition than when you found it. I live by that to this day.

### **To me he was a great dad who threw it all away.**

I didn't understand adult issues back then, so once I made the decision to forgive, the Father God would bring to remembrance childhood events, good or bad, and with each one I knew to say "I forgive". Either for the hurt he caused by excessive punishment, or for the loss of the good times like I described above: "I forgive."

Working through all those emotions went on for 10 years. I would have a quiet moment and a memory would surface: "I forgive". Sometimes one of my siblings would bring up an incident from their memory, and the old anger would surface in me. After agreeing with my sibling from being all stirred up, I would calm down, return to my initial decision to forgive, and though I didn't feel like it, mumbled out loud: "I forgive."

**When I was 26, married with 2 boys and 1 on the way...**

The final thing I was still angry about surfaced. I was angry my teen years with dad were missing. They could never be returned to me. He stole those years by his decision. I was angry.

I remember distinctly the moment I came to peace with it. I was in our house, watching the kids and the dog and my wife who was fixing dinner as I picked up around the house, and realized I had a good life and things my dad chose to give up - a great family who loved each other and was in the Lord. And I was suddenly okay and at peace with my missing teenage years.

It felt like a load was lifted off my emotions. All the memories remained, but none of the pain. I've learned that's how I know, and anyone reading this can know that they are healed - the memories remain but there is no longer any pain associated with them.

The next thing that happened shocked me. Immediately upon this revelation the Father broke into my thoughts and said: "Call your dad and ask him to forgive you." I was shocked. I knew I had said and even written things to him as a teen, as any angry teen might do. But I hadn't talked to him in 6 years. He didn't want contact with us and I honored his wishes. But I made that call:

"Hey dad, this is John, how are you doing?" "Fine." "Dad, I need to ask you to forgive me for anything I have said or done to you." (Silence for several seconds) "Dad. Do you?" (Short silence.) "Very well." "You do! Thank you! Hope you and \_\_\_\_ have a Merry Christmas." "Very well." "Bye dad." (Click) That was the conversation as best as I can remember it. He said 'Very well' 2 or 3 times and that's all he said. But it was enough.

I had completed the loop so to speak. I made the decision to forgive. Additionally, I had asked the Father to forgive him for the divorce as it related to me (that is within my authority, but it is not in my authority to ask on behalf of my siblings, that is their choice). And I had done what I could to make it right horizontally for any trespass I had committed against him.

**Though we haven't talked in decades,**

My dad could call me today and we would start clean and fresh without a single hint of any anger or resentment in my heart - in my heart we are back to that simple father-son relationship we had when I was 8 or 10.

That's how I worked through the forgiveness process. It took 10 years of each memory that came up being brought back to my original decision as a 16 year old to forgive, but I did it. Very often Christians think it is the devil bringing up old memories to torment them.

And that can be the case, but in my experience, if you will look for it, you'll find that very often it is actually the Father God bringing these memories to you so you can bring those emotions and that injustice you feel, captive to the obedience of Christ. Bringing them back to your original decision to forgive.

And that's how it works...hope this has been a blessing. New subject next week. Until then, blessings,  
John Fenn

<http://www.cwowi.org> and email me at [cwowi@aol.com](mailto:cwowi@aol.com)