

Lord and come to His Paradise, and
make for yourself a garland from His tree.

Then put it on your head and be joyful,
and recline upon His rest,
for His glory will go before you.

And you shall receive of His kindness and of His grace;
and you shall be anointed in truth
with the praise of His holiness.

Praise and honor to His name.

Hallelujah.

ode 28

As the wings of doves over their nestlings,
and the mouths of their nestlings
towards their [mother's] mouths,
so also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart.

My heart continually refreshes itself and leaps for joy,
like the babe who leaps for joy in his mother's womb.

I trusted, consequently I was at rest;
because trustworthy is He in whom I trusted.

He has greatly blessed me, and my head is with Him.

And the dagger shall not divide me from Him, nor the sword;
because I am ready before destruction comes,
and have been set on.

His immortal side and immortal life embraced me, and kissed me.

And from that life is the Spirit which is within me;
and it cannot die because it is life.

Those who saw me were amazed, because I was persecuted.
And they thought that I had been swallowed up,
because I seemed to them as one of the lost.

But my injustice became my salvation;
and I became their nemesis,
because there was no jealousy in me,
for I continually did good to every man.

I was hated and they surrounded me like mad dogs,
those who in stupidity attack their masters
because their thought is depraved,
and their mind is perverted.

But I was carrying water in my right hand,
and their bitterness I endured by my sweetness.

And I did not perish, because I was not their brother,
nor was my birth like theirs.

And they sought my death but did not find it possible,
because I was older than their memory;
and in vain did they cast lots against me.

And those who were after me sought in vain to destroy
the memorial of Him who was before them.

Because the thought of the Most High
cannot be prepossessed;
and His heart is superior to all wisdom.

Hallelujah.

ode 29

The Lord is my hope, I shall not be ashamed of Him.

For according to His praise He made me,
and according to His grace even so He gave to me;
and according to His mercies He exalted me,
and according to His great honor He lifted me up.

And he caused me to ascend from the depths of Sheol,
and from the mouth of death He drew me.

And I humbled my enemies, and He justified me by His grace;
and He revealed to me His sign, and He led me by His light;
and He gave me the scepter of His power,

that I might subdue the devices of the people,
and humble the power of the mighty,
to make war by His Word, and to take victory by His power.

And the Lord overthrew my enemy by His Word,
and he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.

And I gave praise to the Most High,
because He has magnified His servant
and the son of His maidservant.

Hallelujah.

ode 31

Chasms vanished before the Lord,
and darkness dissipated before His appearance.

Error erred and perished on account of Him;
and contempt received no path,
for it was submerged by the truth of the Lord.

He opened His mouth and spoke grace and joy;
and recited a new chant to His name.

Then He lifted his voice towards the Most High, and
offered to Him those that had become sons through Him.

And His face was justified,
because thus His Holy Father had given to Him.

Come forth, you who have been afflicted, and receive joy;
and possess yourselves through grace,
and take unto you immortal life.

And they condemned me when I stood up,
me who had not been condemned.

Then they divided my spoil, though nothing was owed them;
but I endured and held my peace and was silent,
that I might not be disturbed by them.

But I stood undisturbed, I like a solid rock,
which is continuously pounded
by columns of waves and endures.

And I bore their bitterness because of humility;
that I might redeem my nation and instruct it;
and that I might not nullify the promises to the patriarchs,
to whom I was promised for the salvation of their offspring.

Hallelujah.

ode 42

I stretched out my hands and approached my Lord:
for the stretching of my hands is His sign.

My expansion is the outspread tree
which was set up on the way of the Righteous One.

And I became of no account
to those who did not take hold of me
and I shall be with those who love me.

Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride,
so was my yoke over those that know me.

And as the couch that is spread in the house
of the bridegroom and bride,
so is my love over those that believe in me.

All my persecutors are dead.
And they sought after me who hoped in me,
because I was alive:
and I rose up and am with them;
and I will speak by their mouths.

For they have despised those who persecuted them;
and I lifted up over them the yoke of my love.

Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride,
so was my yoke over those that know me.

And as the couch that is spread in the house
of the bridegroom and bride,
so is my love over those that believe in me.
And I was not rejected though I was reckoned to be so.

I did not perish, though they devised it against me.

Sheol saw me and was made miserable:

death cast me up and many along with me.

I had gall and bitterness

and I went down with him to the utmost of his depth:
and the feet and the head he let go,

for they were not able to endure my face:

and I made a congregation of living men amongst his dead men,

and I spake with them by living lips:

because my word shall not be void:

and those who had died ran towards me:

and they cried and said,

Son of God, have pity on us,

and do with us according to your kindness,

and bring us out from the bonds of darkness:

and open to us the door by which we shall come out to you.

For we see that our death has not touched you.

Let us also be redeemed with you: for you are our Redeemer.

And I heard their voice; and my name was heard
over their heads:

for they are free men and they are mine.

Hallelujah.

Christ in Prophecy

We have a sure, prophetic Word

By inspiration of the Lord;

And tho' assailed on ev'ry hand,

Jehovah's Word shall ever stand.

He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth
Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with thy God. -- Micah 6:8

"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto
David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build
up thy throne to all generations." -- Psalm 89:3-4

Then they that feared Jehovah spake often one to another
and Jehovah harkened, and heard it, and a book of remem-
brance was written before him for them that feared Jehovah,
and that thought upon his name. -- Malachi 3:3:1

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations
shall come: and I will fill this house with glory," saith Jehovah
of hosts. -- Haggai 2:7

Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing but he revealeth
his secret unto his servants the prophets. -- Amos 3:7

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon
them hath the light shined. -- Isaiah 9:2

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that
bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth
good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith
unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! -- Isaiah 52:7

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the
brightness of thy rising. . . . they shall bring gold and in-
cense; and they shall show forth the praises of Jehovah.

 -- Isaiah 60:3

§. Jehovah fashioned heaven and earth,

 according to His Wisdom and Word:

 "Jehovah created me the Beginning of his ways.

 Before the hills did he beget me.

 I was set up from everlasting,
 from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
when there were no fountains abounding with water.

 Before the mountains were settled,

 before the hills was I brought forth:
 while as yet he had not made the earth,
 nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

When he prepared the heavens, I was there.

When he set a compass upon the face of the depth:
 when he established the clouds above:

 when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

 when he gave to the sea his decree,
 that the waters should not pass his commandment:
 when he appointed the foundations of the earth:
 then was I by him as one brought up with him.

And I was daily his delight,
 rejoicing always before him;

 rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth;
 and my delights were with the sons of men.

Unto you, O men, I call;
 and my voice is to the sons of men.

 I will make them trust in my name.

Unto the end of the world I will not forsake thee.

 I love them that love me;

and those that seek me early shall find me.

Riches and honor are with me;

yea, durable riches and righteousness.

My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold;
and my revenue than choice silver.

I lead in the way of righteousness,
in the midst of the paths of judgment:

that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance;
and I will fill their treasures.

Now therefore hearken unto me,

O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

Blessed is the man that heareth me,
watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

For whoso findeth me findeth life,
and shall obtain favor of Jehovah.

But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul:
all they that hate me love death.

He who created me pitched my tent and said,
'Dwell thou in Jacob. Let thy inheritance be in Israel;
in the Holy Tabernacle before Him I ministered,
and thus was I established in Zion:
in the beloved City likewise he made me to rest,
and in Jerusalem was my authority:
I took root among the honored people.

Doth not Wisdom cry?
And Understanding put forth her voice?
Yea, Wisdom standeth on the top of high places.
On a lofty summit Wisdom crieth forth.

Wisdom came to make her dwelling
among the children of men,
and finding no dwelling place there,
returned to take her place among the angels.
[Yet] from one end of the earth to the other,
and in all ages Wisdom enters into holy souls,
making them friends of God and prophets.

. . . Proverbs

Christ the power of God, the Wisdom of God, in whom all
fulness of Deity dwells, in whom all treasures of wisdom and
knowledge abound. -- | Corinthians 1:24, Colossians 2:9

Conversely, the wicked have said:

"Let us lie in wait for the righteous one,
because he is vexing to us; in opposing our actions,
reproaching us for transgressions of the law
and charges us with violations of our training.

He professes to have knowledge of God
and calls himself a child of Jehovah.

To us he is the censure of our thoughts;
even the sight of him is burdensome to us,
for his life is not like that of others,
and different are his ways.

He judges us debased;
he holds aloof from our paths as from things impure.
calls blest the destiny of the righteous
and boasts that God is his Father.

Let us see whether his words be true;
let us find out what will happen to him in the end.

For if the righteous one is the son of God,
God will help him and deliver him from the hand of his foes.

With violence and torture let us put him to the test
that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience.

Let us condemn him to a shameful death;
for according to his own words, God will take care of him."

These were their thoughts, but they erred;
for their wickedness blinded them,
and they did not know the hidden counsels of God;
neither did they count on a recompense for holiness
nor discern the innocent souls' reward.

-- Wisdom of Solomon

Who hath believed our report?
and to whom is the arm of Jehovah revealed?

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.*

*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:
yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

*But he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities:
the chastisement of our peace was upon him;
and with his stripes we are healed.*

*All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned every one to his own way;
and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth:
he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb,
so he openeth not his mouth.*

*He was taken from prison and from judgment:
and who shall declare his generation?*

*for he was cut off out of the land of the living:
for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

*And he made his grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death;
because he had done no violence,
neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

*Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him;
he hath put him to grief:
when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,
he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days,
and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand.*

*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:
by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many;
for he shall bear their iniquities.*

*Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he hath poured out his soul unto death:
and he was numbered with the transgressors;*

*and he bare the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.*

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good,
that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion,

Thy God reigneth!

The Shoot of David which will sprout in the final days,
since with the breath of his lips he will execute his enemies,
and God will support him with the spirit of courage.

I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen.

That is to say, the Fallen Tent of David
is he who shall arise to save Israel.

A Star [prophetic teacher] shall come out of Jacob
and a Scepter [messianic King] shall rise out of Israel.

The son of God he will be proclaimed
and the son of the Most High they will call him.

You have made clear to him your good judgments.

And you made him a First-born Son
the crown of the heavens and the glory of the clouds
you have set on him.

The heavens and the earth will listen to His Messiah,
and none therein will stray
from the commandments of the holy ones.

Seekers of the Lord, strengthen yourselves in His service!

All you hopeful in your heart, will you not find the Lord in this?

For the Lord will consider the pious
and call the righteous by name.

Over the poor His spirit will hover
and will renew the faithful with His power.

And He will glorify the pious
on the throne of the eternal Kingdom.

He who liberates the captives, restores sight to the blind,
straightens the bent.

And for ever / will cleave to the hopeful and in His mercy...
And the Lord will accomplish glorious things
which have never been.

For He will heal the wounded, and revive the dead
and bring good news to the poor.

-- Dead Sea Scroll Testimonia

*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
why art thou so far from helping me,
and from the words of my roaring?*

*O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not;
and in the night season, and am not silent.*

*But thou art holy,
O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*

*Our fathers trusted in thee:
they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.
They cried unto thee, and were delivered:
they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*

*But I am a worm, and no man;
a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*

*All they that see me laugh me to scorn:
they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him:
let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*

*But thou art he that took me out of the womb:
thou didst make me hope
when I was upon my mother's breasts.*

*I was cast upon thee from the womb:
thou art my God from my mother's belly.*

*Be not far from me; for trouble is near;
for there is none to help.*

*Many bulls have compassed me:
strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.*

*They gaped upon me with their mouths,
as a ravening and a roaring lion.*

*I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint:
my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*

*My strength is dried up like a potsherd;
and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws;
and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.*

*For dogs have compassed me:
the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me:
they pierced my hands and my feet.*

I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

They part my garments among them,

and cast lots upon my vesture.

But be not thou far from me, O Lord:

O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Deliver my soul from the sword;

my darling from the power of the dog.

Save me from the lion's mouth:

for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

I will declare thy name unto my brethren:

in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Ye that fear the Lord, praise him;

all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him;

and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

For he hath not despised

nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;

neither hath he hid his face from him;

but when he cried unto him, he heard.

My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation:

I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

The meek shall eat and be satisfied:

they shall praise the Lord that seek him:

your heart shall live for ever.

All the ends of the world

shall remember and turn unto the Lord:

and all the kindreds of the nations

shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is the Lord's:

and he is the governor among the nations.

All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship:

all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him:

and none can keep alive his own soul.

A seed shall serve him;

it shall be accounted to the Lord

for a generation.

They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness

unto a people that shall be born,

that he hath done this.

-- Psalm 22

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Our Reasonable Duty

We know very little about life
and what happens after death,
but the little we do know
tells us how much more reasonable it is
to believe that we are here
for a plan and a purpose,
than that we and the universe
are creations with no meaning,
with no future, with no hope.

As intelligent animals
we must believe in a beneficent creator,
whose power is beyond ours to resist,
and whose wisdom is not ours to dispute.

And does not the Christian faith satisfy completely
our recognition of these conditions?

-- Loyd Vineyard Kielhorn

They left no stone unturned

When the apostles went forth to distant lands, was it to instruct the folk on how to milk goats in the wilderness? No, they went forth to share the good news that Jehovah God had visited His people in the person of his Son.

In a dogma-eat-dogma world, it is gratifying to know that all the evangelists' combined written accounts amount to only a modest-sized book, which William Tyndale claimed even a ploughboy could learn.

Why should we turn to a commentary to explain the gospel, when, we could engage directly with it, while inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to us? After that, we will find that the gospel sheds a lot more light on the commentaries than the commentaries ever did on the gospel.

Rightly wielded, the gospel is highly protective of our autonomy, fortifying us mightily against institutional conceit and Pharisaical coercion. With no book but the best, with no teacher but the Highest, let us take the gospel and good works for our birthright.

Earnest to communicate the gospel, the apostles and their immediate successors, Jesus' blood relatives, Cleopas and Symeon, fluent in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek,

utilized all three tongues but the innate genius of languages Indo-European and Semitic, as well, the sensibilities of Orient and Occident, differ markedly, which gave rise to multiple streams of textual transmission.

'Verily say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.' - - as translated from the Greek

'Amen I say to thee to-day that with me thou shalt be in the garden of Eden.'

- - as translated from the Syriac

The above two versions of what Jesus said from the cross to the repentant thief demonstrate how the Greek characteristically resorts to a generalized categorization "paradise," while the Syriac goes for a vivid specificity, "the garden of Eden." Whereas in the West, Greek is king, here all linguistic traditions are accorded equal billing.

'When one fully realizes the truth, which has hitherto lain in a state of sub-consciousness, that our Lord spoke Aramaic there can not fail to be a strong desire to get back the ipsissima verba which proceeded from his lips.'

- - J.T. Marshall

Well could we h to have Jesus' very words – and not just in Greek translation – but in his mother tongue, even as mother Mary whispered them in baby Jesus' ear but, *ipsi pipsi*, what good will that do us who know not Aramaic? A translator is needed to provide the meaning.

Nor need this be a bad deal for us, for just as water is oxygenated and mineralized on its trip down stream in a swiftly moving current, so properly translated, God's word is enhanced – and not just corrupted as some might suppose – in its tumultuous journey down thru the ages.

Well suited to biblical translation is the robust, stately English of the Chaucerian and Elizabethan eras. The KING JAMES's '*my cup runneth over*' (PSALM 23) easily trumps the REVISED STANDARD's '*my cup overflows*' but, in the right hands, modern English, too, can sing. The BIBLE IN LIVING ENGLISH reads: '*my cup is full of refreshment*.'

As with the mountain of faith, so the work of translation is approachable from many directions, but whatever the strategy: word-for-word, dynamic equivalence, etc., it can only help if the inspired Word is brokered by a translation that, if not itself is completely inspired, is at least competent. Part art, part science, it is the evangelist's, not the translator's voice which we wish to hear.

Unknown to antiquity was the use of gender-neutral language; likewise is that the case here.

Not to be found in this translation, by reason that it is deemed a mistranslation, is the word 'church.' The Greek word, *ekklesia*, refers, not to a building, a sect, a congregation or hierarchical institution, but rather, to Jesus' little flock, a community of believers, a circle of friends, whose worship emanates from chapels not built with hands.

For such as are willing to approach open-mindedly the possibility of an ancient survival not found in the New Testament, I invite consideration of MS PEPYS 2498, a narrative gospel commonly known as the PEPYSIAN GOSPEL HARMONY, whose chronology and sequencing of the canonical four gospels is here treated as authoritative, whereby *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, the Gospels of the Separated, are transformed into *Evangelion da-Mehallete*, i.e., the Gospels of the Combined, a fully harmonized account, forming a cohesive whole.

In the course of integrating a primitive, narrative gospel with the OLD SYRIAC GOSPELS certain linguistic overlaps necessarily occur, overlaps which some might disparage as repetitions but others, more charitably, will recognize

as a welcome opportunity to take a double bite at the apple.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one gospel, which is why the apostles went forth preaching, not gospels, *plural* but the gospel, *singular*. Multiple tellings, one gospel.

To the extent that we recover the Nazarenes' unified gospel, the core document of the Faith, a harmonization of authentic gospel accounts, to like extent we reverse the Great Gentile Hijack, that being the institutional Church's suppression of it dating to the late 2nd century AD.

Reverting to his mother's tongue, Jesus cried out in extremity from the cross: '*Eloi, Eloi, lama sarachthani*,' the opening words of PSALM 22, code language by which he was saying: go read this psalm, for it is about me:

*In Holy Writ Jesus lies concealed;
in the gospel Jesus stands revealed.*

Absent numbered verses, the GOOD READ VERSION does not easily lend itself to sermon proof-texts. Rather, as an epic tale told by Jesus' apostles, it affords us a genuine, unbroken record of Jesus' mighty words, his mighty deeds, which together reveal to us the glorious gospel of the inner kingdom, Christ in us, the hope of glory.

In immersing ourselves in the gospel, the informing idea is to give God time enough to speak to us long enough, until finally we know enough to submit to Him, with seeing faith, not blind faith, the objective.

In this version of the gospel, as a frequent refrain, is found the expression: 'sweet Jesus.' Thus was he known by those who knew him best.

*'Come unto me, ye toilers and bearers of heavy
burdens, and I will ease you.'* -- GRV, CH. 34

Sweet Jesus, before it ever occurred to us to go looking for him, he had already come looking for us, offering us individually and collectively his royal invitation above.

... be not conformed ... be ye transformed.

-- ROMANS 12:2

The gospel, through the renewing of our minds by the Holy Spirit, is constantly challenging us to think anew how to upgrade our performance. Acting more as a compass than as a roadmap, it spurs us on to good deeds.

Containing qualified promises for qualified people, the gospel involves a covenanted partnership, where we have our part to play, even as God has His, knowing this, that the path of duty is the way of life, for, as Jesus said:

'It behooveth him who would be my disciple, to give the most careful attention to letting go of all such things as would be disturbing to my love.'

'God prevent it that man should tempt him [God] by asking for help to be saved, but not help himself.'

-- GOOD READ VERSION, CH. 66, 8

Independent but not aloof. Albeit beholden directly – therefore independently – to God, we are yet beholden to serve family and community. Hand-folding and staring will not feed or clothe.

Jesus did not call upon us to be the salt of the prayer meeting or light of the church steeple, rather,

... the salt of the earth ... and the light of the world.

So far from annulling the Abrahamic Covenant, Jesus extended it out to all of humanity, for by his cross, he sundered the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. Thus the East-ness and the West-ness of the gospel, Abraham's spiritual heirs saying, "Father Abraham" and being accorded a seat at the table in God's Kingdom.

Paraphrasing G. K. Chesterton, the gospel has not been tried and found wanting, rather, the gospel has been found difficult, therefore not tried.

Operating functionally as a cover letter for the GOSPEL OF JOHN, the first EPISTLE OF JOHN makes explicit our benefit:

'And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.' -- ch. 1

O u r R e a s o n a b l e D u t y

We know very little about life

*and what happens after death,
but the little we do know*

tells us how much more reasonable it is

to believe that we are here

for a plan and a purpose,

than that we and the universe

are creations with no meaning,

with no future, with no hope.

As intelligent animals

we must believe in a beneficent creator,

whose power is beyond ours to resist,

and whose wisdom is not ours to dispute.

*And does not the Christian faith satisfy completely
our recognition of these conditions?*

-- Loyd Vineyard Kielhorn

Texts Consulted

The Anglo-Norman Gospel Harmony: Estoire de l' Evangile

The Middle English Gospel Harmony: MS Pepys 2498

The Liege Diatessaron

*The Syriac Codex Curetonian Version
with readings from the Sinai Palimpsest*

Justin Martyr's Memoirs of the Apostles

The Gospel according to the Hebrews

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew

The King James Version (KJV)