

Abraham, Lot, & the Blessing of Meekness

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Scriptures: [Genesis 13.5-18](#)

v5-9 - Abraham Has Changed

5 Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents.

6 And the land could not support both of them while living together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together.

7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time.

8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are relatives!

9 Is the entire land not before you? Please separate from me; if you choose the left, then I will go to the right; or if you choose the right, then I will go to the left."

Something has happened to Abraham. The Abraham who has come back to Canaan is very different from the Abraham who went down to Egypt.

No longer is he scheming, Abraham is now preferring others.

No longer is he lying to protect himself, he is giving Lot the first choice of his inheritance.

I believe Abraham has gone through a process of maturing that only comes from making mistakes. Going down to Egypt because there was a famine in the land God called to was a mistake. Abraham realized he was not in God's will so he returns to his altar and the land God had originally brought him to. He once again calls on the name of the Lord. This has all served to changed Abraham...to humble him.

The Abraham that has now come back from his mistakes is living by faith, not by sight. He's no longer moving from a place of fear and worry.

There's something different about this Abraham. He's not perfect...as we'll see later. But something about the famine and his mis-steps in Egypt have matured Abraham.

The righteous aren't perfect, but...

This is a defining quality of the righteous...

it's not that they're perfect,

it's not that they never act selfishly,

it's not that they don't experience fear and worry when they bump into famine and mistakenly seek resources from Pharaoh...

But what makes the righteous different is that when these mistakes happen, they learn from them. The righteous allow their failures to mature them. Or, to put it another way, the righteous embrace the cross of their mistakes.

For example; Judas and Peter both let Jesus down.

Judas let his failure destroy him.

Peter took his failure to the cross and believed that no matter what he had done, no matter how awful his mistake was, there was enough grace available at the cross for forgiveness, and there was enough power at the cross for resurrection.

Judas' mistake killed him. Peter's mistake matured him.

Abraham didn't allow Egypt to define him.

He allowed the mistakes in Egypt to mature him.

v10-13

10 Lot raised his eyes and saw all the vicinity of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere—this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt going toward Zoar.

11 So Lot chose for himself all the vicinity of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. So they separated from each other.

12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the vicinity of the Jordan, and moved his tents as far as Sodom.

13 Now the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked sinners against the LORD.

Young Lot; he can see very clearly that of all the land before him there is one particular area off to the east that is exceptionally beautiful.

Lot has good eyesight...and he depends on his good eyesight to make decisions.

But instead of lifting his eyes to heaven to let God direct his steps, Lot allowed his eyes to become fixed on the most beautiful land around, and **what he saw with his eyes determined what he did with his life.** Warren Wiersbe writes,

“The eyes see what the heart loves. Abraham had taken Lot out of Egypt, but he could not take Egypt out of Lot. Outlook determines outcome. While Abraham’s eyes were on the holy city of God (**Hebrews 11:13–16**), and he went on to walk with the Lord and inherit the blessing, Lot’s eyes were on the sinful cities of men, and he went on to worldly success, spiritual failure, and a shameful end.”

Shades of Genesis 3 and 6

Is there anything wrong with wanting beautiful land that is going to provide for your needs? Is there anything wrong with wanting what is best for your family? No. That’s not the point that Scripture is making here. But Scripture is highlighting this story to teach the righteous a lesson.

Choices of the senses are always sinful choices. The righteous don’t walk by sight...they walk by faith. When we make decisions based on reason/logic, emotion, or the the lusts of the eyes, rather than on what God is telling us, we can’t expect His blessing to follow us. As Paul writes in **2 Corinthians 4.18**,

“we don’t fix our eyes on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

The land to the east

The land that Lot chose was “to the east.” I’ve talked about this before, but a movement “to the east” is often used as code in the Bible for a direction that is away from the will of God, and toward his judgement.

For example;

- when Adam sinned he was pushed out of the garden “toward the east”
([Genesis 3.24](#))
- After Cain kills Abel he is forced further east ([Genesis 4.16](#))
- in Ezekiel 10, the glory of the Lord departed from the temple on the east side
([Ezekiel 10.19, 11.23](#))

Lot turned his back on God’s land

By fixing his eyes on the beauty of the land to the east, Lot (literally) chose to turn his back on the ground that would one day become the apple of the Lord's eye ([Zechariah 2.8](#)). Lot turned his back on that special place that the Messiah would one day weep over. Lot falls into the same trap that the tribes of Reuben and Gad fell for when Israel was coming into the Promised Land. They all valued what they could see over the unseen, eternal, multigenerational plan of YHWH.

Scripture is using all of these stories as signposts to tell us “this is not the way that followers of God make decisions.” Or to put it another way; God does not reward good decision making...He rewards faith;

“Without faith it is impossible to please God, for those who come to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”
([Hebrews 11.6](#)).

Seek Him how? By faith.

Abraham is acting by faith, trusting that God will do for him what he can not do for himself; Lot is making good decisions based on what he sees in front of him.

Consider these differences between Abraham and Lot:

- Lot chose for himself, Abraham let God choose for him
- Lot saw what the world had to offer; Abraham saw what heaven had to offer
- Lot chose a piece of land which he eventually lost, but God gave Abraham a land which still belongs to him and his descendants
- Lot said, “I will take.” God said to Abraham, “I will give”
- Lot eventually lost his family, but Abraham received a family so large it couldn’t

be counted

-Lot chose what made sense, but Abraham trusted God for the impossible

v14-18

14 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Now raise your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward, and eastward and westward;

15 for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever.

16 I will make your descendants as plentiful as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can count the dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted.

17 Arise, walk about in the land through its length and width; for I will give it to you.”

18 Then Abram moved his tent and came and lived by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron; and there he built an altar to the LORD.

V18 says that Abraham settled in Hebron. One of the meanings of the name Hebron is “communion.” After Abraham’s wanderings and mis-steps, he finally settles in the place of communion. Before he could arrive at the place of communion, he had to pass the test of preferring someone else more than himself.

The selfish aren’t allowed at the table of communion. That’s a place of intimate fellowship, with God and with God’s people. It’s a place of trust, of love, of humility, of considering the one’s next to you, and in front of you, to be more important than you. Abraham had learned to trust that God is a God who rewards the meek with a seat at the table of communion.

Meekness

8 So Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are relatives!

9 Is the entire land not before you? Please separate from me; if you choose the left, then I will go to the right; or if you choose the right, then I will go to the left.”

Keep in mind, Abraham was God's man, not Lot. As the one whom God had chosen, Abraham had every right to choose the land that he wanted. But instead, Abraham gives Lot the choice.

What if Lot chose the land that God intended for Abraham to settle in? Didn't matter. Abraham trusted God, not Lot.

This was an act of incredible faith...and incredible meekness.

Meekness

Meekness and humility are often said in the same breath...and there are similarities. But I think the best way to understand meekness and how it differs from humility is this:

humility is an attitude, meekness is an action.

Humility is loving your enemies, meekness is turning the other cheek.

Meekness is humility made visible.

I heard one definition of meekness years ago; meekness is strength under control. A horse is meek in that he has incredible strength and power, but he yields to the authority of the rider.

Humility is the attitude of the horse toward the rider.

Meekness is the horse choosing to control his strength for the sake of the rider.

Abraham exhibited meekness by not doing what he had the authority to do, choose the best land...and this is why meekness is one of the most challenging qualities of God that we will ever demonstrate. When you have the authority and the means to get what you want but you refuse to get it your way...that's meekness, and that's hard.

You think God couldn't have defeated Satan and rewritten the script in the garden? But He had given Adam authority over every living creature. How could Adam ever learn how to move in that kind of authority if God didn't let him?

Meekness was God letting Adam and Eve make decisions that corrupted His perfect creation.

Meekness was God letting Moses set Israel free from Egypt and allowing their mistakes to delay the promise 40 years.

Meekness was letting Roman soldiers handcuff His Son and drag Him off to the High Priest when 12 legions of angels were a breath away from storming that garden.

And here Abraham is demonstrating meekness in letting Lot choose the best land, even when Abraham was the one with the authority and the means to make that choice.

The Bible is clear about the fate of the meek...they are the ones who inherit the land.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land" ([Matthew 5.5](#))

"...the meek shall inherit the land" ([Psalm 37.11](#))

Rather than exalting themselves, demanding their way, and pushing themselves onto the best this world has to offer, the meek choose to wait on the Lord and allow Him to exalt them,

"Wait on the Lord, and keep His way and He shall exalt you to inherit the land" ([Psalm 37.34](#))

The irony is by sacrificing his destiny on the altar of Lot's choice, Abraham's meekness guaranteed that the promised land would be his. He had tapped into a kingdom principle that promises to bless the meek with an inheritance.

In closing

Abraham may have failed the test of famine, and he may have failed the test of Pharaoh, but he passed this test with Lot.

Satan wants to use circumstances, and people, and comfort, and possessions to tempt you and bring out the worst in you; but God wants to use these to refine you and form the best in you.

What situation are you facing right now that Satan would love to use to harm you, to set you back, to push you into the arms of Pharaoh? God wants to use that same situation to teach you meekness, to refine you, and shape you into the image of Jesus.

Meekness

From *Marks of the Cross* by Robert Gladstone

The cross is the ultimate expression of Jesus' selfless love. It is the kind of love through which royalty expresses its essential nature. In God's Kingdom, kings carry crosses. And I believe that no character trait reveals the majesty of the cross more than meekness. Meekness is an essential mark of the cross. It is the ongoing death of self, leaving the deepest scar on the soul.

Meekness is a facet of humility. The New Testament Greek word, *prautēs*, can mean gentleness, humility, friendliness, or even courtesy. The English term comes from a word meaning soft or gentle and is often associated with weakness. But biblical meekness, the meekness of Jesus Christ, is not rooted in weakness. It is rooted in power.

True meekness emerges from that cluster of character traits belonging to people who thrive in the Holy Spirit. They live from the divine life abiding inside, not in reaction to the pressures and provocations swarming outside. Their hearts are in order, even if the world around them is not. They sleep on the boat while the storm rages, for the peace of Christ is ruling in their hearts (Col 3:15). Death itself has been defeated by their Lord. God's peace-making dominion is more real to them than the chaos trying to destroy their security.

Those who are truly meek value the expansion of God's Kingdom more than anything-more than reputation, financial success, or earthly well-being. Nothing, therefore, can threaten them. And if they cannot be threatened, they will not react with fear or anger when assailed. Instead, they will respond to every attack with gentleness, remaining at rest in the impregnable rock of surrender.

Meekness is the offspring of rest.

How, then, do we find such rest in a chaotic world? We rest when we entrust our souls to God. That means we do not belong to ourselves; God possesses us: our bodies, families, jobs, present, and future. Our complete inheritance is safe with Him.

"Happy are the meek, for they will inherit the earth"

(Matt 5:5, my translation and emphasis).

Which means we're off the hook. If we believe the King's promises, no one can steal our birthright or trick us out of our inheritance. We cannot be robbed of our destiny. We trust that God is "able to guard what [we] have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Tim 1:12). Therefore, we can afford to be meek. There's no demand to compete against people. We have no need to insist on our rights or fight others for our territory. God will grant us that. We are liberated, free to be gentle even Marks of the Cross when others oppose us, take from us, or succeed instead of us.

Wait and trust the Lord. Don't be upset when others get rich or when someone else's plans succeed. Don't get angry. Don't be upset; it only leads to trouble. Evil people will be sent away, but those who trust the Lord will inherit the land. In a little while the wicked

will be no more. You may look for them, but they will be gone. People who are not proud will inherit the land and will enjoy complete peace (Psa 37:7-11, NCV).

May the King's meekness mark His people and create a gentle revolution in the earth.

Jesus, Model of Meekness

Come to Me, all those toiling and overloaded, and I Myself will give you rest. Take My yoke on you and learn from Me, because I am meek and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My load is light (Matt 11:28-30, my translation).

Meekness is one of the most fundamental character traits of Jesus Christ. In fact, in some ways, I believe it is His central character trait. I say this for two reasons.

First, meekness typically expresses itself through gentleness, and Jesus was the gentlest man who ever lived. Even under the fire of criticism, Jesus did not quarrel with His enemies to defend Himself. He often refrained from personal conflict in order to touch the lives of the afflicted, just as the Scriptures declared the Messiah would do. "He will not quarrel, nor cry out; nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A battered reed He will not break off, and a smoldering wick He will not put out" (Matt 12:19-20).

Though Jesus was perfectly holy, He did not intimidate or repulse sinners; He welcomed them. He ate meals with them and enjoyed their company. With respect and love, He valued them as those made in God's image. Though He possessed the power to destroy the rebellious human race, He chose to come among them as one of them, kindly and tenderly, to heal and forgive them. That is gentleness. There has been no gentler person in all of history than Jesus Christ.

But second, Jesus' meekness produced much more than a gentle demeanor. Gentle behavior comes from meekness. It is one brook that flows from the vast river-source of meekness. But it is not itself meekness. Rather, meekness flowed from the deep of Jesus' character, encompassing His other attributes. This is why we read gospel stories in which Jesus, the gentle Healer, did not always act with mild manners.

Jesus physically wrecked the operation of the temple marketeers for defiling God's house of prayer (Mark 11:15-17). He confronted the Pharisees with anger for elevating traditional Sabbath rules over human need (Mark 3:1-6) and passionately condemned them for their duplicity. He decried them as hypocrites, stung them with woes, and publicly announced their crimes (Matt 23). Jesus even rebuked one of his closest friends, calling Peter "Satan" when he sought to put a stumbling block across Jesus' path to redemptive suffering (Mark 8:33).

These actions are not gentle in the conventional sense of the word. They are passionate, compelling, fearless...

But not gentle.

So if the Model of Meekness could shift into a mode of such strong, incendiary actions and words, what then is meekness? What is that deeper, divine quality that handles a fragile soul with the tender warmth of a nursing mother, yet can rage against religious opposition with the blazing fire of holy wrath?

True meekness is the condition of character that has absolutely no agenda - except for God's.

Jesus was meek because He came to earth with no plans of His own, no mission the except Him. He had God one gave no personal ambition, no private scheme to promote or protect, no need to watch over His reputation. Jesus did not seek a Holy Grail that promised personal fulfillment while derailing Him from His God-given mission (Matt 4:1-11).

In fact, He found no satisfaction in this present age. "I have food to eat that you do not know about" (John 4:32). Only Father's mission filled the craving in Jesus' mighty heart. "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34).

That is meekness. It says, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done at whatever cost necessary to Me. Nothing else satisfies. Every other consideration is dead. I have nothing to possess or gain in this world except Your will." No one could steal that from Jesus; no one could threaten Him. His well-being and identity were determined, and sheltered, by His meekness.

Liberated from the demands of people's opinions, both flatterers and foes, Jesus literally had nothing to lose. Therefore, He was always completely at the Father's disposal.

None of the special interest groups of Israel could prevail upon Him to join their cause, or even support them. No Pharisee could convert Him to their puritan movement. No bed Jesup my 21 Sadducee could pressure Him into temple politics. No Zealot could recruit Him into militant nationalism. Not even Judas' betrayal could tempt Him to defend His honor.

He never had to calculate His words to maintain popular opinion. He never feared the cost of obedience. As a result, He could hear the Spirit's faintest whispers and feel the subtlest promptings. Having no self-interest or commitment to self-preservation, Jesus was acutely sensitive to the will of the One with whom he had to do. And that precisely was His meekness. Jesus was the Model of Meekness.

All hail this Model of Meekness! He is the King of Glory! Happy are all who follow Him. They are liberated by the laying down of their rights for the sake of a higher call. They may possess nothing in this age, but one day they will inherit the earth.

Keep Coming to Jesus

When Jesus calls the exhausted and overloaded to Himself, He is inviting us to rest inside His sanctuary of meekness. But there's more to His invitation than finding respite from chaos. Jesus is calling us, not just to shelter us, but to transform us into His image. True discipleship is all about becoming like Jesus. So when Jesus says, "Come to Me... I am meek...." He specifically calls us to

a core attribute that encompasses so many others. He is calling us to embrace and reflect His meekness.

Jesus is the Model of Meekness, and the call to follow His example of meekness hinges on two practical commands: "Come to Me" and "Learn from Me."

Jesus' call to come to Him is rooted in the soil of the Old Testament prophets. It is the updated version of their ancient but essential message. When Jesus beckons us to come, like the prophets before Him, He is summoning us to repent. But remember: repentance in God's Kingdom is 7 more than a turning away from sin; it is a turning to God. True repentance does more than break old habits and start new ones. Repentance very specifically embraces God and His ways. It trades self-centered living for the Lord himself: knowing Him, being with Him, learning from Him, and obeying Him.

So when the prophets called wayward Israel to turn from their idols, it was always so they could return to God Himself. Breaking covenant with Him was the root crime. Repairing that covenant was root repentance. Likewise, in our context, Jesus calls people directly to Himself. He is the One to whom the prophets always pointed. Jesus is the Lord; therefore, He says, "Come to Me."

The prophets also promised that, when Israel did return to the Lord, they would be refreshed by His presence. Whatever pain, sorrow, or trouble they were experiencing because of their sins, the Lord would wash it all away. He would deliver them from the consequences of their rebellion; He would heal them of self-inflicted wounds; He would revive them out of spiritual despondency. The demand for repentance was always coupled with an invitation to revival.

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, is and delight yourself in abundance. Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David (Isa 55:1-3, emphasis added).

Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls... (Jer 6:16, emphasis added).

Jesus' call to come to Him and find rest issues from the tradition of these prophets. But there is one major difference. The prophets called people to the Lord who was speaking through them. Jesus calls people to Himself. He is the Lord to whom we repent and from whom we drink the refreshing waters of revival.

The first step, then, for us to follow Jesus as the Model of Meekness, is to repent in the true, biblical sense of the term. We must turn away from our sins, idols, and other sources of selfish satisfaction and come to Jesus Himself. Whether we have strayed from Him completely or have wandered off in certain areas, He calls us to return.

But the Lord's call to us is not just for when we stray. He always says, "Come to Me" - every chance we get, at every turn of our path. Coming to Jesus is a way of life. People often enter

valleys, or face serious problems, without really, deeply turning to Him for peace and wisdom. Jesus' solution is simple. No matter what the situation, no matter what the season, He continually says, Come to Me.

Meekness, then, is a life fully yielded to Jesus. It begins with repentance and continues as a lifestyle that constantly comes out of the chaos, confusion, and complications of life... to Him. Like a lighthouse in the middle of raging seas, Jesus constantly radiates His welcoming command, "Come to Me." Those who heed that command learn what meekness really is.

Learn from Jesus

Jesus' call is not just to come to Him; it is also to learn from Him. The essence of discipleship is learning the ways of the Master and walking in those ways. In fact, Jesus' call to come and learn is a forecast to the Great Commission at the end of Matthew's gospel (Matt 28:18-20). There Jesus says to make disciples by baptizing new believers, then teaching them to obey everything He commanded them. Here in a miniature commission (Matt 11:28-30), He says something similar, inviting people to come to Him so they can learn from Him.

While the Great Commission instructs Jesus' disciples to teach all He commanded, this earlier version tells disciples specifically to learn His meekness. This is because meekness is an essential component to Jesus' total character. If we possess the Lord's meekness, we have the power to perform His commands. For meekness is the absence of personal agenda and is therefore foundational to the obedience Jesus requires.

If we lack this foundation of meekness, how can we obey all of the Lord's other commands? They would require too much from us. Without meekness, we are still trying to hold on to our own reputation or ambitions. How, then, can we afford to offer the other cheek after being slapped? Or forgive relentlessly? Or continue to love those who or betray us?

Without the meekness of Jesus coursing through our veins, these responses, and others like them, are impossible. We cannot afford His selfless, crucified lifestyle if we have not already settled the issue that we don't belong to ourselves. Our lives must be like Jesus' life: at God's disposal in every way, at all times. That is meekness. It is the cross made practical, and it activates God's power to obey all of His commands.

Meekness is the way Jesus exercised His royalty and took dominion over His enemies. That means we too must intentionally learn from Jesus how to be meek. How can we do that?

Take up His yoke

A yoke was a wooden frame that either joined together two animals to pull a load or allowed a person to carry two heavy objects across his shoulders. The Jews used it as a symbol of dedication and obedience to the Torah. Studying and obeying the Law was the way they expressed their devotion to God as Master, as well as their responsibility to carry His commands in the world. But here Jesus uses it as a symbol of exclusive devotion to Him and His teachings.

Jesus calls us to make a fundamental decision to bow to His yoke alone. That means we have made Him our only option. Learning from Jesus is not done on our terms, but on His terms. So we begin our learning process by resolving deeply in our hearts that we are devoted to Jesus His ways and His teachings-not to ourselves or anyone else. His manner of life becomes our personal culture. He is our Master; we are His disciples. Then we find that His yoke is liberating, inspiring, and eternally satisfying. Life becomes utter joy. His yoke is easy.

Learn from Him

The Greek words for "learn" (manthano) and "disciple" (mathētes) share the same root. This tells us that disciples learn. They are devoted protégés that have come to know Jesus Christ as Life itself, and have therefore committed themselves to the lifelong endeavor of learning His virtues and assimilating them into their souls. Disciples have caught sight of Jesus' eternal value and cannot look away. "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68, LEB).

Now entrapped by love and the words of the coming age, they pursue Him: "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are you staying?" And He responds: "Come, and you will see" (John 1:38-39). Then they abide with Him to watch His lifestyle and listen to His teaching. They follow Him and sit at His feet and unearth the treasures of His meekness and humility. Anyone in the crowd can have an encounter with Jesus during the excitement of revival. But disciples surrender to His yoke and learn the traits of meekness and humility.

Notice that, just prior to His invitation to come and learn, Jesus "began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent" (Matt 11:20). These cities encountered Jesus in ways others had only dreamed of. They experienced His glory, beholding great signs and wonders. But they did not want to see the priceless treasures of meekness to which those signs pointed. If they did, they would have become disciples-loyal learners of the meekness that qualified this Man to be King of the Universe.

People tend to desire the benefits of power without the sacrifices of character. God wants both. So when Jesus comes to town, He's looking for something specific. He may visit our cities and blow us away with miracles. But as electrifying as these visitations are, the Master Fisherman is looking into the deep waters. He scans the crowd. His X-ray eyes dart to and fro, looking to support those whose hearts are completely His. Jesus is always searching for disciples, for sons and daughters of peace who will invite Him into their homes. When He sees such people, the Lord bids them come to learn His ways.

True repentance does not merely walk to the front of a building and say a prayer to "receive salvation." True repentance yokes itself to Jesus forever and says, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end" (Psa 119:33, NKJV). Jesus calls us to Himself to learn His meekness. How do we do this today?

Through the Word. Specifically, we must rediscover Jesus in the four gospels and see Him there with fresh eyes. These divinely-inspired biographies, full of the simple but extraordinary stories and sayings of Jesus, beckon us to behold a Man like no other. They call us, not merely to read them,

but to feast on them, devouring the essence of their unusual Hero into our spirits. And that essence is divine, eternal meekness, enshrined in the flesh of authentic humanity and recounted for us in words too simple to be misunderstood and too wonderful to be ignored words that describe the Indescribable. As one author said, "If Jesus had never lived, we would not be able to invent him." True meekness cannot be found in any books of philosophy or history. It can only be found in the Spirit-inspired Scriptures that describe Jesus, the Model of Meekness.

The four gospels give four accounts of the One who could never, ever have been contrived by human ingenuity. No eye has seen and no ear has heard. For "never has a man spoken the this man speaks" (John 7:46). He fits into no existing, earthly categories; He rather comes to us in His own, pre-existing category, and then stands in it by Himself. Yet the Holy Spirit has seen to it that we would have access to the very books that paint the portrait of this unimaginable Figure. What a privilege to have such writings-to possess the stories and teachings that unveil the divinely meek King -that we might learn His ways.

Unlike the gods of ancient Greek myths, or the lead characters in modern movies, the Jesus of the gospels refuses to overpower His enemies with selfish, carnal vengeance or prove Himself through temporal force either through physical violence or verbal attack. Instead, He entrusts Himself to God and refuses to defend or promote Himself. He proclaims the gospel with boldness. He eats with sinners. He feeds multitudes. He serves the poor. He performs miracles, teaches, and heals. And in the end, instead of conquering His enemies by calling on His Father for twelve legions of angels, He lays down His life out of love. Then God vindicates Him by raising Him from the dead. That is meekness, and the cross stands at its center.

Yet none of this negates the glorious, sobering reality of the Day of the Lord, "When the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thess 1:78). Both aspects are true and necessary-the Lamb and the Lion-because both express the Lord's meekness. In this world, and during this age, Judah's Lion would not conquer as the world would conquer. He would conquer only as a Lamb. This was the Father's way-the only way to dislodge the enemy's foothold in sin and death. It was ingrained too deeply in the human soul and spread too broadly throughout creation. We needed the Lamb who was slain to shed the only blood able to cleanse our filthy garments. But just as our salvation is rooted in the slain Lamb, so is the Day of the Lord. Both radiate the same meekness.

Only Jesus could embody perfect meekness. The same lamb-like Servant, "Who will not break off a battered reed nor put out a smoldering wick," will also one day "lead justice to victory" (Matt 12:19-20). "In Your majesty ride on victoriously, for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Psa 45:4). Meekness looks like a Lamb in this age. But the same meekness comes to judge like a Lion at the end. From a human point of view, this union of gentleness and holy vengeance in one meekness is a paradox. But from a divine point of view, there is no other a Lamb can be a Lamb without also being a Lion-and vice versa.

The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the

fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation (Exod 34:6-7, ESV).

Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals. And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb... (Rev 5:5-6, LEB).

It is impossible to replicate divine meekness in our own power. How can we possibly become reproductions of this indescribable Model of Meekness? Only by learning His meekness from the sacred writings that describe Him, and allowing His Spirit to formulate that same character in us.

We must get the living Word of such meekness into our souls to replace our tendency toward mere human justice on our terms. We must leave room for God's wrath in the future by overcoming evil with good in the present (Rom 12:19-21), Jesus conquered through meekness, becoming the Model of Meekness for us. So must we read, study, and memorize-indeed, we must bask and soak-in the Jesus story of the gospels. He is calling us to learn His meekness through the Word.

Through Prayer. When Jesus first said, "Come to Me," He knew His words would reverberate into every generation as a call to commune with Him in prayer. One of the trillions of echoes of that resonance made its way into the book you now read. In fact, their sound may be striking your heart afresh-at this very moment-in a way tailored just for you. The Lord may now be calling you to a kind of prayer that connects with Him on a deeper level and for greater transformation. But the sound of the invitation is quite specific. It does not merely say, "Come to Me and rest." It says, "Come to Me and rest by learning My meekness." This is a call to prayerful discipleship and disciple-making prayer.

We often come to Jesus out of desperate need. We seek refuge in Him because we are toiled and overloaded. In ourselves we are indeed frail. Our motivations for racing into His arms span the spectrum of human emotions in a troubled world. This age constantly seeks to stress us out, unwittingly helping us realize how much we need rest in Jesus. He is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Such prayer is right, good, and essential; we must do it often. But we must also remember that our refuge is also our Teacher. We must come to Him for help and safety, but we must also come to Him to learn.

That rest we seek in the presence of the Lord will settle more deeply and permanently when we come to Him intentionally to learn His meekness. Or to put it in Paul's words, prayer that comes to learn from Jesus is prayer that comes to behold His glory for the express purpose of being transformed into the same image. Jesus, the Word become flesh who tabernacled among His disciples in Israel, is now present by the Spirit. To come to Jesus is to behold His glory. And to learn from Jesus is to be transformed by that glory.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (2 Cor 3:18).

When we connect with His glory for the sake of transformation, that is the moment Jesus says, "You will find rest for your souls." His glory melts us into the meekness of Jesus Christ. And that meekness leads us into more and more of the land of Sabbath rest.

Take a moment and ponder this familiar word in a fresh way. Do not allow "glory" to fall the way of cliché. Glory refers to the Lord's luminous Presence—the weighty, new covenant manifestation of His Spirit, the very Being of God Himself, sacred, indescribable, eternal, and awesome—given to us so we can behold Him and be transformed into His image. Glory is not static; it is dynamic. It does not merely hover as a spectacle; it radiates divinity as creative power. It transforms us.

The Lord's glory is His heavenly beauty, the copious emanation of His dazzling, divine virtues that, when beheld, strikes us as so utterly awesome, winsome, and desirable, that we must do more than feel it. We must engage it and become like it. The Lord's glory expresses the outward radiance of His inward virtue, it exhales His fragrant affections and stamps His holy character onto our hearts to reshape them into His likeness. To behold Jesus Christ's meekness with the eyes of our hearts wide open in awe and adoration, is to drink that meekness visually into our souls. The glory of meekness demands we do more than offer petitions; it demands we behold and become.

To change the metaphor: the prayer that seeks to learn Jesus' meekness is the prayer that seeks to feast on His virtues. So Jesus' metaphor of yoking is parallel to Paul's metaphor of beholding. Now Paul's metaphor of beholding is parallel to David's metaphor of banqueting (Psa 23:5-6). Israel's sweet psalmist and warrior king imagined Yahweh's attributes as a table full of paradisiacal delights for the famished soul—a buffet of fruits and nuts and meats and wine spread before a weary pilgrim. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psa 34:8). The imagery beckons us to contemplate the fruit of the Spirit as a spiritual banquet. Yes, we should bear the Spirit's fruit in our lives, but we should also feast on the Spirit's fruit in prayer. God's virtues have exquisite taste to the palate of our souls. And remember, "you are what you eat."

Let us delight in the edible fare of the Lord's glory. Behold the banquet of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). What law condemns the worshipper who is so elated by the divine Personality that he does more than sing or petition or meditate, but he feasts on the Lord to become like Him? The ingestion of these divine attributes will then organically grow out of the life of the one who sits at the Lord's table in the temple. And of course, the word "gentleness" in the list above is the same word translated as "meekness" (prautes). It belongs to the cornucopia of attributes we engage as a meal in worship and eventually show forth as character. Against such things there is no law.

When we become angry with a co-worker or church member who offended us, we turn to Jesus. There we learn from Him, behold Him, and we feast on His virtues. He speaks to us, He imparts His Spirit to us, and we sense His attitude toward that person. He is not fuming with offense, lusting to give that person a piece of His mind. Rather, He longs to have mercy and forgive. Yes, we may need to confront the person, or even remove a speck from his eye. But the Lord also sees the value and potential of that person, feels compassion, and will therefore approach the speck with gentle precision to remove it without harming the eyeball's delicate tissue.

When we turn to our Lord's presence in situations like these, His nature rubs off on us. Jesus teaches us His ways when we simply come to Him as He is, in His meekness. Once in His presence, free from the demands of selfish justice, ambition, religious pride, and worry, we learn His meekness and thereby enter His rest. His yoke is the easiest yoke to carry. From that place of rest, we can do anything.