

THE COMFORTER

30 March 2002

The word comforter is always associated with the book of John where Jesus says he will send it. It is also called the spirit of Truth and the holy Spirit. A transliteration of the Greek word is parakletos, Strong's number 3875. Only John uses this masculine form of the verb, parakaleo³⁸⁷⁰. The feminine form of the word is paraklesis³⁸⁷⁴, used only by Luke and Paul. The school of thought in the books I researched do not connect these two nouns together. Yet they are the same word except for gender, indicated by a different Greek ending. The verb root, parakaleo³⁸⁷⁰, means to call to one's side, call for, summon, to admonish, exhort, entreat or comfort, to encourage, strengthen, to instruct, teach. Another meaning given by Thayer is to strive to appease, or make peace, by entreaty. (Cf Lk 15:28, the return of the prodigal son).

There are two opinions as to the meaning and use of parakletos³⁸⁷⁵. One is "summoned, called to one's side, especially called to one's aid"; and the second is that of "one who pleads another's cause before a judge, counsel for defense, legal assistant, an advocate". The concept of a legal defense in a court comes from outside the Bible. When considering the Biblical use of paraklesis³⁸⁷⁴ and parakaleo³⁸⁷⁰ in the LXX (Septuagint), the predominant Hebrew word used is *naham*⁵¹⁶², and this makes "comfort" the main sense. It is interesting that the Mandaean Writings trace the origin of the use of parakletos³⁸⁷⁵ in John's writings back to the concept of heavenly helpers. Parallels to this concept can be seen in ideas as sending from above, imparting instruction, leading to salvation, and confirming in moral conduct.

Jn 15: 26. *But when the Comforter³⁸⁷⁵ is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me:* Jesus said in John 14:6 that He was the truth. If Jesus is the truth, then the spirit of Truth is the spirit of Jesus. Why does it proceed from the Father? The Father sent His only Son into the world to live in the flesh. After His resurrection and ascension, the Father sent Him back into the world as a Comforter. **Jn 14: 16.** *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter...* What is meant by "another" Comforter? When Saul was about to be anointed by Samuel as king, he was told to go and do certain things, and he would be turned into another man. The Spirit of God came upon Saul and gave him another heart. Physically, Saul was the same man. Inwardly he was changed. (1 Sam 10:6, 9). The Son of God was changed inwardly after his resurrection from what he was when he first became a man. **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...* Notice, Christ did not become the author of eternal salvation until after the cross. He was different inwardly, after the cross because of His experience. He became "another" comforter.

1 John 2: 1. *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2. And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* The words "advocate" and "propitiation" are key words. The Greek word translated "advocate" here is the exact same word translated "comforter" in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; & 16:7. The underlying Greek word for propitiation is hilasmos²⁴³⁴ a masculine word. The neuter form of the same word is translated "mercy seat" in Hebrews 9:5. The root of the word is translated "be merciful" in Luke 18:13. The "mercy seat" on the ark of the covenant was a solid gold covering, and gold is a symbol for faith. What better example than that of Jesus Christ, sent as an act of mercy by our heavenly Father, not to pay the penalty for the law, but to cover mankind with His righteousness. Therefore we have a comforter, consultant, someone who exhorts, entreats and comforts. He is one who comes beside us when we call for His help. He summons us to repentance, and teaches correction. He does all these things, not as an advocate, but as The Comforter & Consulate, The Spirit of Truth, The Holy Spirit. (Cf 2 Cor 3:17-18).

Ps 119: 49. *Remember the word to your servant, upon which you have caused me to hope. 50. This is my comfort*⁵¹⁶⁵ *in my affliction: for your word has [given me life].* [Original]. As we understand the promises of God, it generates hope. **Jn 6:** 63. *It is the spirit [giving life]; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* [present Greek participle] It is not the words written in the Bible that give life. It is when the spirit of Truth, which is the spirit of Jesus Christ, speaks the understanding of those words into your heart. The concept becomes part of the lives of those who hear and do (Cf Matt 7:24).

Jn 14: 17. *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but ye know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. 18. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.* It was right before the cross, and Jesus was to depart out of this world. He was trying to help the disciples understand that He would manifest himself differently in the future. At the time the disciples did not understand: Thomas did not know the way (Jn 14:5); Philip wanted to see the Father (Jn 14:8); and Judas could not comprehend a spiritual manifestation of the Savior (Jn 14:22) as a comforter.

Very clearly, Jesus stated of the Spirit of Truth - *he dwells with you; shall be in you;* and ***I will not leave you comfortless.*** The Greek word translated “comfortless” is *orphanos*³⁷³⁷. The word literally mean “bereaved”. In various versions it is rendered as orphans, abandoned, bereaved and desolate. Several times I have been shopping in a large store or a mall and would see a child crying profusely because they were separated from mother or dad. Jesus told his disciples that he would not abandon them.

If Jesus is the Comforter, why did He say that it would “proceed from the Father” (Jn 15:26)? **Jn 14:** 23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Jesus is, was and always will be abiding in the Father (Listening to His voice). What the Son is giving us is of the Father. So it is as if both come to us. **Jn 5:** 30. *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. Jn 8: 28 *...I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.* The source of the eternal Spirit, the source of all life, the source of all comfort is the Father. When Jesus comes as the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, He is bringing the words of the Father (Cf Rev 1:1), and revealing the Father to us. **Jn 8:** 18. *I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me. 2 Cor 1: 3. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort*³⁸⁷⁴; 4. *Who comforts*³⁸⁷⁰ *us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort*³⁸⁷⁰ *them which are in any trouble, by the comfort*³⁸⁷⁴ *wherewith we ourselves are comforted*³⁸⁷⁰ *of God. 2 Thes 2: 16. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation*³⁸⁷⁴ *and good hope through grace, 17. Comfort*³⁸⁷⁰ *your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.****

Brothers and sisters, our heavenly Father is the one God, and He brought forth a Son in eternity past. They are one in spirit and comfort. The Father therefore, is reconciling the world through Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:19). It is through the Son the Father brings us into fellowship and unity with Himself. The Father could not die for us. However, in the sacrifice of His only Son, He manifested His infinite love.

Rom 15: 4. *For whatsoever things were written afore time were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort*³⁸⁷⁴ *of the scriptures might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and consolation*³⁸⁷⁴ *grant you to be like minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: AMEN!*