

## Jesus is Lord of All

The truth that Jesus Christ is Lord of all was paramount to the understanding of the gospel to the early church and should be to all Christians. The truth of Jesus' Lordship should not only be in our minds but also in our hearts so that it inspires in us faith, not only to believe that all things are possible with God, but also that everything ultimately is under the control of our Lord Jesus. This was so fundamental to the early apostles in their preaching and their letters, being so aware that the Jesus who died was alive again, prompting Paul, the apostle, to write in Romans, chapter 14, *"For whether we live, we live unto the **Lord**; and whether we die, we die unto the **Lord**: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the **Lord's**. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be **Lord** both of the dead and living"*. We see how often in these two verses we have the 'Lord' and the ultimate glorious fact that whether we live or die we belong to Him. *"Nothing shall separate us from the love of God in **Christ Jesus our Lord**"*. This is all so fundamental to the Christian gospel which declares the gift of eternal life to all who will receive the risen Lord Jesus.

The scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, confirm this truth and in doing so fit wonderfully together, giving us an understanding which will work very practically in our lives. The Lord Jesus would very much want every member of His church to know the truth and reality of His Lordship, and the experience of the writer is that a number of prophecies have been heard with this message over many years, as God speaks to His church to impart the word of truth to them.

The great prophecy in the New Testament is the book of the Revelation which emphasises the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Just two phrases from the first chapter are enough to make it very clear. *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty": and "I am he that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death"*, and confirm to the churches, indeed all churches, that their Saviour whom they serve is THE LORD.

'Understanding' is mentioned above, it is the development of 'knowing' which enables a person to use what they know practically in their lives. We shall see by turning to Isaiah 43 that God wants us to understand Him; firstly we recognise that, even for Israel, the desire of the Lord, - Jehovah to them, now Father to us, - was for them to know that He is the Lord. They were to know that there is no one else and there is no other God before Him. Here is the passage from Isaiah 43 which makes it all very clear, it is a real declaration from God saying 'He is God' and shows a real resolve and determination in the words, with the desire that those who know should be sure.

*"Ye are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may **know** and **believe** me, and **understand** that I am He: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, says the Lord, that I am God"*.

The whole history of Israel was that their God was the Lord and the Lord was God. From the time of Moses, the God of Israel, indeed the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was Jehovah. 'Jehovah' comes from three parts of the verb 'to be' in Hebrew, showing He that is and was and is to come; the eternal one. Israel was familiar with the Lord being, for example Jehovah Jireh, 'the Lord will provide', as aspects of His name and nature worked for the nation. Their whole history was around

the Lord, Jehovah, being involved in the life of the nation and working always on their behalf. The experts call these names 'Jehovah Titles'.

Probably the most familiar of these names is 'Jehovah Rohi', 'The Lord is my Shepherd', from Psalm 23. David, the psalmist, declares it is the Lord, He that is and was and is to come, who is **my** shepherd. It is a wonderful thought, and of course Jesus is the Great Shepherd, the Good Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. The Lord Jesus is our shepherd as one risen from the dead. We will return to Psalm 23 later but will firstly confirm some of the other Jehovah names to show how Israel understood the operation of 'Jehovah' in every part of their lives. Interestingly, the first mention in the time of Moses is 'Jehovah Ropheka', 'I am the Lord that heals you'. God was to put none of the diseases of Egypt on the children of Israel if they obeyed Him. He was their healer, the one that made them whole, and this was ultimately fulfilled when Jesus came as the 'apostle of God' to Israel and 'healed them all'. Jesus brought such a revelation of healing to Israel and such deliverance to a troubled people. This was to demonstrate that God is the 'Lord that heals them' and overcame the many years of decline as a nation because of their sin, rebellion and disobedience. Many were sick and demonically troubled, even the children, and Jesus comes and heals them. *"I am the Lord that heals you"*. Now Jesus is risen from the dead, how much more should 'I am the Lord that heals you' apply to the church of Jesus Christ? How much do the people of God know Jehovah Ropheka in their lives today?

We find 'Jehovah Nissi', 'the Lord is my Banner'. When Israel fought the Amalekites they were victorious in the battle. Israel had fought under God's banner and in doing so had been the victors. Moses' hands had been held up to intercede for the people so that they were under God's banner. God fought for them as He will for all His people, His church, if we will fight our spiritual battles under His banner and therefore authority. Are the failures of the church in modern times due to the fact that we no longer fight our battles under the banner of the Lord, and do not use our weapons which are 'mighty through God' but fight as those who 'beat the air'? Jesus of course intercedes for His church at the right hand of God, so that we always can fight under His banner, and as He lives after the power of an endless life He does not need His hands held up; so victory is always available for the people of God.

We can, however, go back to the time of Abraham and, as we have mentioned above as our example, find 'Jehovah Jireh,' 'the Lord will provide'. This is when God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac being the offering Abraham was to make. This points us to the Lord providing our Lord Jesus as the sacrifice for our sins. 'Jehovah Jireh'; the Lord will provide in all things.

Just using these examples we see therefore how totally implicated and involved 'the Lord' was in the life of Israel. He was 'Jehovah Elohekunu' 'The Lord our God', and 'Jehovah Tiedkeenu'

'The Lord our righteousness', among many other things and, perhaps wonderfully too, 'Jehovah Shalom', 'The Lord is our peace'.

We return to Isaiah 43 and see that Israel, and now the church, are to be witnesses of this truth, and indeed when Israel followed the Lord it was seen how the Lord fought for them and all the other nations knew that God was on their side. This was the witness God intended, so that all other nations knew He was the Lord. He was their God and their righteousness and provided for all their needs even though they were the 'least nation' on the earth. The same applies now for the church in its testimony of the Lord Jesus; we read in Ephesians 3, *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"*.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, in his message to the people says, "We are witnesses", fulfilling this prophecy of Isaiah 43, and they were indeed witnesses to the Lordship of Jesus Christ which was as a result of His resurrection and return to His Father in heaven. Peter says, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both **Lord and Christ**".* 'Assuredly' means 'to be sure of'; so this is a very sure thing, not fantasy or imagination but real fact. They were witnesses of the real truth that Jesus is the Lord and Christ and it is God who has made Him so. Jesus did not take this position upon Himself but *"God has highly exalted Him and given Him a Name above every name".* *"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand".* We must remember that Peter was only speaking to Jews with his message on the day of Pentecost, the time the gospel would come to the Gentiles would be a little later. Such a declaration to them has huge significance. This Jesus is the Lord. It connects Him totally into their history and the Lord they have always known: to Jehovah. It also connects the Lord Jesus as the Christ for them. The nation had an expectation that 'Messiah' would come, the 'longed for one', to deliver them from their slavery. 'Christ' is the Greek, 'Messiah' is the Hebrew, and both mean the 'anointed one'. So this Jesus is the Lord but He is also the Messiah. This is of huge significance to the hearers. This Messiah though is not the earthly saviour they were expecting, but a heavenly one. One seated on the throne of heaven to save them from their sins and give them eternal life. He is not a Messiah seated on the throne of Jerusalem, but King of Kings and Lord of Lords sitting in the New Jerusalem. Jesus said *"My kingdom is not of this world"*. Many people, even Christians, look for some kingdom on the earth but that is just natural and temporal. Even in the Old Testament those of faith looked for something eternal; for 'a city whose maker and builder was God'. All the hopes and desires of Israel are truly fulfilled in the making of Jesus Lord and Christ, their Lord is now their Messiah. "What to do?" they ask. The answer, *"Repent, be baptised for the remission of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"*. The anointing that is on Jesus will come to you and you will enter His kingdom, you will receive eternal life. How exciting this all is from God's point of view. *"The stone the builders rejected has become the head of the corner and it is marvellous in our eyes"*. The 'our' is the Father and Son, they rejoice together, but it is wonderful for us too as we have a Saviour who is Lord of all.

We see therefore that the will of God is that they/we should **'know, believe and understand'** in order to be those witnesses. The order in Isaiah is correct; God always gets things right and is wonderfully accurate in the things He says, and has ensured the scriptures accurately reflect His will. The truth is that we are to believe that which we know and then move on to understanding. God always wants us to be sure with our believing, which is why Peter, as we have seen above, says "Let the House of Israel know **'for sure'** that Jesus is risen from the dead". There was such assurance in His preaching it convinced the listeners; they did not question what Peter said but only asked what they should do. They knew what he said was true and therefore were able to believe. So much is misunderstood about faith, as if God really wants us to believe something which we do not know. Many people in the world believe in that which they do not know, but for the Christian things are so much *better*. *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence for things not seen"*; it is solid ground. Abraham is declared as the 'father of faith' and when he believed God it was 'reckoned to him for righteousness'. But Abraham only believed what God told Him, there was a clear imparting of knowledge from God. "I will do this for you"; it was a promise from God, but such was the clarity and authority in the word spoken to Abraham he was fully persuaded of what God had said and was therefore 'strong in faith, giving glory to God'. What God had said bore witness

and provided evidence in Abraham, at that time Abram; it spoke to his heart as so relevant to his need. He knew that God knew the desires of his heart; that was the reason for their communication and why he then knew God had spoken and would do that which He had promised. It is always like that when God really speaks to His people, he speaks to our needs, to our desires, in such a way that we know that 'He understands'. 'Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God', and for those who hear God, we know that when God speaks we have evidence in our hearts and therefore the knowledge on which we can believe on Him and what He says. Then when faith works, when we see the reality of what God has said being outworked, we understand God and know that He is the Lord; so knowledge first and then believing, and then understanding; it is solid ground. Praise God.

Psalms 23 helps us to see how this worked out for David and perhaps will add to our understanding. We see his opening statement; *"Jehovah Rohi", "The Lord is my Shepherd"*: actual fact, not 'might be' or 'I think He may be' or 'He could become', but the "Lord IS my Shepherd". *"I shall not want"* is a declaration of the faith based on that knowledge, because it is pretty obvious that if the 'Lord' (Jehovah) is my shepherd I cannot possibly lack anything. We find then 'Jehovah Jireh', 'the Lord will provide' and see how one part of God's character flows into another. *"He makes me to lie down in green pastures and leads me by still waters"*. There is just one God and when we find He is our shepherd we find 'a provider'. We next come to *"He restores my soul"*; the tense of the verb shows us that it is happening now and will continue to do so in the future. So this statement declares both knowledge, as the restoration is being experienced now, and faith that it will continue to be so in the future. How does this happen? *"He leads me in paths of righteousness"*, which is knowledge, and the subsequent understanding, for *"His Name's sake"*. Walking, having our habitual direction of life, in righteousness will always be restorative. It is the outworking of 'Jehovah Tiedkeenu', 'the Lord our righteousness' in a life, making everything right with God and aligned with His will and nature. Paul writes to the Corinthians. *"Be you reconciled to God"*; it is the same thing when every part of our lives becomes conformed to Him. We are to be changed into His likeness 'from glory to glory'. But then David says *"For His name's sake"*. This is quite an insight for David; it is for His sake, not mine, His cause not mine, maybe even for His glory and definitely not mine. For us all to get this understanding is very helpful, so many Christians' lives revolve round themselves and are only interested in what they can get out of God. To realise this is for 'Jesus' sake' totally changes the direction of our lives. This is faith in the workings of God in His life, which comes from the understanding; it is for 'His sake'. When our lives are rightly related to God and live 'for His sake' our souls will be restored. It applied to David and will apply to any of us who walk in a right relationship with God; it is the most restorative input into our lives. We continue in Psalm 23 and note that faith rises even further in David's heart with the statement, *"Even if I go through the valley of the shadow of death there is no need to fear as the Lord will be with me and I will be comforted by His authority and correction"*. This in many ways marries up with our quotation from the book of Romans chapter 14 right at the start of this teaching, *"Whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord's"*. It is a real statement of faith and abandonment of David's life to the will of God.

Our next phrase is *"He spreads a table for me in the middle of my enemies"*; this takes us to 'Jehovah Jireh' and 'Jehovah Nissi', as we see David's understanding of God's ability to provide spiritual food however great the attack of 'the enemy' in his life, and leads us to the final and the wonderful understanding, as an outcome of the knowledge and faith; *"Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will live in the house of the Lord for ever"*. We have certainty here; **'surely** goodness and mercy will follow me'; it is so reassuring; perhaps David had also found

'Jehovah Shalom'. We see how things develop when we come to 'know, believe and understand', and how we progress to a place of rest in God, understanding that He is the Lord, and will forever meet our needs both in this life and that which is to come.

We have looked at Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost and seen how those early Christians knew the Lord in their lives, it had come by revelation; they all knew, that Jesus was Lord; the revelation had come by the Holy Spirit poured out on them from the place of authority where Jesus reigns at the right hand of His Father. Jesus had said to His disciples when teaching them about the coming of the Holy Spirit;

*"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you".* He had told them "I will send you another comforter" and *"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth".*

This comforter is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth; He, for the Holy Spirit is a person, is the third part of the trinity of Almighty God who can tell no lies and speaks just pure truth. That is what the disciples experienced on the day of Pentecost; they knew the word of truth. How wonderful to have total truth in a world full of lies and lying: half-truths are in fact lies.

Jesus says in that day you will **know**; their knowledge was to be that 'He was in the Father'. They were to know He was Lord, it was vital for their whole work from that point onwards. They did know, they preached it; they were witnesses and that which God had promised through the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled in them. They **would**, and then did, know that He is God and beside Him there is no other God; it had all been fulfilled in them. That should, indeed must, be the testimony of all who receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

We have a God, therefore, who is able to make us to **know**, and so very much wants us to know, His Lordship. We read in John chapter 17 of Jesus' great prayer, praying for His disciples and then for His whole church. He really sets out what He is seeking for us, and this is a knowledge of God; *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent".* Psalm 115 says, *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusts in them".* This is the declaration that we really have a God who is alive and who can speak to us, in comparison to all other gods who cannot communicate, and is illustrated so well when Elijah mocks the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. Their God neither hears them nor answers them whereas the living God is the God that 'answers by fire'.

We saw earlier that this knowledge comes by revelation and it is the Holy Spirit who imparts that knowledge to us. Paul, the apostle, prays for the Ephesian church, *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him".* Part of this whole revelation, please read the whole chapter, is to know that 'Jesus is in the Father' and therefore Lord; it is for all Christians. The Holy Spirit convinces the world of righteousness because Jesus has gone to be with His Father, and of sin as they have not believed on the Lord Jesus, as the 'sent one', to establish that righteousness. Jesus' position before God and in God is that which establishes righteousness for all God's people. *"He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification".*

One of the great themes, if not the greatest, running through the book of Hebrews is that Jesus is Lord. The book is written to encourage the early Jewish believers to stay firm in their faith, and to achieve this aim it sets out to establish the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah. We referred to that earlier as the basis of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, and the huge significance in the message that Jesus has been made **Lord** and **Christ**. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews uses a variety of Old Testament prophecies to establish this truth and leads to a summary in chapter 8. *"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"*. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest in the heavens, the 'anointed one' ever living to make intercession for us before God. Jesus' anointing enables Him to fulfil the role as the High Priest in the same way that He was able to fulfil the role as 'apostle' when on the earth. In Chapter 3 verse 1 of 'Hebrews' we are exhorted to consider *the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession Christ Jesus"*; Jesus anointed to serve in both these offices. The first anointing, for his earthly ministry, was when the dove descended on Him at His water baptism, and this anointing is in heaven for His heavenly ministry. The first chapter of Hebrews very much sets out the truth with reference to these Old Testament prophecies. *"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, and again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son"* and *"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom"*. *"Because you have loved righteousness more than iniquity God, even your God, has **anointed** you with the oil of gladness above your fellows"*.

'Begotten' refers to the resurrected Lord Jesus, Jesus being begotten, or made alive, from the dead. We read in the first chapter of the letter to the Colossians; *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence"*. Further, Jesus' throne/authority is established for ever as He is God: *"Your throne O God is for ever"*. This quotation declares the eternal nature of the Son of God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, restored in heaven as an equal part of the trinity. We have already examined 'the anointing' which makes Jesus the 'Christ' to fulfil, as we have said, His role as the High Priest in heaven; *"To appear in heaven for us"*.

The apostle John in his letter says, *"There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father and the Word and the Holy Ghost and these three are one"*. Also *"There are also three which bear witness on the earth, the water, the Spirit and the blood"*. We know from the Judaic law that matters are always established, as far as God is concerned, in the mouth of two or three witnesses; so we find three witnesses on earth and three witnesses in heaven. We note the Holy Spirit is therefore witness in both earth and in heaven and fulfils that role in our hearts, bringing the truth of what He witnesses in heaven to our hearts when we are filled with the Spirit of God. As we have said, that is why the apostles had such knowledge on the day of Pentecost and why they preached with such assurance, and this applies to all who truly receive the Lord Jesus. *"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself"*. This all continues to show us how God's will, expressed in Isaiah 43, works in the hearts of all true believers, who then take on the role, *"You are my witnesses"*.

The quotation from Psalm 45 mentions a 'sceptre'. It is a ceremonial rod which is a symbol of authority and in the prophetic psalm represents Jesus' authority in the Kingdom of God. It is Jesus' kingdom and not only does His righteousness give Him the authority to operate as Lord, but also gives Him the right to give salvation, healing and deliverance to all who will believe on His Name and receive Him. *"Your sins are forgiven you"*. Therefore we see Jesus' Lordship is the very basis of all

that is taught in the New Testament and the source of all that is available to the Christian, for the church of Jesus Christ, in the 'New Covenant'.

In the same way that Peter preached Jesus as Lord, so Paul the apostle, in his letter to the Corinthians, says, *"We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and we are your servants for Jesus' sake"*. Paul in his letters comes back time and time again to 'through Jesus Christ our Lord', or similar phrasing using the same words. This is particularly obvious in the book of Romans and in particular the final verses of chapters 4,5,6,7 and 8. Paul had never been to Rome to preach directly to the church there, so his imperative in the letter, possibly the clearest and fullest outline of the gospel in the New Testament, is to make it very clear what the gospel really declares. In chapter 1 we read, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith"*. The same gospel is to both Jew and Gentile as Jesus is Lord of all.

So we will look at the verses in these chapters to make clear to **us** what the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ provides for all God's people.

Chapter 4:

*"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up **Jesus our Lord** from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"*.

This tells us how God reckons/ imputes the 'righteousness of God' to us by faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness, right standing, is reckoned to us when we believe in **Jesus our Lord**. Romans chapter 10 tells us, "If we confess with our mouth the **Lord Jesus** and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead we shall be saved". It is the confession of Jesus' Lordship, knowing He has been raised declaring He has all authority, in particular power over death and sin, giving him the right to forgive our sins. Jesus becomes our Lord; He must do, as we submit His judgement on our lives to Him and become subject to His mercy and love and the righteousness He has obtained for us. *"Those who are forgiven much the same love much"*. Surely, this must be the testimony of the true Christian; there cannot be any superficial experience here, but a deep repentance before God, recognising our need, so that He can remove the nature of sin from our hearts. Putting it this way may aid our understanding. The meaning of the word to 'impute' is to reckon or calculate; it is the word used by accountants or mathematicians when doing their calculations. It is as if God gets His 'spiritual calculator' and counts up what Jesus has done and then counts that out to us. Is it enough? Of course, we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ; it is more than enough. Having conquered all things, Jesus is supreme. Believing in 'the supreme, eternal one' He becomes our Lord and Saviour and we find ourselves made free from the laws of sin and death. We are justified by His grace, God having reckoned/counted out the righteousness of God to us.

Chapter 5: *"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by **Jesus Christ our Lord**"*.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is all of grace. It is not of 'works', and so prevents anyone boasting, or saying that they have played some part in their own salvation. *"By **grace** you are saved, through faith and it is not of yourselves, it is **not of works**, lest any man should **boast**. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works"*. Now we find, rather than 'dead works' which were the fruit of our lives when we were in sin, 'good works' abound in us; it is all the outworking of God's grace. Rather than sin being the dominant factor, grace becomes the ruling

factor in our lives. This is only possible through the Lordship of our Lord Jesus and only when we are under His command. One could say, "Grace reigns in our lives when the 'Gracious One' is our Lord".

Chapter 6: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through **Jesus Christ our Lord**".*

This statement very much continues the words of chapter 5. The life in our lives here is 'eternal life'; it is God's gift to give, and all of grace as we have seen. Again it comes through our **Lord Jesus Christ**. Jesus having been raised from the dead must have eternal life; He is to die no more. We read in the same chapter, *"In that He died, He died unto sin **once**, but in that He lives, He lives unto God"*. So, Jesus has eternal life and when we receive Him that life comes to us; *"He who has the Son has life"*. The payback from our previous sinful life was death, spiritual death, eternal death, but now we have eternal life. As we have seen, our salvation is not of works, it is of grace. Therefore as there are no works there can be no wages, what we have instead is a gift and that gift is everlasting life. *"Whosoever believes on Him has everlasting life"*.

Chapter 6 also has a very helpful verse: *"Likewise **reckon** you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God **through Jesus Christ our Lord**".* We are now to do the 'reckoning'. This time we get out our 'spiritual calculator of faith' and, knowing that Jesus has died for us, we reckon His death to us; we believe on Him. We reckon that if He died, we died with Him. We then re-calculate on the basis that He is raised from the dead. We were raised up together with Him in His resurrection. *"For if we have been planted in the likeness of His death we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection"*. Therefore we can reckon, or count, ourselves alive into God through our **Lord Jesus Christ**; we therefore live unto God just as Jesus lived unto God. We are in Him and He is in us; He is our life and that life will lead us to live unto God; Jesus' life will always lead us in that direction.

Chapter 7: *"I thank God through **Jesus Christ our Lord**".*

This statement comes at the end of the passage in which Paul laments his natural state. *"I know that in me, that is my flesh, dwells no good thing"*. Paul had discovered that, even though he had lived a blameless life according to the law, his own heart was full of covetousness and he could not overcome this state of his own heart and nature. He could not 'sort himself out' and found he wanted/lusted after that which he did not have, and this showed him his 'wretchedness' before God. He realised the life he lived in this covetousness was a 'spiritual death'; he was trapped within a body in which sin reigned and the *"wages of sin is death"*. Paul's cry was one of anguish *"Who will deliver me from the body of this death?"* His sinful nature prevented him 'doing the things he wanted to do and made him do the things he did not want to do'. *"How do I get out of this?" "Thanks be to God through our **Lord Jesus Christ**".* There is a way out and it is through Jesus, through Jesus' death and resurrection, and Paul gives thanks; he rejoices at the possibility of victory when a different 'Lord' is working in Him. Then God would be working in his life 'both to will and to do of His good pleasure'. Paul goes on to write, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not*

*after the flesh, but after the Spirit*". It is a long section of the letter and please read it over to yourself, but in essence it says, 'There is no more judgement; there is a new spiritual law operating in me'. This new law, 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the old spiritual law which once operated in me'.

'I am a new creation', spiritually made new; this is regeneration, new birth, reconciliation, full salvation which ever phrase you want to use. Here the righteousness of the law is outworked in our lives as we 'walk not in the flesh but after the spirit', allowing the new spiritual law to operate in us. It is all to the glory of God who has provided such a salvation through Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8: *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"*.

This is the ultimate declaration of joy in many ways; 'nothing shall separate us from the love of God'. It is 'Jehovah Rohi, Nissi, Shalom' and all the other Jehovah Titles rolled into one. It is the fulfilment of the love of God expressed through our **Lord Jesus** in that *"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life"*. That love is poured into our hearts when we receive the Holy Spirit and keeps and preserves us, not only in this life but also in that which is to come. This love only comes through our **Lord Jesus Christ** and because He is Lord the love is unbreakable, being sustained through His authority. No one has, or ever will have, any greater or higher authority than Jesus our Lord and therefore nothing, absolutely nothing, shall separate us from that wonderful eternal love. No! Not in this world or that which is to come. Hallelujah.

The reason **for knowing, believing and understanding** that **Jesus is the Lord** of all should now be entirely clear. It was to the Apostle Paul and it led him to the total persuasion that nothing would separate him from such love from His **Lord and Saviour**. He understood the eternal love of God; he also understood righteousness being reckoned to Him. He understood that He could reckon himself dead to sin but alive to God; He rejoiced in the victory which was his in **Jesus Christ his Lord** and understood how the grace of God ruled in his life in every circumstance. He was free and living unto God and discovering the extent of 'By grace are you saved'. This understanding applied whether in prison or not, whether in a shipwreck or not, whether asleep or awake; it applied in **life** and in **death**. This is the 'Normal Christian Life' lived under the authority of, and by grace of, our **Lord Jesus Christ**.

One final thought. *"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, No; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, what says my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou stand is holy. And Joshua did so"*.

This describes Joshua's encounter with the 'Captain of the Lord's Host', who is considered to be the Lord Jesus, in a pre-incarnate form. This encounter takes place after the children of Israel have come through the river Jordon into the 'Promised Land' but before they set off in their battles to possess their inheritance. Joshua meets the captain of the host of the **Lord**. Joshua was to lead the people in to the land; but here was the real captain, the one who had actually made a way through the river

Jordan and would fight all their future battles: 'Jehovah Nissi'. Dare we say He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the one with the real power to win the battles for Israel because He **is** the Lord? It was deemed essential for Joshua to know where the real power and authority came from before he went into battle and so it should be for us, before we engage in moving on with God and going through any spiritual battles or warfare. We must see the one who has brought us from death into life and is **Lord**; He is our **Lord Jesus Christ**. *"We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour"*. Joshua fell on His face; there was no command not to do so, therefore we can consider this encounter really was with God. Joshua, this Joshua who had been 'magnified in the sight of the people' as a result of leading them through the river Jordan, prostrate before God. It is the place where we all must come, and however much we are blessed we must recognise the one from whom the blessing comes. We must know the **Lord**. *"This is holy ground"*, so it is for us when we encounter God like this; when we know and believe and understand He is the **Lord**. It is a sacred place, one of total submission to this wonderful authority but, at the same time, an awareness that an overcoming life is possible through our **Lord Jesus Christ**. It is a place of joy and peace and yet 'awe and wonder' that the Jesus born as a baby, and who lived and died and rose again, is **Lord of all**. Such an encounter is life changing, it has to be, and the more we know and believe and understand of Jesus' Lordship and authority the better we shall be able to serve and follow Him, knowing all things are possible with Him. We will know too that He is coming again. We must know that if He is **Lord** He must return, and on that day every knee will bow, in heaven, in earth or under the earth, and every tongue will confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord** to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

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