

Lucan: It's time to begin; Bro. David, will you please offer the opening prayer?

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We thank you for the many blessings you have given to us this week. We thank you that, because we know You and Your Son, we are aware of, and may rejoice in, these blessings. We thank you for the guidance of your Spirit, shedding greater and brighter light unto the perfect day, and for the indwelling of that Spirit that leads us to walk according to that light. Bless this sacred time, and the fellowship of your People, as we ask it in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Daphna: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Adriel7777: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Elyna1: Amen

Lucan: Our study tonight is called "The Mark of Character," and this is the opening passage:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:1-3)

There are several things of note in this passage, any one of which might warrant a study all its own. We read that it was Yahweh who spoke both through the prophets and through His Son. We read that Yahshua was appointed heir of all things, and was the one through whom the Father made the worlds. We read that Yahshua purged our sins by means of Himself, being both High Priest and sacrifice, before resuming His place of authority beside the Father.

What we will be looking at tonight, however, is that portion which describes the Son as "the brightness of His glory" – that being the Father's glory – "and the express image of His person." These things are important to us individually and as a people, for we "walk even as He walked," and that walk is the very essence of how Yahweh's "glory" and "express image" are revealed:

"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou

[then], Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:7-10)(LMK)

Zahakiel: Finished

Pastor Chick: F

Daphna: F

Elyna1: F

Marie-kadeth: F

Adriel7777: f

Barb: F

Lucan: How is it that "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father?" Yahshua tells us in the very next verse; "the words that I speak," and "the Father doeth the works."

Yahshua spoke this to both disciples and detractors:

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father [is] in me, and I in him." (John 10:37, 38)

We may note that Yahshua did not appeal to doctrinal orthodoxy, although His doctrine was pure. So far from doing this, we may read of His deliberate separation of those who were followers of the letter only, rather than the letter and the Spirit:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us [his] flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." (John 6:51-56)

And what was the result? "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard [this], said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? From that [time] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." (John 6:60, 66)

For many, the evidence of Yahshua's works was insufficient to remove their prejudice. His words, full of Spirit and life, were insufficient to overcome their unbelief. While many knew Christ "after the flesh," relatively few came away as believers compared to those whose expectations were disappointed. Even Phillip did not discern what it meant to be the "express image" of the Father, or in what way His "glory" was already being revealed.

Yahshua points us to His testimony and actions as the evidence of His unity with the Father, as these reveal something deeper than the expectations of the flesh.

"And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." (Exodus 33:17, 18)

We see that as far back as Moses, seeing the "brightness of His glory" was of supreme interest. And how did Yahweh fulfill this request?

"And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear [the guilty]; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth [generation]." (Exodus 34:5-7)

Many later prophets were blessed with visions of Yahweh, some of which were exceedingly awe-inspiring. Ezekiel describes a complexity of interactions that could only be described as a "wheel in the midst of a wheel." Isaiah saw a vision of majesty that lead him to realize his own unworthiness, exclaiming "I am undone!"

Yet to the one with whom Yahweh spoke "face to face" as with a friend, who He "knew by name," the revelation of His glory was not of might, or of intricacy, or of majesty. Instead it was of His character. Yahweh did not reveal His glory in flaming fires of vengeance, or the parting of the sea; Moses had seen all of this. Yahweh did not reveal His teaching or commands as His glory; Moses had received those instructions.

Instead, Yahweh revealed His glory by revealing to Moses who He is. This was the "glory" that Yahweh revealed to Moses, and the "brightness of His glory" as revealed in His Son, the living Word, the truest expression of His thought.

The phrase "express image" has similar meaning; we know that "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [him]." (John 1:18)

We also know that "God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

How, then, was Yahshua the "express image" of the Father? It is not that the physical form of Yahshua was in the same style as the Father, or particularly impressive to look on, for we read of Yahshua's appearance:

"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:2, 3)

The word for "express image" in Greek sheds light on this question; it comes from a single word: "Charakter."

As you might suppose, this is the origin of the English word "character." Notably, while "character" has come to mean traits, characteristics, and aspects of personality, the Greek word also means something of related significance: "mark, engraving."

It may speak of the instrument used for the marking or engraving, or the mark and engraving itself. Thus, while Yahshua is the "mark, the express image" of the Father, He is also the instrument, the means by which we ourselves are "marked" (Ezekiel 9), and "made in the image" of Yahshua, expressing His character as He expressed His Father's:

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate [to be] conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8:29)

And again: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new [man], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col. 3:9, 10)

The "express image" and "mark" of Yahweh in Yahshua, then, are matters of His "character" – quite literally, in terms of the Greek. The "glory" of Yahweh is similarly a matter of character – who one is as revealed in words and works.

The word for "mark" in Revelation comes from a related root word; whether the "mark of the beast" or the "express image" of the Father, our eternities are decided, and marks are received, based upon the character we develop. Those who have the Father in them speak His words and do His works; thus, the Father is in them, and they are in the Father. Those who have Satan in them speak his words and do his works; thus, the beast is in them, and they are in the beast. The glory of the Father and the shame of the beast are their characters, despite all fleshly appearances to the contrary. The glory of the Father is revealed in selfless sacrifice; the shame of the beast is revealed in self-serving power and oppression.

"For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to [answer] them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And [that] he died for all, that they which live should

not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we [him] no more." (2 Cor. 5:12, 14-16)

It is those who "glory in appearance, and not in heart" who judge after the flesh, and are yet dead. Christ was "known after the flesh" by many, yet received by few; "yet now henceforth know we him no more" after the flesh. Rather than being known by the personal bodily presence of Christ, which was of little benefit to most, He is known to us after the Spirit – after His "glory" and character.

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I [am] in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:19, 20)

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (John 16:7)

The Spirit of Christ brings a more intimate knowledge than physical presence, and having known Yahshua through His personal presence in the soul, we "henceforth know no man after the flesh;" we regard the person, the reputation, the glory of no man.

"Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17)

If any man be in Christ, all former things are gone; they are not worth regarding. If any man be not in Christ, he lives unto himself, and any "glory in appearance" can only be "in appearance, and not in heart;" for the heart is corrupt. When the old man is laid in the grave, the heart is made new; we may then glory in heart, and the appearance will follow.

"All things" (not some things, or most things) are become new, and of what nature are the new things?

"And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5:18-19)

All new things are of God; where, then, is the room for anything other than praise for what Yahweh has made us? If we are in Christ, "all things" are new, and "all things" are of God. Shall we speak of the things of God as though they are lacking, or insufficient for the thing they are created unto? "God forbid."

And what are we in "all things" created to do; what is our purpose for being remade?

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Good works; that is, the works of God, the works of the Father. "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." We reveal Christ as Christ revealed the Father.

Further, Yahweh "hath reconciled us unto Himself," and how? Through Christ; for Yahweh "was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." And having been reconciled to God through Christ, having been made new creatures in Christ, having "all things become new" in Christ unto good works, we are joint-heirs and co-laborers with Him. Having become such, Yahweh has given to us the "ministry of reconciliation;" that as we have been reconciled by His Word, that "word of reconciliation" is to reconcile others through us. As God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, so Christ is in us reconciling the world unto Himself:

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech [you] by us: we pray [you] in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:20-21)

As ambassadors for Christ, we plea for others to be reconciled; we do this "in Christ's stead," or, standing in the place of Christ Himself. The ministry that Christ ministered, we are to minister. The words that Christ spoke, we are to speak. The works that Christ worked, we are to work. And more than this:

"Believe me that I [am] in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:11, 12)

The reconciliation has been made; we who have received it, having been reconciled by Him "who knew no sin" being made sin for us, are ourselves "made the righteousness of God in Him." And what does it mean to be made the righteousness of God, save for His "glory," His "character," and His "image?"

"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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John 17:21-23)

It is the character of the Father that reveals His glory in His Son; it is the character of the Son that reveals His glory in us. Thus we are "made manifest" unto God, and "made manifest" to one another; we then are "made perfect in one," being made one even as the Father and Son are one.

None of these promises may take effect in one who is "living unto themselves," but instead "unto Him which died for them, and rose again." Life is easy living when self is dead; it is Christ that does the living in us, even as it was the Father that did the living in Christ. This can only be the case for those who are reconciled; this is the sure result of being reconciled. Is this your experience? If so, then "the ministry of reconciliation" is committed unto you towards others.

If not, then be converted; "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God; for He hath made Him to be sin for you, that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Either we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ, or we have not been reconciled to Him.

None who have been made in the image of Christ, receiving the Spirit of Christ, can ever bow to the image of the beast. None who have received the divine mold of Christ's "charakter" will receive the mark of the beast, for Christ has said:

"And he saith unto them, Whose [is] this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:20-21)

"Whose is this image?" Just as the coin, we are all being examined for the image and superscription we bear. If we are in Christ's image and character, we will render ourselves unto Christ; if we are in the world's image and character, we will render ourselves unto the world.

Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to Yah what is Yah's; "We ought to obey God rather than man." (Acts 5:29) Those who receive the Spirit of Christ in truth, not only in doctrine or appearance, cannot bow to the beast or its image, for they will of necessity be "one" with those of whom it is written:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Revelation 12:11)

As we reach out to gather such ones, let us reveal the glory which Christ has given us, the very character and spirit and unity of the Father and Son. As the Father revealed His "glory and express image" through Christ, Yahshua reveals His "glory and image" through us, "that the world may know" that He was sent of the Father. Let us not love our lives unto the death, nor live unto ourselves, but lay our lives down gladly for the sake of Him who "died for us, and rose again."

Having been crucified with Christ, let us bear the testimony of Christ: "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29)

Lastly, let us "overcome by the blood of the Lamb," knowing that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans 8:37)

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (1 John 4:4; John 16:33)

Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Adriel7777: Amen

Elyna1: Amen

Daphna: Amen. I understand this.

Lucan: If not, I'll ask Pastor to offer the closing prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in heaven, we are thankful to be made the righteousness of God in Your Son and then, the "express image" of Your Son. May Your Spirit accomplish the ministry of reconciliation through us who have been reconciled unto God. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Daphna: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Elyna1: Amen.

Peterson: Amen.

Adriel7777: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Piedad: Amen