

Come up here, I want to show you something; (Revelation 4; 1)

THOUGHTS AND REASONINGS

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THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND FROM A 'HIGHER' PERSPECTIVE

INTRODUCTION

If you have read my other booklets, you know why they are calling the reader to; "Come up here". It is a calling to you to put aside your natural and carnal way of thinking and to mature in having a renewed mind so that you can spiritually discern spiritual things.

Let us search out matters that God has concealed. Proverbs 25; 2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter"

I want us just to remember one important thing. We are comprised of flesh, soul and spirit. Our soul and our flesh are very intimately connected. Our soul is our mind, our will and our emotions. When we are not born again, we live dominated by our soul which is led by our flesh. We live by our 5 senses; how we see, feel, taste and touch. We are governed by pleasing these 5 senses and we interpret life through them. When we are born again, we are born of the Spirit. God intended man to be governed by his spirit connected to HIS Spirit. This will mean that natural life, flesh, carnality does not have a say in what we think or say. Romans 5; 5 -8 "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

But the choice is ours. When we are born again, we could chose to continue to live life carnally, or we could make the decision to be led by the Spirit.

What will govern our decision making? Our thoughts. How we think about things and situations. Most books written about the battlefield of the mind concentrate on the demonic and how we must withstand it or war against it in order to have victory over our thoughts. This booklet is going to give you another perspective on this topic.

One of the blessings of Abraham, which is ours too when we are of the faith of Abraham, is contained in Genesis 22; 17 "..... and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies".

This Old Testament promise must mean something to us in the here and now. We don't live in walled cities today and our elders don't sit at their gates. God's word is timeless so how does this promise apply to us in 2023?

Gates in Old Testament times were the places in ancient cities or towns where entrance was gained into the city, where the elders sat and decisions were made and where the market place was. Wikipedia states that they filled functions relating to defense, security, health, trade and representation. If you have read my other booklets and understand the concept of looking at things from a spiritual perspective, you have already said 'aha' in your mind.

The Hebrew word used for 'gate' is 'sha'ar' which means in its original sense an opening, or space inside a gate, as public meeting-place, market. You will remember how I broke down the Hebrew language in my other booklets. The Hebrew language started with letters drawn as pictures of something. To the Hebrew, things were described according to their function and not their appearance. Therefore verbs are the Hebrew's way of explaining things. All Hebrew words have roots. Put very simply the root is the picture or action of a thing. The Hebrew verb from which the word 'sh'ar' stems is also 'sha'ar' and it means to reason, or to think. Isn't that interesting? The physical gates are therefore a type and shadow of thoughts. Now we can apply that to the promise given to Abraham and see that it is our thoughts which need to be 'possessed' according to this verse in Genesis.

The Hebrew word for 'possessed' is Yarash and means to take possession, to dispossess or occupy, to occupy by driving out previous tenants and possessing their place. Is the picture becoming clearer now?

The gates that will be possessed according to this promise are those of our enemies. Enemies in Hebrew is the noun oyeb meaning enemy or foe and it stems from the verb ayab meaning hostility. Very interestingly the root of ayab is ab which means a pole, or to stand. It's broken up into the Hebrew letters aleph (strength) and beit (house). Together they mean the strength of the house/tent, which in ancient civilizations in the physical, was the pole that held up the tent, but in the metaphorical it was the father. It also means desire - a standing firm for what is desired. Therefore the enemies that are spoken of in the promise, refer to the things that are hostile.

So what does scripture tell us is hostile to us and to God? No, not the devil. Think again.

Romans 8; 7 says "the carnal mind is enmity towards God." Carnal in Greek is the word 'sarkikos' and means pertaining to behavior that is typical of human nature but with special focus upon more base desires. You should see how this is contrary to spiritual. The spiritual mind thinks on things above and not below. Col 3; 2 "Set your minds on things above, not on things below." The carnal mind is also contrasted to the spiritual mind in James 3; 14 - 17 "But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, and demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

You can understand now how a carnal way of thinking is hostility to God and how they can become a stronghold.

The picture of gates with this background is created for me of how our thoughts are the trading floor, the entrance or opportunity granted to things that may be hostile to God. When we allow carnal thoughts, we firstly make a decision to allow these thoughts, (judgement) and then we give those thoughts entrance into our reasoning, and we trade, we exchange the wrong thoughts for the truth of God, we therefore exchange the truth for a lie (Romans 1; 25).

We have to repossess our thoughts, our gates, in order to have an intimate walk with God and

impact our world around us. We have to dispossess our thoughts from the things below and re-occupy that space with the wisdom that comes from above.

Keeping in mind that Proverbs 23; 7 says.....as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he....” We have to guard our thoughts, because they are the building blocks of what we become. 2 Corinthians 10; 5 “we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” God uses warfare terminology to explain what it is that we must do.

The church of God is constantly told that our battle is against evil forces and that we are in a spiritual war against demons. But is this what Paul meant when he spoke about our war in 2 Cor 10; 4, 5; “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

The effect of the weapons that he lists, in the Greek language are actually referring to the demolition of thought patterns and not a physical or spiritual force.

The Greek word for ‘ strongholds’ is ochuroma and means physically a fortress or anything on which one relies, figuratively a false argument. This makes sense to us in our present day where we don’t have physical fortresses. The word used for imaginations in verse 5 is logismous which means bottom line thinking that reflects someone’s values. Every high thing exalted against the knowledge of God is referring to pride. All references are to thought patterns, and not evil spirits or demons.

Galatians 5; 19 “Now the practices of the sinful nature are clearly evident: they are sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality (total irresponsibility, lack of self-control), idolatry, sorcery, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions [that promote heresies], envy, drunkenness, riotous behavior, and other things like these.” Did you really understand what you have just read? All these ‘evil’ things are the practices of a sinful nature. We have been binding spirits of lust, addiction, jealousy, rebellion.....we have been fighting demons and witchcraft. But God’s word says; these things are the works of the flesh! They are the evidence of a carnal nature and therefore immaturity in the spirit. Even sorcery is a work of the flesh.

Galatians 5; 17 very clearly states that the warfare is between the Spirit and the flesh – not between evil spirits or demons and flesh. “For the flesh desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. For these are opposed to one another in order that you should not do those things you might wish.”

We must realize that we cannot just allow our thoughts to run wild like a steam train with no one driving it. We need to constantly be aware of what is going on in our thought life, and re-route our ‘train’ when our thoughts are taking us on the wrong track. The challenge is recognizing the wrong thoughts as they take place in our heads and immediately dispossessing them, and replacing them with the right thoughts. It’s the age old discipline called the ‘renewing our mind’.

This scripture in Genesis 22; 17 is a promise of authority. We will have the possession and control

of the gates and market place of the enemy or adversary, or the place where hostile things threaten to enter. We will be in control of what we allow and what we don't allow to enter, what we will transact with, trade with and what not.

In summary then; Gates as thoughts..... We are in possession of hostile and adversarial thoughts meaning we are in control. We decide what to let in and what not to. The promise is that we can occupy, we can drive out and possess in the place of what is hostile. Yet what we have done with this promise, is we have stood at the gates, and still allowed the enemy to come in and out, and trade with us at will because we have not understood it properly. We allow hostile thoughts, we allow adversarial thoughts, we play with them, and we entertain them. We are not exercising the control that we were meant to. We are allowing our thoughts to take us captive and lead us on the path of destruction and death, just like Eve did when she stared at the tree of knowledge and contemplated it in her thoughts.

We have for too long understood this verse and others to mean that we are opposing a physical or spiritual force, entity or being that is external to us. We are in fact shadow boxing. What we have failed to realize, is that the shadow we are battling with, is our own.

As our thoughts are therefore gates. You probably know the saying; you become what you think. It's very true if you apply the picture of thoughts as gates. What you let into your mind, what you think about, will become established in your thought life, and will then become what you speak (amar) and what you confess(debar) – for out of the heart the mouth speaks. Luke 6; 45.

The Hebrew word 'amar' means say or utter. This is a word that includes non-verbal communication, therefore it includes intention and thought.

The Hebrew letters that spell Debar are Dalet, Beit and Resh. The picture painted by the pictograph of the letters is that the Head (resh) or your intellect, is the doorway (dalet) to your house, family (beit). The verb (dabar) means to formalize: to deliberately establish and pronounce something's name or definition. This causes the thing to become "real" in the mind of whoever understands this word, name or definition. Confession creates an entrance by the one speaking (leader) into the house or family. The noun debar means word. It also means "thing" since the naming of a thing causes the experienced reality of the thing. Can you see how absolutely impactful our words really are?

Adam was placed in the garden to keep (shamar) it. The Hebrew word 'shamar' means to keep and preserve, like a watchman. The root word means to hedge about.

Amar is spelt in Hebrew; aleph, mem and resh. And Shamar is spelt Shin, mem and resh. The aleph is not the letter 'a', it's actually a silent letter representing an ox head and symbolizes a sacrifice, leader, strength, teach, what is first or important. The ancient mystic rabbi's said that the Aleph brings into form that which is formless, it makes solid that which cannot be grasped. (From chaimbentorah website)

'Shamar' is actually 'amar' with 'sh' the Hebrew letter shin in front of it. So it represents in the Hebrew letters utterances (amar) with the ability to change, consume, or destroy you,

(represented by the shin). The two meanings contained in one communicate the message that we need to keep and preserve, guard (shamar) what we say (amar).

Don't you find it interesting that thoughts and intents are pictures of gates and the Hebrew word used as a gate keeper is the same word used for the job that Adam was assigned to do in the garden?

We have been believing that the devil tempts us, that he places thoughts into our minds which lead us astray. But scripture tells us something different. James 1; 14-15; "Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed, then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin and sin when it is full grown brings forth death,"

In the same way, Amar – thoughts, that become confession (debar) will conceive things. That is why it is of the utmost importance to understand that thoughts are the gateway of whatever we allow into our lives.

A better interpretation of James 1; 14, 15 from the Greek words used is the following;

Each one is tempted (tested) when he is drawn away (like a fish lured by bait) by his own desires (focus or longings) and enticed, (sounds much like Eve) then when desire (our focus or longings) has conceived, it gives birth to sin (missing the mark) and sin when it is full grown brings forth death,". The word 'conceived' links to the Hebrew letter mem in Amar. Mem is symbolic of amongst other things, the womb. (Amar which includes thoughts and intentions because they are the womb which bring forth what we declare, links to the picture of our longings giving birth to sin)

It is imperative that we recognize the link between what we think and what we say. This is why it is so important to take our thoughts captive to Christ; we must be gate keepers of the gates. Our thoughts are the gateway to either our success in our walk with God or our downfall.

Let's examine what I am saying by looking at the New and Old Testament. They must speak the same language and have the same message because the word of God is timeless, eternal, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

If the one has a different message to what the other is saying, then we need to re-examine our understanding of it, or the doctrine we have been taught.

Numbers 33;51,52 "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, you must drive out before you all the inhabitants of the land, destroy all their carved images and demolish all their high places." We have always read this verse in a physical understanding and thought of statutes of idols that the people of Canaan were worshiping. This is indeed the physical picture. But because God knew that statutes and idols and the practice of falling down and worshipping images will become outdated as time moves on, He has made it a type and shadow of something deeper. Let's go up higher and look at what the physical picture was a type and shadow of in the spiritual dimension.

We will examine this verse in Numbers in the Greek first and then the Hebrew.

You shall lift away (remove) their sacred heights (what you look at, contemplate, observe) and you shall destroy (cut off entirely) all their carved (lame, maimed) images (eikon – representations) and demolish all their high places (what they stand on, persist or persevere with). Not what you expected?

Now in Hebrew;

You shall destroy (annihilate) their carved images (showpiece, figure, imagination) their covered images (tselem – used in Genesis to say man was created in the tselem/image/ representation of God) and demolish (destroy) their high places (heights – elevation- pride)

Tselem in Hebrew and eikon in Greek are both words that mean an image, a shadow or a representation. It is a copy and representation, not a clone. It is like the original – it is not the same as the original. So in Genesis when God said that He will make man in His tselem, he was not saying that He was making a mini-God. Man, as a created being himself, carried the representation/ shadow of God to the created earth. Man is NOT in any sense God. Yet it is AS IF he is God to the earth. So when man acts in an ungodly way – then his representation of his source is crooked, or maimed.

This is incredibly interesting; the Old and the New Testament speak the same language and give us the same picture. What this means is that idolatry in the Old Testament and its corresponding practices in the making of idols and high places, and images was symbolic of representations that we make of our source, which are lame and maimed, proud, imaginations and thought patterns we persist in. That is why this is our enemy, and why the only way to defeat it is by the Truth which is the word of God, because the truth is the exact representation of God. We can also understand better now why God told Israel to never make an image of anything. Because an image is a representation. God said in Genesis 1; 26 that He would make man into His image. Therefore, if we are the image of God on this earth, there need be no other image. Any other image we make, will be crooked, maimed and deformed, which means the representation of God is crooked, maimed and deformed.

The Hebrew word for carved images is maskith and is translated as imaginations in these verses and as carved images in other verses.

Psalm 73; 7 “their eye bulges from fatness; the imaginations (maskith) of their heart overflow.”

Proverbs 18; 11 “A rich person's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own imagination (maskith).”

Look at what Jeremiah 10;8 says “ A wooden idol is a worthless doctrine” An idol maker or a metal smith would carve out of wood or stone or metal an idol that people would worship and ascribe deity to. Look at the process. The idol maker has an image in his thoughts of what he wants the idol to look like, he then shapes his material into this image – then people ascribe a spiritual quality to this idol believing in it and things will start to manifest in their lives that they will ascribe to this idol. This is actually a picture of Rev 13. An imagination takes a form

to which 'power' is ascribed and persons worship this power by serving it, submitting to it, and representing it. From a spiritual understanding we understand that what Jeremiah is saying is that an earthly / carnal (wooden) representation (idol) is a worthless (empty, unsubstantial) doctrine.

A picture of 'worship' is contained in Ex 23; 24 "you shall not bow down (submit your will) to their gods, nor serve (further their ways) them, nor do after their work (copy them, replicate, represent them). Worship, we have thought, means to either sing slow songs about how wonderful God is and raise our hands, or to bow down before something. But the idea of worship in scripture is far deeper than this. From the above passage, it means a submission of our will to something we find of importance, a furthering of that things' interests and ways, and representing it to others.

In Genesis 22; 5 "And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." When Abraham took his son Isaac to sacrifice him as he was told to do by God, he told his servants that he and his son would go and worship. They didn't go to bow down before anything nor to sing. What they went to do, was to carry out a physical representation of what was destined to happen thousands of years later. Abraham and Isaac went to submit their will to the Father's instruction, to further it and to represent it. Abraham, as representative of God the Father, was taking his only son, and going to give him up as a sacrifice. Isaac was submitting to the process. It was a type and shadow of Jesus, as God's son, willingly becoming the sacrifice for the world. Both Abraham and Isaac were representing God as Father and son perfectly. This is worship.

The gates of the ancient city of Jerusalem are listed in Nehemiah. You can find many scriptures on this topic on the internet, but for the purpose of this booklet of mine, I am going to explain another view of them.

Keep in mind what you have just been taught; that gates are thoughts or thought patterns.

Jerusalem is the place where God put His name. 2 Chronicles 6; 6 "But now I have chosen Jerusalem for my Name to be there." Jerusalem means Place of peace. Most of us know that shalom or shalem means peace. But it means more than peace as in the absence of strife. It means prosperity, completeness, wholeness too.

Remember also that 'name' in Hebrew is 'shem' and it means character, essence. This is why God said He would chose Jerusalem - its name means place of peace - and it's where God intended to put His character and essence. We are told that there will be a New Jerusalem at the end of the age. Revelation 21; 2. And on a spiritual level, the body of Christ is the spiritual Jerusalem. Hebrews 12; 22 " but you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the New Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the church of the firstborn who are registered in Heaven, to God the Judge of all and to the spirits of just men made perfect". We, as the New Jerusalem are the 'place' where God has chosen to deposit His character and essence in an environment of peace. So ancient Jerusalem and its gates is a type and shadow of what thoughts (gates) the body of Christ (Jerusalem) should have.

The first gate on the top, North-west side of the city was the Sheep gate; this gate was where

the lambs for the offerings at the temple were brought into the city. It is obviously symbolic of the Lamb of God, and therefore our salvation and our priesthood after the order of Melchizedek (which interestingly enough means King of Righteousness – it is the sacrifice of the Lamb of God that has made us righteous).

The next gate on the west is the Fish gate; this is where the fishermen took their catch. Jesus said that he would make his disciples fishers of men, and this gate represents trade and our testifying, and confessing Jesus to those around us.

The next gate was the Old Gate, it was the gate into the new quarter of Jerusalem, quite the paradox; the old leading into the new. Jeremiah 6:16 tells us that the old way is the way we must walk in, the ancient paths where the good way is and where rest for our souls is. It represents us putting off the old and putting on the new, the new creation in Christ and sticking to the ancient paths that God has given us in His word to stay on His paths.

The next gate moving further south west is the Valley gate; this is the gate where Nehemiah began his investigation of the walls of Jerusalem. It's symbolic of our doing introspection, inspecting our thoughts and identifying the weak places so that we can build them up.

After the Valley gate comes the Dung gate. Obviously this was the dumping site of the city; where all the refuse was taken. This was the sanitation of the city. Symbolically it represents us getting rid of all things that are bad for us in our walk with God, i.e. our cleansing.

Starting to move Northwards on the Eastern side is the Fountain Gate; It is near the Pool of Siloam. It was the City's water system. It is symbolic of the Holy Spirit who refreshes and renews us.

The Next gate is the Water Gate which led to the Spring of Gihon which was the city's water source. Water is symbolic of the Word of God, so this gate symbolizes the importance of God's word as our source.

The horse gate was next; it was obviously used for horses. Horses were used in the armies then, and are symbolic of warfare. This gate therefore symbolizes the warfare we are in.

The East gate led directly into the temple and is today called the Golden gate. This gate symbolizes intimacy with God, entering into the Holy of holies through the new and living way, Christ's sacrifice.

The last gate on the North eastern corner is the Inspection gate or the Lion's gate; it had military implications; and was where the troops were called and inspected. This is symbolic of our inspection by God to see whether we have represented Him well.

In keeping with the understanding that gates on a deeper level represent our thoughts, what do these gates of ancient Jerusalem reveal to us today?

If the promise to Abraham said that his seed, which are us, will possess the gates of their enemies, and we now know that the gates are our thoughts. What or who are the enemies?

Well, who was Israel's enemies? Ezekiel 16; 1-3 says; "the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, 'thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: "Your birth and your nativity are from the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite". God was saying that for Jerusalem to know their abominations they had to consider from where they came; their origin was from the Amorite and the Hittite. I understand this as God saying; for them to know their abominations they had to consider what the abominations were of these two nations from which they had come.

The first verse in the bible that I found that referred to Israel's enemies was Deut 7; 1. I try to always use the principle of first reference in scripture as it sets the stage for every other place in the scriptures where you find the same word or phrase. If one reads the bible and interprets the same words and phrases differently every time they appear in scripture, you are going to become completely confused and misled. God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is the one who was and is and is to come. His expression of His plan and His will, will never change.

Deut 7; 1 says; "When the Lord your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you; the Hittite, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, and when the Lord your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them."

Israel had many more enemies; Babylon, Assyria, Moab etc. But these 7 were the ones they had to dispossess, the ones that were inside the Promised Land. The Promised Land is symbolic of our secret place of intimacy and rest in God's promises. Remember the exposition of the word 'possess' being Yarash meaning to take possession, to dispossess or occupy, to occupy by driving out previous tenants and possessing their place? All of the other nations I mentioned briefly (Babylon, Assyria, Moab etc) were external to the Promised Land. There will surely be a message in them too, but that will be for another time. These 7 were internal.

The number 7 is very significant. Seven is a picture of completeness, a finished work. 7 in the scriptures does not necessarily mean 7 separate things, it may very well mean that the 7 things listed form a comprehensive picture of one completed thing. For instance, in Isaiah 11 the 7 spirits of God are listed. It does not mean God has 7 spirits. It means that the 7 things listed are the complete picture of who the Spirit of God is in His totality.

These 7 enemies are very significant. They represent the full spectrum or complete picture of the enemy or what is hostile to God. Keep in mind the context of this verse Genesis 22; 17; that the enemy and adversary God has shown us through His word are thoughts.

In each of these nations, I will show you a symbol of what the hostile thoughts are that the carnal mind / the old man has, which we have to get rid of, dispossess and take to the dung gate. And they each seem to correlate with one or more of the gates on the western side of Jerusalem which symbolize, if you think about it, the renewed mind, i.e.; renewed mind-sets with which we need to re-occupy our thoughts with.

Let me just make a quick mention of direction in Hebrew. Westerners always work out direction from North. In the Hebrew mindset, they work from the East. The Garden of Eden was in the

East. Abraham on his journey to the Promised Land walked from East to West. The walk from the entrance to the tabernacle right through to the Most Holy place is from East to West. The tabernacle is a type and shadow of the journey into spiritual maturity. One starts at the altar of sacrifice which is outside in the outer court. There are many people there and they are in the light of the sun. Fewer people, represented by the Levitical priests moved beyond that into the Holy Place. Here the only light was from the Menorah which represents the Holy Spirit. And then only one person, the High Priest moved even further into intimacy with God by entering the Most Holy Place where God said He would speak from. The East to the Hebrews was the place of beginnings and therefore the past. The West was the future. You can fit the spiritual meanings of the gates of Jerusalem into this understanding of East and West. See how the Eastern gates representing our beginnings and past as new Christians represent refreshment of the Holy Spirit, the word of God as our source, warfare, intimacy through the sacrifice of Jesus and inspection, and how the Western (deeper intimacy and maturity) gates represent righteousness and peace, testimony and confession, putting off the old man and putting on the new one, and being refined by trials.

Let us look at the 7 enemies.

The Hittites were the grandson of Noah through Ham. The word Hittite comes from the root word which is a verb meaning; to deplete of strength, courage or will-power or any essential support which results in a collapse of sorts. Nouns from this verb describe various nuances of debilitating or paralyzing fear.

The Hittites were one of the 7 nations in the Promised Land which caused the spies to experience debilitating fear when they saw them and that is why they brought the report back to the Israelites that they would not be able to defeat these people. You can imagine the fear the Israelites, who had been slaves for 400 years, experienced when they saw these people who epitomize fear.

The "Hittite" thought patterns are therefore those which cause us to fear, or those thoughts that result in us feeling that we cannot cope anymore.

Dr Mk Strydom in her book 'Sanctification of the heart' says that fear is the one emotion that is the source of the majority of all disease and sickness because of the toxic effect that it has on our bodies.

How do we dispossess these thoughts? We replace them with truth; the Word of God; We are told that we are no longer slaves to fear, Romans 8;15, and that we don't have the spirit of fear but of power, love and sound mind, 2 Tim 1;7. And that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength, Phil 4; 13.

The Sheep gate or gate of salvation is the opposite of this enemy, it represents the inheritance of a spirit of adoption, of power love and sound mind and the realization that Jesus has set us free from the fear of death (Heb 2;15)

It was interesting for me to see that Bathsheba was married to a Hittite. Had the Israelites completely wiped them out as God had instructed them to, it might have changed the course of

David's life.

The Amorite, also a descendant of Ham, was known to the Hebrews as the 'Talkers' as the word Amorite comes from the root word 'amar'. We know that 'amar' means to speak or talk.

The Amorites were called an evil and sinful people symbolized by black water due to their witchcrafts. (Jewish Encyclopedia). Therefore their speech was dark, threatening and boastful.

This represents to me thoughts that cause us to speak dark, boastful things. It includes accusing and criticizing thoughts. We are told that our enemy is the accuser of the brethren. To bring an accusation, we need to speak, and that is why I link this enemy with accusation too. Accusation brings with it guilt and shame, all thoughts, that as children of the Most High God, we should not be entertaining. By complaining to God about someone, we are in essence saying that we are better than them or the way we do things or think is better; this is boastful and critical. When we complain to God about someone therefore, we are in actual fact, the accuser of our brethren.

I link this enemy with the renewed mind of the Fish gate. The Fish gate is symbolic of our testifying and confessing Jesus to the people around us as we operate in the task of being fishers of men. If we have an Amorite mind-set, we confess negative and critical things; we talk of things that cause fear and negativity, guilt and shame. With a renewed mind, we should be confessing God's promises, life over situations, absolution of our sins and freedom of guilt and shame instead. Romans 8; 1 "There is therefore now, no condemnation to those who are in Christ."

I find it so interesting that Abraham was an Amorite (Ezekiel 16; 3). God chose a "Talker" to become the spiritual father to a spiritual people who are called upon to confess (talk) God's word (i.e.; Jesus) and His promises. Abraham's actions in obeying God's instruction to sacrifice his only son, was a perfect representation of who God is. His actions were the words he spoke. God sees so far beyond what we see; He sees potential where we would not.

The Gergashite; the word means one who turns back from a pilgrimage and dweller in mud or clay. The verb means to drag or strive. This is a mind-set of turning back, backsliding, carnal, earthly, sensual, and which causes strife or agitates strife. When we turn back or away from the ancient paths, we will stray onto carnal, earthly ones. When the Prince of Peace is not in our hearts, we will be the source of strife in our environment.

This mind-set is opposite to the Old gate; where we are called upon to stay on the ancient paths and to let go of the old man. We must remember that we are a new creation, a spiritual man, living in the Spirit and not by the flesh, walking by faith and not by sight.

What is the renewed mind in this regard? 1 Cor 2; 5; our faith must exist/be in the power of God and not in man's wisdom. 1 Cor 2; 14 the natural man doesn't understand the things of God's Spirit, only the spiritual man can. Colossians 3;2 Set your minds on things above and not on earthly things, for you died and your life is hidden in Christ.

The Canaanites were descendants of Ham. They were a people who had a structured way of life. They had walled cities, political systems, legal systems, and they were a mixed people due to trade.

The name Canaan means purple representing trade and it also means synchronicity; giving up on certain things in order to unite more effectively as a group. This speaks to me of tolerance and compromise. Trade speaks of greed and focus on profit and money.

The Canaanite mind-set is one of thoughts that allow compromise and tolerance. Thoughts centered on financial benefit, and not considering the cost involved in that.

The opposite of this mind-set is The Fish gate. At the Fish gate, we are traders of the Word of truth, the Gospel of the good news; our thoughts should be centered on HIM as our source and on being content with what we have. There is no thought of profit to ourselves.

In Philippians 4; 11-13 we read that Paul learnt to be content in any situation he was in. He learnt that he could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. Romans 10; 15 "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news". 1 Thes 2; 8 "Having so fond an affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives". 1 Peter 3; 15; "In your hearts be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have."

The Perizites were a people who rejected the Canaanite way of life and preferred to live in open spaces instead of in walled cities. They therefore separated themselves in order to not have to live in a structured and ordered system.

The root verb is 'peres' and means to go beyond a border or limit.

This mind-set are thoughts that break through the walls and hedges that God puts around us. (Hosea 2; 6). These are thoughts that refuse discipline and order and that separate us or isolate us.

The Valley gate mind-set fits in here; it's the place where we must examine our thoughts and identify those who do not fit into the parameters of God's hedge.

Proverbs 25; 28 says "a city with no walls is like a man with no self-control". The Perizite mind-set is one with no discipline, it continually wants to break through any restraint. Eccles 10; 8 warns us that if we break through a wall, a snake bites us. There is safety in operating within the boundaries that God has set for us. Under the shadow of His wings, we are safe and cared for, Psalm 91. In His coverings, we are hidden from the scourge of tongues, Job 5; 21, Psalm 31; 20.

If you look at what we know of the Hivite people from the scriptures we gain a picture of what type of mind-set this is.

It was a Hivite who raped Dinah in Genesis 31. He saw her and wanted her, so he took her. And then in order to get her, his father and he were willing to accept the Israelite's culture and religion and incorporate it into theirs; i.e. compromise and tolerance.

It was also men of the Hivite people who tricked Joshua into entering into a covenant with them to ensure their survival. Joshua 9

They were tent dwellers. The verb means to lay out in order to live collectively, i.e. to submit

oneself wholly to a collective. This is what Shechem did; he and his father were willing to submit their tribe to fusion with the Israelites. This would obviously be a fusion where compromise and tolerance of opposing cultures would be required.

This seems to be a mind-set governed by me, myself and I; I get what I want, when I want, and how I want and I don't care what price I pay to get it. If it means I lose the essence of who I am, it's a price I am willing to pay. The nuance of the verb; lay out to live collectively speaks of tolerance and compromise.

We are a body of believers; we are all members of one body. Our submission is only to God and Jesus as our head, we chose to live and move and work within the boundaries that He has set for us. As His children, we know that we cannot get what we want, when and how we want it. He is our source, He is the one who orders our paths, He gives promotion, and He guides us where He needs us. This is the mind-set of the Valley gate.

The Jebusites lived in the mountains and occupied Jerusalem. Joshua was never able to fully dislodge them. They were a warlike people.

The verb 'bus' means; to trample down with the effect of destruction, or down trodden/ subjection or ruin/downfall. What also comes to mind is heaviness, depression, and a tendency to humiliate and criticize others in order to destroy them or bring about their ruin.

We have to correct this mind-set with thoughts of God's truth that we sit in Christ in heavenly places, in positions of authority. Christ is above all principalities in heavenly places and we are in HIM, we are therefore in positions of authority. We lift a spirit of heaviness with the garments of praise. We lay off the old, downtrodden and humiliated man, and pick up the new creation, which has the Spirit of life in us, the Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead. The Old gate and Valley gate is our renewed mind with relation to this mind-set. Ephesians 2; 6, Ephesians 1; 21, 2 Cor 5; 17, Romans 6; 10-11.

The next time you have any of these thought patterns outlined above by the 7 enemies; remember the corresponding gate; thoughts that will open up life because you let in God's truth instead of the lies that come with the hostile thoughts. This is a lifestyle, we cannot just do it once or every now and then. It must become a habit. The more we practice this, the easier it becomes.

It's interesting to see the progression of what wrong mind-sets ultimately result in; when we open up ourselves to fear and start to think incorrectly (Hittite), we start to speak incorrectly (Amorite) which leads to us to walking incorrectly, backsliding and being carnal (Girgashite) and then we start to have wrong interactions /trade and compromise with people and things (Canaanite). This leads us to separations and breaking through boundaries, (Perizzite), which in turn leads us to focus on me, myself and I (Hivite) and this leads ultimately to a downtrodden soul and a defeated life (Jebusite).

In contrast to that, when we give over to God (Sheep gate) and experience our adoption into HIS family, we confess and proclaim HIM and HIS words of truth (Fish gate), through confession we start to lay down our old man as we refuse to tolerate the old things anymore, and we chose to walk on the ancient paths (Old Gate and Dung Gate). We will be led through trials and tribulations

through which we see where our weaknesses lie and where we learn to become submissive to HIS Will, only staying within His boundaries (Valley Gate).

I remember that Joseph Prince said once, that our emotions are our red flags. The minute we have negative emotions, characterized by the works of the flesh and listed in Galatians 6, we must immediately pause and consider what we thinking of because our thoughts trigger our emotion. They are truly gates. We need to exercise discipline and stop allowing our thoughts to have a will of their own.

Romans 1; 21 "because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened."

The Greek word used for 'thoughts' is Dialogismos and it means back and forth reasoning, internal considerations, in other words whenever we reason in our heads or try to make sense of something with our senses or our soulish area instead of seeing things in the spirit.

An example of this would be when Jesus was explaining to His disciples the death that awaited him. Peter, operating in his carnal mind, with his soul leading him, rebuked Jesus and said that he shouldn't speak of such things. He didn't have the spiritual understanding of what Jesus was saying because the physical reality of what Jesus was saying didn't make sense to him. The things we face, life in this physical planet has a spiritual dimension to it. We must learn to see it in order to fulfill our purpose.

Whenever I see the words 'back and forth' I am constantly reminded of what HaSatan does in Job 1. This movement is a character trait. Does this then mean that back and forth reasoning manifests adversary?

Let us examine this.

The root of dialogismos is LOGOS. The word is made up of two words; Dia + Logos.

Dia in Greek means thoroughly, across to the other side, through, back and forth.

Logos means word.

So reasoning's and thoughts have got to do with the WORD and handling it correctly (2 Tim 2; 15 "be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth") This verse implies that there is an incorrect way of dividing the word of God. The Greek word used for 'rightly dividing or handling' the word of God is a word that means to to cut straight, to cut on a straight line, to correctly apportion.

To cut in a straight line is opposite to back and forth. Back and forth implies indecision. It reminds me of the scripture that says; "that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting." This is in essence what happens when we dialogismos / reason - we become unstable and undecided, confused.

Scriptures which use dialogismos (thoughts) are;

Matthew 15; 19 out of the heart proceed evil dialogismos

Luke 2; 35 Jesus was a sign that dialogismos of the hearts will be revealed

Luke 5; 22 and 6; 8 God knows our dialogismos

Luke 24; 38 dialogismos leads to a terrified and troubled heart

Romans 1; 21 by not acknowledging God we become futile in our dialogismos

Romans 14; 1 don't do this (dialogismos); don't reason

1 Cor 3; 20 the Lord knows the dialogismos of the wise that they are futile.

Phil 2; 14 do all things without dialogismos

1 Tim 2; 8 lift up holy hands without wrath and dialogismos

James 2; 4 partiality has evil dialogismos

This Greek word comes from the word 'dialogizomai' which means to consider, go back and forth when evaluating - leading to a confused conclusion. The term implies one confused mind interacting with another confused mind further enforcing the original confusion.

If you look at all the scriptures where this word 'dialogizomai' is used, you will begin to see a pattern;

Luke 20; 14 dialogizomai led to murder

Luke 12; 17 it led to a foolish decision

Luke 5; 22 it led to disbelief

Luke 1; 20 it led to fear

Mark 11; 31 it led to receiving no answer (a double minded man receives nothing from the Lord)

Mark 9; 33 it led to arguments about who is more important

Mark 8; 16-18 it led to a hardened heart - seeing but not seeing, hearing but not hearing.

Luke 3; 15 "the people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering (dialogizomai) in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah". (Indecision and confusion, inability to discern spiritual truth)

Luke 5; 17 -22 "Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop

and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus. When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

Matthew 9; 1- 4 "So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. 2Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." and at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemeth!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"

Matthew 16; 8 "So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemeth!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"

Remember the scripture that says that our faith should not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God? 1 Corinthians 2; 5.

When we rest in the wisdom of men, we operate with logic and reasoning with our minds driven by our soul. And as we have seen from the above scriptures, this is the beginning of a downfall for us. It was Eve's downfall. She looked at the tree and her mind processes, her reasoning, are set out for us; Genesis 3; 6 "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate."

Reasoning is operating out of our soul dimension, using our 5 senses to lead us. We will never increase in spiritual maturity if this is how we chose to live. This is why God told Joshua in Joshua 1; 8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success"

This is the secret of success in the spirit. To meditate on God's truth day and night, to confess it, and to obey it. This is the natural progression of thought. What we think of, becomes what we speak, becomes who we are.

Jesus put it very plainly to Peter in Matthew 16; 21 -23 "From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of

God, but the things of men” Jesus was a Jew and spoke in Hebrew. The word he would have used for ‘thing’s is the word ‘debar’ that I have explained earlier. Debar is at its very base, confession.

It’s very harsh but true words. When we are mindful of the things of men, we are thinking of things from a carnal nature – and this is offensive to God because it goes against His purposes and because it’s living by sight and not by faith. Romans 8; 5 explains it like this; “Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit.”

Proverbs 4; 23 “Guard your heart for out of it flow the issues of life.” Heart in Hebrew is a word that refers to the inner man, your mind. Hidden everywhere in God’s word is this simple truth; your thoughts are your gates into the city of your life. Trade wisely. Have a ‘right of admission reserved’ policy to your thoughts, discern your thoughts, inspect them in order to determine if they are based on your 5 senses (i.e. your soul) or whether they pass the test of the truth of God’s word and by doing so, you will take over the hostile strongholds (enemies gates) and submit them to God’s authority and your city (life) will be full of life and peace and righteousness.

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