



NEW LIFE

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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LORD'S DAY 01 JULY 2007

My dear readers,

SAFETY, FULLNESS, AND SWEET REFRESHMENT, TO BE FOUND IN CHRIST

by Jonathan Edwards (1752), minimally edited from Works, 2.929–36

(Part 3 of 3, continuation from last week)

"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." (Isaiah 32:2)

III. There are quiet rest and sweet refreshment in Christ Jesus, for those who is weary

He is *"as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."* The comparison that is used in the text is very beautiful and very significative. The dry, barren, and scorched wilderness of Arabia is a very lively representation of the misery that men have brought upon themselves by sin. It is destitute of any inhabitants but lions and tigers and fiery serpents. It is barren and parched, and without any river or spring. It is a land of drought, wherein there is seldom any rain, a land exceedingly hot and uncomfortable. The scorching sunbeams, that are ready to consume the spirits of travellers, are a fit representation of terror of conscience, and the inward sense of God's displeasure.

And there being no other shade in which travellers may rest, but only here and there that of a great rock, it is a fit representation of Jesus Christ, who came to redeem us from our misery. Christ is often compared to a rock, because He is a sure foundation to builders, and because He is a sure bulwark and defence. They who dwell upon the top of a rock, dwell in a most defensible place. We read of those whose habitation is the munitions of rocks. He may also be compared to a rock, as He is everlasting and unchangeable. A great rock remains steadfast, unmoved, and unbroken by winds and storms from age to age. Therefore God chose a rock to be an emblem of Christ in the wilderness, when He caused water to issue forth for the children of Israel. The shadow of a great rock is a most fit representation of the refreshment given to weary souls by Jesus Christ.

There is Rest in Christ for the Guilt-Laden

First, there is quiet rest and full refreshment in Christ for sinners that are weary and heavy laden with sin. Sin is the most evil and odious thing, as well as the most mischievous and fatal. It is the most mortal poison. It, above all things, hazards life, and endangers the soul, exposes to the loss of all happiness, and to the suffering of all misery, and brings the...

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wrath of God. All men have this dreadful evil hanging about them, and cleaving fast to the soul, and ruling over it, and keeping it in possession, and under absolute command: it hangs like a viper to the heart, or rather holds it as a lion does his prey.

But yet there are multitudes who are not sensible of their misery. They are in such a sleep that they are not very unquiet in this condition, it is not very burthensome to them, they are so sottish that they do not know what is their state, and what is like to become of them. But there are others who have their sense so far restored to them that they feel the pain, and see the approaching destruction, and sin lies like a heavy load upon their hearts. It is a load that lies upon them day and night: they cannot lay it down to rest themselves, but it continually oppresses them. It is bound fast unto them, and is ready to sink them down. It is a continual labour of heart to support itself under this burden. Thus we read of them *“that labour and are heavy laden”* (Mt 11:28).

Or rather, it is like the scorching heat in a dry wilderness, where the sun beats and burns all the day long, where they have nothing to defend them, and where they can find no shade to refresh themselves. If they lay themselves down to rest, it is like lying down in the hot sands, where there is nothing to keep off the heat.

Here it may be proper to inquire who are weary and heavy laden with sin, and in what sense a sinner may be weary and burdened with sin. Sinners are not wearied with sin from any dislike to it, or dislike of it. There is no sinner that is burdened with sin in the sense in which a godly man carries his indwelling sin, as his daily and greatest burden, because he loathes it, and longs to get rid of it. He would fain be at a great distance from it, and have nothing more to do with it. He is ready to cry out as Paul did, *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Rom 7:24). The unregenerate man has nothing of this nature, for sin is yet his delight, he dearly loves it. If he be under convictions, his love to sin in general is not mortified. He loves it as well as ever, and he hides it still as a sweet morsel under his tongue.

But there is a difference between being weary and burdened with sin, and being weary of sin. Awakened sinners are weary with sin, but not properly weary of it.

Therefore, they are only weary of the guilt of sin: the guilt that cleaves to their consciences is that great burden. God has put the sense of feeling into their consciences, that were before as seared flesh, and it is guilt that pains them. The filthiness of sin and its evil nature, as it is an offence to a holy, gracious, and glorious God, is not a burden to them. But it is the connection between sin and punishment, between sin and God’s wrath, that makes it a burden. Their consciences are heavy laden with guilt, which is an obligation to punishment. They see the threatening and curse of the law joined to their sins, and see that the justice of God and His vengeance are against them. They are burdened with their sins, not because there is any odiousness in them, but because there is hell in them. This is the sting of sin, whereby it stings the conscience, and distresses and wearies the soul.

The guilt of such and such great sins is upon the soul, and the man sees no way to get rid of it, but he has wearisome days and wearisome nights. It makes him ready sometimes to say as the psalmist did, *“Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness.... I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest”* (Ps 55:6–8).

But when sinners come to Christ, He takes away that which was their burden, or their sin and guilt, that which was so heavy upon their hearts, that so distressed their minds.

He Takes Away Guilt

(1) He takes away the guilt of sin, from which the soul before saw no way how it was possible to be freed, and which, if it was not removed, led to eternal destruction. When the sinner comes to Christ, it is all at once taken away, and the soul is left free. It is lightened of its burden, it is delivered from its bondage, and is like a bird escaped from the snare of the fowler (cf. Ps 91:3). The soul sees in Christ a way to peace with God, and a way by which the law may be answered, and justice satisfied, yet he may escape: a wonderful way indeed, but yet a certain and a glorious one. And what rest does it give to the weary soul to see itself thus delivered, that the foundation of its anxieties and fears is wholly removed, and that God's wrath ceases, that it is brought into a state of peace with God, and that there is no more occasion to fear hell, but that it is forever safe!

How refreshing is it to the soul to be at once thus delivered of that which was so much its trouble and terror, and to be eased of that which was so much its burden! This is like coming to a cool shade after one has been travelling in a dry and hot wilderness, and almost fainting under the scorching heat.

And then Christ also takes away sin itself, and mortifies that root of bitterness which is the cause of all the inward tumults and disquietudes that are in the mind, that make it like the troubled sea that cannot rest, and leaves it all calm. When guilt is taken away and sin is mortified, then the foundation of fear and trouble and pain is removed, and the soul is left in peace and serenity.

He gives Strength and New Life

(2) Christ puts strength and a principle of new life into the weary soul that comes to Him. The sinner, before he comes to Christ, is as a sick man that is weakened and brought low, and whose nature is consumed by some strong distemper: he is full of pain, and so weak that he cannot walk nor stand. Therefore, Christ is compared to a physician. *"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"* (Mt 9:12; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31). When He comes and speaks the word, He puts a principle of life into him that was before as dead. He gives a principle of spiritual life and the beginning of eternal life. He invigorates the mind with a communication of His own life and strength, and renews the nature and creates it again, and makes the man to be a new creature.

So that the fainting, sinking spirits are now revived, and this principle of spiritual life is a continual spring of refreshment, like a well of living water. *"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life"* (Jn 4:14). Christ gives His Spirit, that calms the mind, and is like a refreshing breeze of wind. He gives that strength whereby He lifts up the hands that hang down, and strengthens the feeble knees (cf. Heb 12:12).

He gives Comfort and Pleasure

(3) Christ gives to those who come to Him such comfort and pleasure as are enough to make them forget all their former labour and travail. A little of true peace, a little of the joys of the manifested love of Christ, and a little of the true and holy hope of eternal life, are enough to compensate for all that toil and weariness, and to erase the remembrance of it from the mind. That peace which results from true faith passes understanding, and that joy is joy unspeakable. There is something peculiarly sweet and refreshing in this joy, that is not in other joys. What can more effectually support the mind, or give a more rational...

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ground of rejoicing, than a prospect of eternal glory in the enjoyment of God from God's own promise in Christ? If we come to Christ, we may not only be refreshed by resting in His shadow, but by eating His fruit: these things are the fruits of this tree. *"I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste"* (Song 2:3).

Before proceeding to the next particular of this proposition, I would apply myself to those that are weary; to move them to repose themselves under Christ's shadow.

The great trouble of such a state, one would think, should be a motive to you to accept of an offer of relief, and remedy. You are weary, and doubtless would be glad to be at rest. But here you are to consider,

(a) That there is no remedy but in Jesus Christ. There is nothing else will give you true quietness. If you could fly into heaven, you would not find it there. If you should take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, in some solitary place in the wilderness, you could not fly from your burden. So that if you do not come to Christ, you must either continue still weary and burdened, or which is worse, you must return to your old dead sleep, to a state of stupidity, and not only so, but you must be everlastingly wearied with God's wrath.

(b) Consider that Christ is a remedy at hand. You need not wish for the wings of a dove that you may fly afar off, and be at rest, but Christ is nigh at hand, if you were but sensible of it. *"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach"* (Rom 10:6–8). There is no need of doing any great work to come at this rest. The way is plain to it. It is but going to it, and it is but sitting down under Christ's shadow. Christ requires no money to purchase rest of Him: He calls to us to come freely, and for nothing. If we are poor and have no money, we may come. Christ sent out His servants to invite the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. Christ does not want to be hired to accept of you, and to give you rest. It is His work as Mediator to give rest to the weary. It is the work that He was anointed for, and in which He delights. *"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound"* (Isa 61:1).

(c) Christ is not only a remedy for your weariness and trouble, but He will give you an abundance of the contrary, joy and delight. They who come to Christ, do not only come to a resting place after they have been wandering in a wilderness, but they come to a banqueting house where they may rest, and where they may feast. They may cease from their former troubles and toils, and they may enter upon a course of delights and spiritual joys.

Christ not only delivers from fears of hell and of wrath, but He gives hopes of heaven, and the enjoyment of God's love. He delivers from inward tumults and inward pain, from that guilt of conscience which is as a worm gnawing within, and He gives delight and inward glory. He brings us out of a wilderness of pits and drought and fiery flying spirits, and He brings us into a pleasant land, a land flowing with milk and honey. He delivers us out of prison, and lifts us off from the dunghill, and He sets us among princes, and causes us to inherit the throne of glory. Wherefore, if anyone is weary, if any is in prison, if anyone is in captivity, if anyone is in the wilderness, let him come to the blessed Jesus, who is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Delay not, arise and come away.

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There is Rest in Christ for the Weary

Second, there are quiet rest and sweet refreshment in Christ for God's people that are weary.

The saints themselves, while they remain in this imperfect state, and have so much remains of sin in their hearts, are liable still to many troubles and sorrows, and much weariness, and have often need to resort anew unto Jesus Christ for rest. I shall mention three cases wherein Christ is a sufficient remedy.

The Case of Persecution

(1) There is rest and sweet refreshment in Christ for those that are wearied with persecutions. It has been the lot of God's Church in this world for the most part to be persecuted. It has had now and then some lucid intervals of peace and outward prosperity, but generally it has been otherwise. This has accorded with the first prophecy concerning Christ; *"I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed"* (Gen 3:15). Those two seeds have been at enmity ever since the time of Abel. Satan has borne great malice against the Church of God, and so have those that are his seed. And oftentimes God's people have been persecuted to an extreme degree, have been put to the most exquisite torments that wit or art could devise, and thousands of them have been tormented to death.

But even in such a case there are rest and refreshment to be found in Christ Jesus. When their cruel enemies have given them no rest in this world, and when as oftentimes has been the case, they could not flee, nor in any way avoid the rage of their adversaries (but many of them have been tormented gradually from day to day that their torments might be lengthened), still rest has been found even then in Christ. It has been often found by experience: the martyrs have often showed plainly that the peace and calm of their minds were undisturbed in the midst of the greatest bodily torment, and have sometimes rejoiced and sung praises upon the rack and in the fire. If Christ is pleased to send forth His Spirit to manifest His love, and speaks friendly to the soul, it will support it even in the greatest outward torment that man can inflict. Christ is the joy of the soul, and if the soul be but rejoiced and filled with divine light, such joy no man can take away. Whatever outward misery there be, the Spirit will sustain it.

The Case of Affliction

(2) There is in Christ rest for God's people, when exercised with afflictions. If a person labour under great bodily weakness, or under some disease that causes frequent and strong pains, such things will tire out so feeble a creature as man. It may to such an one be a comfort and an effectual support to think that he has a Mediator who knows by experience what pain is, who by His pain has purchased eternal ease and pleasure for him, and who will make his brief sufferings to work out a far more exceeding delight to be bestowed when he shall rest from his labours and sorrows.

If a person be brought into great straits as to outward subsistence, and poverty brings abundance of difficulties and extremities. Yet it may be a supporting, refreshing consideration to such an one to think, that he has a compassionate Saviour, who when upon earth, was so poor that He had not where to lay his head (Mt 8:20; Lk 9:58), and who became poor to make him rich (2 Cor 8:9), and purchased for him durable riches, and will make his poverty work out an exceeding and eternal weight of glory (2 Cor 4:17).

If God in His providence calls His people to mourn over lost relations, and if He repeats...

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His stroke and takes away one after another of those that were dear to Him, it is a supporting, refreshing consideration to think that Christ has declared that He will be in stead of all relations unto those who trust in Him. They are as His mother, and sister, and brother (Mt 12:49–50; Mk 3:34–35): He has taken them into a very near relation to Himself. In every other afflictive providence, it is a great comfort to a believing soul to think that he has an intercessor with God, that by Him he can have access with confidence to the throne of grace, and that in Christ we have so many great and precious promises, that all things shall work together for good and shall issue in eternal blessedness. God's people, whenever they are scorched by afflictions as by hot sunbeams, may resort to Him who is as a shadow of a great rock, and be effectually sheltered, and sweetly refreshed.

The Case of Temptation

(3) There is in Christ quiet rest and sweet refreshment for God's people, when wearied with the buffetings of Satan. The devil, that malicious enemy of God and man, does whatever lies in his power to darken and hinder, and tempt God's people, and render their lives uncomfortable. Often he raises needless and groundless scruples, and casts in doubts, and fills the mind with such fear as is tormenting, and tends to hinder them exceedingly in the Christian course. He often raises mists and clouds of darkness, and stirs up corruption, and thereby fills the mind with concern and anguish, and sometimes wearies out the soul. So that they may say as the psalmist, *"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"* (Ps 22:12–13).

In such a case if the soul flies to Jesus Christ, they may find rest in Him, for He came into the world to destroy Satan, and to rescue souls out of his hands. And He has all things put under His feet, whether they be things in heaven, or things on earth, or things in hell. Therefore He can restrain Satan when He pleases. And that He is doubtless ready enough to pity us under such temptations, we may be assured, for He has been tempted and buffeted by Satan as well as we. He is able to succour those that are tempted, and He has promised that He will subdue Satan under His people's feet. Let God's people therefore, when they are exercised with any of those kinds of weariness, make their resort unto Jesus Christ for refuge and rest.

Reflections and Conclusion (Part 3)

(1) We may here see great reason to admire the goodness and grace of God to us in our low estate, that He has so provided for our help and relief. We are by our own sin against God plunged into all sorts of evil, and God has provided a remedy for us against every sort of evil: He has left us helpless in no calamity. We by our sin have exposed ourselves to wrath, to a vindictive justice, but God has done very great things that we might be saved from that wrath. He has been at infinite cost that the law might be answered without our suffering. We by our sins have exposed ourselves to terror of conscience, in expectation of the dreadful storm of God's wrath, but God has provided for us a hiding place from the storm. He bids us enter into His chambers, and hide ourselves from indignation. We by sin have made ourselves poor, needy creatures, but God has provided for us gold tried in the fire. We by sin have made ourselves naked, and when He passed by, He took notice of our want, and has provided us white raiment that we may be clothed. We have made ourselves blind, and God in mercy to us has provided eye salve, that we may see. We have deprived ourselves of all spiritual food. We are like the prodigal son that perished with hunger, and would gladly have filled his belly with husks. God has taken notice of this our condition, and has provided for us a feast of fat things, and has sent forth His servants to...

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invite the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind (Lk 14:21). We by sin have brought ourselves into a dry and thirsty wilderness, but God was merciful, and took notice of our condition, and has provided for us rivers of water, water out of the rock. We by sin have brought upon ourselves a miserable slavery and bondage. God has made provision for our liberty. We have exposed ourselves to weariness, and God has provided a resting place for us. We by sin have exposed ourselves to many outward troubles and afflictions. God has pitied us, and in Christ has provided true comfort for us. We have exposed ourselves to our grand enemy, even Satan, to be tempted and buffeted by him; God has pitied, and has provided for us a Saviour and Captain of salvation, who has overcome Satan, and is able to deliver us. Thus God has in Christ provided sufficiently for our help in all kinds of evils.

How ought we to bless God for this abundant provision He has made for us, poor and sinful as we were, who were so undeserving and so ungrateful. He made no such provision for the fallen angels, who are left without remedy in all the woes and miseries into which they are plunged.

(2) We should admire the love of Christ to men, that He has thus given Himself to be the remedy for all their evil, and a fountain of all good. Christ has given Himself to us, to be all things to us that we need. We want clothing, and Christ does not only give us clothing, but He gives Himself to be our clothing, that we might put Him on. *“For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ”* (Gal 3:27). *“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof”* (Rom 13:14).

We want food, and Christ has given Himself to be our food. He has given His own flesh to be our meat, and His blood to be our drink, to nourish our soul. Thus Christ tells us that He is the bread which came down from heaven, and the bread of life. *“I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 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”* (Jn 6:48–51). In order to our eating of His flesh, it was necessary that He should be slain, as the sacrifices must be slain before they could be eaten; and such was Christ’s love to us, that He consented to be slain. He went as a sheep to the slaughter (cf. Isa 53:7) that He might give us His flesh to be food for our poor, famishing souls.

We are in need of a habitation: we by sin have, as it were, turned ourselves out of house and home. Christ has given Himself to be the habitation of His people. *“LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations”* (Ps 90:1). It is promised to God’s people that they should dwell in the temple of God for ever, and should go no more out, and we are told that Christ is the temple of the new Jerusalem.

Christ gives Himself to His people to be all things to them that they need, and all things that make for their happiness. *“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all”* (Col 3:11). And that He might be so, He has refused nothing that is needful to prepare Him to be so. When it was needful that He should be incarnate, He refused it not, but became man, and appeared in the form of a servant (Phil 2:7). When it was needful that He should be slain, He refused it not, but gave Himself for us, and gave Himself to us upon the cross.

Here is love for us to admire, for us to praise, and for us to rejoice in, with joy that is full of glory forever.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

CHURCH THEME: WALK IN THE NEWNESS OF LIFE (Romans 6:4)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am** and **4.00 pm**.

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 01/07/2007	Next Week: 08/07/2007	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Requirements for Serving in Christ's Kingdom	Do You Have the Heart of a Servant?	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Text:</i>	Luke 9:57-62	Matthew 20:20-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Worship: Thank God for the worship held at home of Sis Yetta. For those who like to open their home, please inform Pr Mok. • Prayer Requests: (1) Pray for students who are waiting for their examination results. (2) Pray for those suffering physical ailments: Elder Ford (knee pains), Barbara Tibby (early stages of Alzheimer), Susan Teoh (abdominal pain – awaiting scan results). • Daily Devotion Materials: The daily devotion "Our Daily Walk" by F. B. Meyer, for this quarter is available free at the book table. • School of Theology at Metropolitan Tabernacle: The theme for this year programme is "The Glory of Christ in the Working Church". It will be held from 3rd – 5th Jul 2007. • Memory Verses: <i>Previous Week (June 07 Wk 4):</i> Hebrews 12:28-29 - Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God <i>is</i> a consuming fire. <i>This Week (July 07 Wk 1):</i> Matthews 10:37-38 - He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Yanning	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	Faith That Moves Mountains	Lover Of Strangers	
<i>Text:</i>	1 Corinthians 12:9	Romans 12:13	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Feng Qian	Anthony	
Other Duties			
	Today: 01/07/2007	Next Week: 08/07/2007	
<i>Ushers</i>	Wah Soon/Joyce	Daniel/Constance	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Joyce	Carol	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Constance	Feng Qian	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	BBK / DHW	BBK / DHW	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 6 Jul	7:30 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by: Pr Mok	
Sat 7 Jul	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr: Pr Mok	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £408.97		Lunch: £46.10	
Family Worship at the home of Sis Yetta			
			