

The Silversmith

A group of women were in a Bible Study reading in the Book of Malachi., Chapter Three. When they came across verse three which says: “He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,” the women became puzzled and wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

Mal. 3:2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: (to wash by stamping with feet)

3 And he shall sit as a refiner (purge away) and purifier (cleaner) of silver: and he shall purify (uncontaminate) the sons of Levi, and purge (refine) them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

One of the women offered to research the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study. The woman called up a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held up a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest in order to burn away all the impurities.

When the woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot, she thought about the verse, “He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver.” She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. She then asked the silversmith, how do you know when the silver is fully refined? He smiled at her and answered, “Oh, that's easy – when I see my image in it.”

This story made a lasting impression on me from the first time I had heard it. Recently I found myself thinking about this story and how it defines Yah and His relationship with us.

Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

Yah's relationship with us began when He created us. We were created in the image of the Father and the Son, as we are told in Gen. 1:26 and 27. We are also told in 1 John 4:10 that Yah loved us first. These three short verses reveal that Yah and Yahshua wanted a fully complete family, surrounded by and with Their love along with Their righteousness, mercy and truth. If

mankind had been obedient and had not become prideful, life today would be so different. We would not have to go through the fire of refinement.

Most people desiring to become parents have a dream, a hope, and a desire to raise God-fearing, loving, happy, productive, obedient children. Our beloved Father is no different as He is ever vigilant, watching, protecting and guiding His children. He gave us an instruction book, His holy word, the Bible, containing commandments, statutes and laws in order to direct our footsteps down that straight and narrow path.

Job 34:21 For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

Psa. 33:20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

These are only two of the many scriptures that speak of Yah protecting us while watching us seeing all that mankind is doing. He rewards according to our works or deeds. Yet His love and mercy are tempered with His wisdom and righteousness.

When we read the Parable of the Silversmith, we find the silversmith holds the silver in the midst of the fire in order for the hottest part of the flames to burn away all impurities just as Yah does with us to burn away all of the evil that lies within us. He doesn't refine us as the silver is refined, over fire and heated up. He refines us in the furnace of affliction as we are told in Isa. 48:10.

Isa 48:10 Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

Today, Yah is ever vigilant and watchful with us as He was in biblical days when He sent forth His prophets to warn about the sins that were being committed; the punishment that would result from the sin, and finally the reward if there was repentance. If one is in the "fire," repentance is seen when Yah sees His image; if there is not repentance Yah cannot see His image and the fire continues to burn until you melt or are destroyed. Yah, standing in the midst of the fire, needs to continually remain vigilant while He awaits the choice we are about to make. Our choice is one of two: evil: continued rebellion and rejection or good: to change, to repent.

Ezek. 22:20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you.

We know that Yah angers and becomes furious with our continued forward behavior. Yet concurrently He is a God that is long-suffering and patient. He does not want to leave us in the fire as He remains a God that extends His hand of mercy waiting for us to return to Him.

2 Pet. 3:9 ¶ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

We are told in Psalms 115:9, 10 and 11 that Yah is the help and shield:

Psalm 115:9 *O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: **he is their help and their shield.***

10 *O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: **he is their help and their shield.***

11 *Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: **he is their help and their shield.***

Yah can only be your help and your shield if He is watching over you, ever vigilant, ever loving and concerned, just as we who are in His image are watchful, loving and concerned about our children.

The life we live on this earth has many trials, tribulations and afflictions, yet none have suffered as much as our Lord Yahshua. Yahshua, who walked this earth as a man was and is God. We know He gave up His Godhead for us so He could walk this earth while experiencing all the trials we face daily, then paying the sin penalty for us which allowed us the privilege of eternal life.

Luke 24:46 *And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it **behoved** (necessary) Christ to suffer, and to **rise from the dead** the third day:*

Heb. 2:6 *But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?*

7 *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:*

8 *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.*

9 *But we see **Jesus**, who was made **a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death**, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God **should taste death for every man.***

10 ¶ *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, **to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.***

Heb. 5:8 *Though he were a Son, yet **learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;***

9 *And **being made perfect**, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

Strong's #3804. payema pathema, path'-ay-mah means **sufferings** from a presumed derivative of 3806; **something undergone**, i.e. **hardship or pain**; subjectively, an emotion or influence: affection, **affliction**, motion, suffering.

Strong's # 3806. payov pathos, path'-os from the alternate of 3958; properly, suffering ("pathos"), i.e. (subjectively) a passion (especially concupiscence):-- (inordinate) affection, lust.

Strong's# 5048. teleiow teleiwo, tel-i-o'-o **perfect** from 5046; **to complete**, i.e. (literally) **accomplish**, or (figuratively) consummate (in character):--consecrate, finish, fulfil, make) perfect.

From **Thayer's** – **To complete (perfect)** add **what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full.**

These scriptures tell us of Yahshua's obedience, His sufferings and His ultimate perfection through suffering.

What is the tale of the Silversmith telling us? What are we to learn from Yahshua's suffering? Many will tell you Yahshua's suffering freed us from the penalty of sin, giving us the hope for eternal life with Yahshua and His Father, our Father. That is true, **but** there is more. We need to learn and completely understand that our loving, kind and merciful God wants us to do our part. We go through the fire or the furnace of affliction in order to be made perfect. We again have choices, we can choose to blame Yah for bringing all this pain and unhappiness or we can blame Him for not changing our circumstances. Assessing blame on God is one negative viewpoint **or** we can choose to turn to Yah with prayer and love. In actively turning to Him in our need by so doing, we become closer to Him. One can only achieve closeness to someone who is close to you. Yah becomes our ever present companion, offering His love and His help, but not in the way most of us want. He allows for us to continue in the fire, being ever present with us and making sure we don't go the way of the Lake of Fire. By going through all of life's sufferings, we eventually should have become perfect; Yah being able to see His image in us.

Isa. 48:4 Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

*5 I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and **my molten image**, hath commanded them.*

6 Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

8 Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opekned: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

9 ¶ For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

*10 Behold, **I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.***

Zech. 13:9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

As sure as God puts his children in the furnace, he will be in the furnace with them.

The greatest affliction of life is never to be refined.

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