

I Come in the Name of the Lord (The Problem with Problems)

“Sigh! If only I could be rid of this problem; then I’d be ok”.

Who hasn’t said this at times, many times over the years perhaps? Maybe you’re saying it at this very moment.

Job 5:7 Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

It would seem that problems during one’s lifetime are inevitable. Problems from minor ones to sometimes, catastrophic ones. Yet do you notice that when you have a problem, it is ‘your’ problem. As you recognize it and take it onboard, you end up with a problem, with your problem. The problem with the problem being, “How am I going to rid myself of this problem” So it doubles. You have a problem, then the further problem of how you are going to deal with it. How you are going to eliminate it, so that you may return to your peace again.

Of course the spirit of fear wastes no time in moving in to the situation. The problem itself is not fear, but the human mind is so subtle, that fear can spin the problem like a web, to end up in who knows what kind of imagined disaster. I remember hearing an octogenarian lady once on the radio, when asked, “In your many years madam you must have had a lot of problems?” She replied, “Oh my dear boy, hundreds. The thing is most of them never happened”. This is what I mean by the subtlety of fear taking hold of one’s mind. I also remember reading one time about the little bird that was on the ground foraging for some food, when it was caught by the stare of a very nearby Cobra. As the little bird looked into the eyes of the snake, fear caused it to become totally petrified. It knew that any moment the snake could spit its deadly venom at him. The bird dared not look away. It just stared, hoping to duck, or side slip the venom as it spurted, at him. The bird only had to fly away, but that was not as easy as it sounds, for in order for him to do that, it would of necessity need to momentarily take its eyes from the snake, and fear would not allow him to do this. Of course sticking your head in the sand like the ostrich, so you can take your eyes from the problem, is useless, unless you have something greater to put your eye on.

I’m sure you have heard this quoted, or have even quoted it yourself. “God is in his heaven and all is well” All is well? Are they kidding? You only need watch CNN, FOX, or the BBC to see that humanity on this little planet is far from ‘well’. Or are those that make this quote seeing the problems of life on a deeper level? Are they able to see through the appearances of these very real problems, to something more real than the problems?

When we have problems, we want them removed from us, so that we can have the opposite of the problem; peace. Peace of mind, rest from fear and worry. It would seem that the whole world’s answer to achieving this peace is to - ‘eliminate the problem’. Whether this be on a global scale, or just our own personal problem, the remedy is always, eliminate the problem, somehow. Or even set up mechanisms to avoid and prevent the problems happening in the first place. Yet, in spite of all these measures, man is still born to trouble (problems), as the sparks fly upward.

If peace is the result sought for, in the elimination of problems, let’s look at this quote below that Jesus made. Let’s examine it and see what the peace he speaks of is. Compared to the peace the world offers us.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

I think we have already recognised that the peace the world offers is always at the cost of eliminating problems. But here Jesus says, “let your heart not be troubled, nor let it be afraid”. No mention of getting rid of the fear or the trouble. What is he getting at? Well, he says, “I give my peace to you”. How does he give us his peace?

Well, it is not so much his peace that he gives, but rather it is himself that he gives us. He IS Peace. Peace is a person, not a ‘thing’ or a feeling or a state of mind, but a person. If you have him, you have Peace, in fact if you have him, you are peace, for we are told that he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit - one person. And you do have him. You were born with him, for he is the light that lights every man that comes in to the world. But of course you have to discover him there within.

So, how does this help with the elimination of my problem? How can I have this peace whilst I am still haunted by my problem? As I said earlier the problem is seen as ‘your’ problem. In the above sentence the word ‘my’ is the real problem. Or even ‘me’. It is not the problem it is this ‘me’ that seems to have the problem, that is the real problem.

I’ll explain what I mean by a little illustration I received in my mind, many years ago now, but it has always stayed with me, for I could not have dreamed it up myself. It came to my mind at a particular time, when I was struggling with ‘my’ problem. The actual problem is neither here nor there, it could be anything, though it was a particular problem to me, but the nature of it here is irrelevant. A problem is just that, a problem. I wore myself out trying to eliminate it, or trying to reason ways in my mind to be rid of it. All this just resulted in total mental exhaustion. It was in this exhausted state that the illustration came to my mind. It went like this.

I could see a picture in front of me, though of course it was actually in my mind’s eye. I was looking at the back of a man’s head and shoulders. That’s all I could see of the man, but he was looking up at a steep hill that rose in front of him. A blanket of thick snow lay on the ground, and as the man looked up he could see this huge snowball rolling down the hill toward him, growing bigger and bigger as it rolled on its collision course with him. Like the bird in the previous story, the man became gripped with fear. When his reasoning mind kicked in, he very quickly set about gathering any debris he could find to build himself a fence, that he could hide behind. This attempt at eliminating his problem, was very successful, as the huge snowball crashed in to the fence breaking up in to a million particles of snow. I then observed the man breath a huge sigh of relief, as he looked back up the hill, only to his horror to see a second snowball, twice the size of the first one again rolling on a collision toward him. Once again he rallied all his energy and very quickly built himself another fence from anything that came to hand, and once again his efforts were not in vain, as the massive snowball hit the fence and smashed to a million fragments. Again he sighed a huge sigh of relief. He looked for a third time up the hill, and as he looked his legs turned to jelly as he saw a third snowball rolling toward him. This snowball was bigger than the previous two snowballs put together, and it wasn’t even halfway down the hill yet. His resources had run out. He was sunk. This was it. He was helpless; there was nothing he could do, so he did the only thing left to him. He stood up straight put his arms out and braced himself for the inevitable. Then, wonder of wonders, as the snowball hit him, it too smashed in to a million pieces, and he realised that he himself was stronger than any fence he may build.

From this little illustration, I became immediately aware of just what Jesus meant, when he said, “My Peace I give unto you”. The man in the story at last came at the problem, in the name of the Lord. To come in the name of the Lord, really means to come in the ‘nature’ of the Lord, which is really the same as coming *as* Him. It is actually Him dealing with the whole thing called ‘problem’. For he has given Himself, (Peace), to you.

This made me think of little David, when he came in the name of the Lord, to face the giant Goliath. Problems always seem to be giants don’t they? Whether represented by a Goliath or a huge snowball in the story, the analogy is the same. Did you ever think, like me, what a

tremendous shot David was, with his little sling and pebbles. But then again, as it was Christ himself coming in the form of little David, we wouldn't expect Christ to miss would we? We also have a wonderful picture here of the Word of God going forth, as the pebble, to deal with the giant. Speak the word, as Him, and you will see your problem (giant), for what it is. Like the snake, like the snowball, like the giant. None of them are a match for your real true self.

So at the end of the day it would seem that the world's way to peace is to eliminate the problem, whilst God's way is to eliminate the person with the problem, and replace that person with Himself. Is this not what St. Paul was getting at when he said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". For it is not really Christ giving His strength to Paul, so he can do it, (though it looked and no doubt felt like him doing it), but rather it is really Christ *as* Paul dealing with it. For once again, like peace, He is also Strength. The Lord IS my courage and my strength. Or, my courage and my strength is really He. Not my courage, nor my strength, but really his courage and his strength through me, *as* me. There is absolutely no room for me to boast of achieving anything, accept my boast be in Him who is the real doer and copier.

See Galatians 2:20. For, this is how we are able to 'Come in the Name of the Lord'