

## GOD'S BREATH OF UNDERSTANDING

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### Setting the pattern

**Reading 1 - Genesis 2.7:** And the LORD <Y@hovah> God <'elohiym> formed <yatsar> man <'adam> of the dust <'aphar> of <min> the ground <'adamah>, and breathed <naphach> into his nostrils <'aph> the breath <n@shamah> of life <chay>; and man <'adam> became a living <chay> soul <nephesh>. (KJV Interlinear – Greek)

This is how God created man; male and female, in His own image and blessed him. Sadly, man chose to disobey God and therefore fell in sin. Being the ancestors of the entire human race, the sin and guilt of Adam and Eve was extended to their descendants: we are all brought forth in iniquity, and in sin we were conceived. There is no distinction or exception; all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!

As in some parts of the Bible, the words ‘understanding’, ‘intelligence’, ‘mind’ and ‘wisdom’ may be used interchangeably throughout this topic.

From Romans 12.2, we are commended to offer our bodies - that is our lives-, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God and this should be our *reasonable service*! Thus, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God is not necessarily opposed to a *spiritually-led reasonable service*.

In Isaiah 1.18, the Lord God invites us to “come now and reason together” with Him. In this reasoning with Him, He takes the first step and says to us: “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool”.

In this reasoning with man, the Lord God offers to the sinner His thoughts: “however dirty and desperate you see yourself, - however wicked others may have portrayed you, - whatever bad things you might have ever committed, - however serious has your rebellion against Me been, or – no matter how low you have ever fallen morally; I am both willing and ready to wash you and to forgive you! – This is the Good News.

**Now the question is:** how do you respond to such an offer?

Through His breath, the Lord God has granted us with understanding. In Job 32.8, we read:” But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding”. The Complete Jewish Bible, the Revised Standard Version and the Louis Segond version of the French Bible all read: “But *it is the spirit in a man*, the breath of the Almighty (Shaddai), that makes him understand”. This is the general understanding that is available to all.

However, because this understanding/ mind has been so corrupted by sin, it now needs to be restored or renewed; only then, can one begin to prove or discern God’s will; *what is good and acceptable and perfect* (See Romans 12.2). The mind that has been renewed can discern spiritual things. We read in I John 5.20: “we know that the Son of God has come and *has given us an understanding*, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life”.

Now, this renewal of understanding is neither acquired from any professor, nor is it by any encyclopaedia, Christian parents or church attendance, etc. It is primarily a gift from God and it deepens as one lives in obedience and submission to God. The Holy Spirit does the work in one’s heart that has been surrendered to Jesus-Christ! One is now a child of God!

For those who reject God's gift of salvation, the condemnation is that the *light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For anyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to light, lest his deeds should be exposed.* (See John 3.19-20)

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right (*exousia*) to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, **but of God.** – John 1.12- In this passage, right is translated from the Greek word *exousia*, that also means: ability, privilege, force, capacity, competency, freedom, mastery, delegated influence, authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right and strength.

There was a man called Blaise Pascal (1623-1662); he was one of the greatest philosophers and mathematicians. He is also the inventor of the calculator that was instrumental in creating the modern computer. Blaise Pascal has also been said to be the father of the modern theories of insurance through his work in the field of the mathematical theory of probability. Blaise Pascal declared:

*"And thereupon these wretched and lost beings, having looked around them and seen some pleasing objects, have given and attached themselves to them. For my own part, I have not been able to attach myself to them, and considering how strongly it appears that there is something else than what I see, I have examined whether this God has not left some sign of Himself [...] I see many contradictory religions, and consequently all false save one. Each wants to be believed on its own authority, and threatens unbelievers. I do not therefore believe them. Every one can say this; every one can call himself a prophet. But I see that Christian religion wherein prophecies are fulfilled; and that is what every one cannot do. And what crowns all this is prediction, so that it should not be said that it is chance which has done it"*.

To Blaise Pascal, it is also attributed the following thought: *"How can anyone lose who chooses to become a Christian? If, when he dies, there turns out to be no God and his faith was in vain, he has lost nothing – in fact, he has been happier in life than his nonbelieving friends. If however, there is a God and a heaven and hell, then he has gained heaven and his sceptical friends will have lost everything in hell"*

Humankind was especially created to fellowship with God his Creator. Unfortunately, he rather chose to disobey God and fell into sin. As a result, the entire human race has inherited the sinful nature and guilt. Thus, the original image of God was corrupted and the fellowship with God was broken.

Since then, humankind had been always trying but unsuccessfully to restore some dignity before God. We read in the Bible how Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. This is what I call a *manipulation in vitro*! Man was created to exercise his free will in obedience to God. He rather chose to rebel against God. Even today, man has still have the opportunity to exercise his free will and to turn to God, but he rather chooses rebellion while he is still blaming God for the consequences of his own actions.

There is no way man can possibly substitute God by anything else successfully and at the same time pretend to have peace; you do not create peace by separating yourself from its source. God is *Jehovah Shalom*!

A life *in vitro* (literally from Latin 'in glass'), in the context of humankind, is a life in an artificial environment, which is without God; this is what God meant by "the day that you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall surely die".

Sadly, this brings us to the biblical and undeniable truth: 'without God, man is dead'!

**Reading 2 – I Corinthians 15.22-23:** For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

After the fall of man, in Genesis 3.15, the Lord God foretold that “the Seed of the woman shall bruise” the head of the serpent.

- The Seed of the woman is the Son of God (Galatians 4.4)
- The serpent is the devil and Satan (Revelation 12.9)

The victory over the devil is also the victory over the power of sin and the opportunity to be reconciled to God and live a holy life through His Son Jesus Christ. “*The sting of death is sin*”!

- Jesus Christ was tempted in every way yet without committing sin
- After His baptism He faced the devil in the wilderness and defeated him
- He also conquered death

Since He has victory in all these three areas (the head of the devil), therefore to those who believe in Him, He has given the same power in these areas, by the shedding of His blood. By the blood of Jesus Christ, we are made more than conquerors! (See also Revelation 12.11).

The solution to the problem of sin is receiving Jesus Christ, because He has paid the full price for human race’s redemption. When dying on the cross for our sins, the Lord Jesus said: “*it is finished*”! or “*teleo*” (Gk), which means brought to an end, i.e. complete, executed, concluded, discharged (a debt):-- accomplished, ended, expired, filled up, finished, gone over, paid, performed. In finance, there is a difference between a transaction being settled and the one that is being *written off*. The latter means generally that the payment due has become irrecoverable; it is now called *bad debt* and then written off from the books. The all idea is that the debtor has become *insolvent the therefore unable to pay his debt*. To put things right (or *reconcile* the debtor’s account), the owner of the business will take a decision to write off the debt but has also an option to sue and bring the debtor to justice! Therefore, the matter is closed and the debtor is now free from any liability. This has the same effect as if a payment was made. In fact, the owner of business will have resolved this matter by not choosing to punish the debtor. The latter is fully acquitted and can now go free. The debt has been *written off* and it is all *finished*! We read in the Bible (John 19.30) that “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, *It is finished*: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost”! He did so to write off our sins !

This full price was required because of God’s both holiness and justice; an eternal and perfect God required an eternal and perfect sacrifice for an eternal and perfect salvation. This is what it cost the Creator to redeem His beloved creature and this shows how seriously God treats sin. (See John 3.16)

- For the redeemed soul: 2 births and 1 death/ rapture and eternal fellowship with God
- For the lost soul: 1 birth and 2 deaths / judgement and the lake of fire

In John 11.25-26, the Lord Jesus says: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die”.

**Now the right question:** Do you believe this?

**Reading 3 – Revelation 3.17-20,** the Lord is now saying to you: “ 'Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

## Conclusive thoughts

In the introduction to this topic, we read how the Lord God invites us to reason with Him, and offers to change our lives and make us to be new persons. If anyone is willing to surrender his life to God and respond responsibly to His offer, then I suggest that we pray together in reading *Psalm 51.7-17*:

“Purge (purify) me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart-These, O God, You will not despise”.

Now, if you seriously believe in your heart that God has provided (He is Jehovah Jireh) for your salvation, then could you please confess with your mouth and pray:

*“Lord Jesus Christ, I believe in my heart and I confess with my mouth that you died for my sins and that you rose again from the dead; I repent from my past life and I accept your forgiveness; I now receive you in my life, as both my personal Saviour and Lord. From now on, help me to live for you. Thank you for your faithfulness; In Jesus’ name. Amen!”*

If you want to know more about what you have just read or have any comments, please write to:

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