**What is the Morning**

**Introduction**

In Jesus’ teachings to the Jews, He spoke to them using parables. He only made plain the meaning of His parables when He was among His disciples [Matt 13:34-43].  There are verses in every book of the Bible that contain terminology that do not make sense to the reader regardless of language and culture. The New Testament writers used the term; ‘Perfect/perfection’ [Matt 5:48; 19:21; Phil 3:12;   1Cor 13:10; 2Cor 13:9,11; Heb 2:10; 5:9; 7:11, 19, 28: 10:1]. This term perfect when read in context holds more meaning than the conventional use of the word. In the Old Testament, we see many examples of terms being used in unconventional ways. In God’s response to Job, He asks him to adorn himself with glory and splendour and to clothe himself in honour and majesty [Job 40:10]. God and the saints are also spoken of as being clothed/arrayed/robed in splendour and majesty [Ps 45:3; 93:1; 104:1; 110:3]. How exactly is one clothed in majesty, glory, and splendour? It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking of these expressions as literary devices, as parts of speech, or as the authors being poetic. One might say the writers of scripture are merely using metaphors and personifications in order to be poetic. Paul however teaches us that the Biblical words are spiritual words

*This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. [1 Corinthians 2:13]*

Spiritual truths – according to Paul – are expressed using spiritual words. The Bible authors were not merely being poetic but were speaking a spiritual language.

One of these spiritual words we see recurring in scripture is term ‘the Morning’. This word or its variant ‘the Dawn’ is used in ways that cannot simply mean the rising of the sun. There are conventional uses of these terms in scripture where their meaning is clear as seen in the following verses:

*Genesis 44:3: As* ***morning*** *dawned, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys.*

*Psalms 119:147: I rise before* ***dawn*** *and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.*

In the above verses, the use of the “morning” and “dawn” do not leave the reader pondering their use. There are however certain verses where the use of those words may not appear meaningful at first glance as seen as follows:

*2 Peter 1:19: And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day* ***dawns*** *and the* ***morning*** *star rises in your hearts.*

In the above verse, Peter’s use of the words “morning” and “dawn” don’t really make much sense. What does he mean by “until the day dawns”? What or who is the “morning star” that will rise in our hearts?

This unconventional use of the terms “Morning” and “dawn” is what this article seeks to address. This article will endeavour to shed light on the meaning of these terms as used in many portions of scripture. This will be done by following the context of some passages where it appears and try to make sense of it.

**The Morning in Psalm 30:5**

*Psalms 30:5:*

*"… weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning*."

This is a verse where the use of the word “morning” holds more meaning than meets the eye.

The verse simply says that sorrow endures for a night but joy comes in the morning. Does this statement mean that morning always brings relief from sorrow? Obviously not. There are portions of scripture where it is evident that the morning does not always bring joy:

*Deuteronomy 28:67:*

*"In the morning you will say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening, "If only it were morning!"-because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see."*

In the above verse, God promised the Israelites that He would exile them to hostile lands if they did not fear Him and that they would dread both morning and night. So Psalm 30:5 cannot possibly refer to every morning.

Could the passage refer to the joy coming in the morning to those who are obedient to Him? Obviously not. There were and have been devout and obedient followers who did not wake up every morning to find an end to sorrow. The Apostle Paul for example woke up many mornings in prison. Clearly, the verse was not referring to just any morning.

It appears that God may have been referring to a specific morning. An examination of the verse in context sheds some light to what “morning” is referred to.

*Psalms 30:1-5:*

*I will exalt you, O LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. O LORD my God, I called to you for help and you healed me. O LORD, you brought me up from the grave (SHEOL); you spared me from going down into the pit. Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may*

*remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning."*

When read in context, we see David prophesying of what appears to be the resurrection.

"*O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave (Sheol): …"*

He says that God brought him up from the grave; this is a clear prophecy of the coming resurrection for Christ, himself and all of God’s people.

"For (because) his anger (wrath) endureth but a moment; …"

David expatiates on this promise and implies that the reason for going down to the grave in the first place is because of God’s wrath (Genesis 2:16-17, Isaiah 40:6-8). David then proceeds to compare the grave (the sufferings of this world in general, the pit, the wrath of God) to the night and then says that although the sorrows of the grave (Psalm 18:5) last for the night; joy comes in the morning.

So, if the night refers to the grave (Sheol) and perhaps this dying world, then the morning – when read in its context – must refer to the resurrection.

**The Morning in Psalm 49:14**

*Psalms 49:14:*

*"… the upright shall have dominion over them in the* ***morning****; …"*

Applying the same logic here, it is apparent that the morning referred to in this verse is not the literal breaking of the day.

In the Psalm, the Sons of Korah speak of the importance of wisdom

*Psalms 49:3:*

"*My mouth shall speak of* ***wisdom****; and the meditation of my heart shall be of* ***understanding****."*

*Psalms 49:20:*

*"Man that is in honor, and* ***understandeth*** *not, is like the beasts that perish."*

And of the foolishness of trusting in riches and how riches have no power to save anyone from the grave.

*Psalms 49:6-7, 9:*

*"They that* ***trust in their wealth****, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;* ***None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him****… …"That he should still live forever, and not see corruption."*

Then the Psalmist(s) go(es) on to plainly state that those who lack understanding and trust in riches will end up in the grave and that in the morning, the upright will rule over them.

*Psalms 49:14:*

*"Like sheep* ***they are laid in the grave*** *(****Sheol****);* ***death shall feed on them****;* ***and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning****..."*

How can the dead who are in their graves be ruled over by the upright? Quite obviously, the upright are the righteous, the people who do the will of God. How can the righteous rule over the dead when even sin (a cruel and unrelenting master) cannot rule over the dead? The only sensible explanation is that in the morning, the dead will rise (both the upright and the sinners alike) to be ruled over by the righteous. This would again mean that – in this context – the morning refers to the time of the resurrection.

**The Morning in Psalm 90:14**

*Psalms 90:14:*

*"O satisfy us* ***early*** *with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." (KJV)*

*"Satisfy us in the* ***morning*** *with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days."*

*(NIV)*

Moses wrote the 90th Psalm and in it he asked God to satisfy the saints in the morning. Examining the context of the passage reveals that this use of the word is the same as many other places in scripture.

*Psalms 90:2-3:*

*"Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world,* ***from everlasting to everlasting you are God****. You turn men back to dust, saying, "****Return to dust, O sons of men****.""*

Moses tells us that God is eternal and that man is not because God has ordained him to die. This is a clear reference to the curse God placed on Adam in Genesis 3.

*Psalms 90:5:*

*"****You sweep men away in the sleep of death****; …”*

*Psalms 90:7-11:*

*"****We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation****.* ***You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence****.* ***All our days pass away under your wrath****; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years--or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Who knows the power of your anger?* ***For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you****."*

He makes the point again that man would die because of God’s wrath (the curse on mankind) brought about by our sin. He says that the average man can live 70 or 80 years at best but death would eventually come for all because of the wrath of God.

*Psalms 90:13-14:*

*"Relent, O LORD! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days."*

He then proceeds to ask God how long this curse of death will last and prays to God to show mercy. It is in this prayer for mercy that Moses asks God to satisfy us “in the morning”.

In summary, Moses speaks of the curse of death and how sin is responsible for it then prays to God to end the curse by satisfying us in the morning. It is known that the saints of God will overcome death at the first resurrection when Jesus returns in glory to avenge Israel and glorify His holy ones. So, Moses also teaches us that the morning is the time of the first resurrection.

**The Morning in Psalm 110:3**

*Psalms 110:3:*

*"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the* ***morning****: thou hast the dew of thy youth."*

Psalm 110:3 is not as clear as the previous examples. Instead of stating that something will happen in the morning – as we have seen in other verses – it uses an unusual phrase: “the womb of the morning (dawn in the NIV)”. The prophet David used a personification here. He attributes childbearing (an attribute of living things) to the morning.

*Psalms 110:1:*

*"Of David. A psalm. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.""*

God is speaking to Jesus in this verse asking Him (Jesus) to sit at His (the Father) right hand

*Psalms 110:2:*

*"The LORD will* ***extend*** *your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies."*

The Father will extend Jesus’ mighty scepter (a symbol of authority) from Zion (in heaven) to the earth. This means that Jesus already has authority in heaven but His authority on the earth is still not yet full so at this time, the authority will be extended to the earth and He will rule over His enemies (those who oppose His rule).

*Psalms 110:3:*

*"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness* ***from the womb of the morning****: thou hast the dew of thy youth." (KJV)*

*"Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty,* ***from the womb of the dawn*** *you will receive the dew of your youth." (NIV)*

Facts from this verse:

1. Jesus’ people (troops) will be willing in the day of His battle (power).
2. They will be in the beauties of holiness (arrayed/clothed in majesty)
3. They will be from the womb of the morning.
4. Jesus has the dew of youth.

Jesus’ people will be willing on the day of His battle. The day of His battle refers to the day of His wrath when He will return to judge the nations (Zephaniah 1:15-18, Isaiah 13; 63:1-6). His troops will be arrayed in holy majesty from the womb of the morning. Leaving aside (for the time being) what it means to be arrayed in holy majesty or in the beauties of holiness (KJV) and to have the dew of youth, David prophesied that Jesus’ troops will be from the womb of the morning. This implies that the morning will give birth to Jesus’ people or to put it in simpler terms, Jesus’ troops will be products of the morning; the morning is what will produce Jesus’ willing troops.

Like in the previously explained verses, morning here also refers to the resurrection of the saints. The theme of Zion and the world being pregnant is not an uncommon theme in scripture. There are examples of it in many places in scripture and almost [if not] all of them refer to the resurrection of Jesus, the church [and faithful Israel] and the rest of creation (Romans 8:22-24, John 16:21-23;Isaiah 66:7-14;Mark 13:8,24-27).

**The Morning (Dawn) in Isaiah 60:3**

*Isaiah 60:3:*

*"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of* ***thy rising****." (KJV)*

*"Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your* ***dawn****." (NIV)*

This verse and the ones before (still in chapter 60) are perhaps some of the most commonly misunderstood or under-interpreted verses in the Bible. The verse says that nations shall come to the brightness of Israel’s dawn (rising). Fewer statements are so obvious. It literally says that nations and kings will come to [witness and or partake in] the BRIGHTNESS of Israel’s RISING. This can be interpreted:

* Figuratively to mean Israel will be great and kings and nations will come to witness it

And

* Literally to mean that the people of Israel will be luminescent.

Neither interpretation contradicts the other and are both correct. Looking at the verse in its context makes the point even clearer.

*Isaiah 59:17-20:*

*"He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head;* ***he put on the garments of vengeance*** *and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.* ***According to what they have done, so will he repay wrath to his enemies and retribution to his foes****; he will repay the islands their due. From the west, men will fear the name of the LORD, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory.* ***For he will come like a pent-up flood*** *that the breath of the LORD drives along. "****The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob*** *(****Israel****) who repent of their sins," declares the LORD."*

*Isaiah 60:1:*

*""Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you."*

In verses 17 through 20 of the 59th chapter (read whole chapter for fuller context), Isaiah prophesies of the coming of Christ to avenge Israel and to repay its enemies according to what they have done. Then, the 1st verse of chapter 60 says to Arise, shine for your light (Christ) has come. So, in response to Christ’s [2nd] coming, there is a call to “ARISE” and to “SHINE”. If this is not a clear prophecy of the 1st resurrection that will take place when Jesus returns, then what is? There is a literal call for people to arise i.e., to rise from their graves (for those who died in faith) and a call to shine (both for the risen dead and those who will be alive) at Jesus’ return. The call to shine will be addressed later in this article.

*Isaiah 60:2-3:*

*"See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the* ***brightness of your dawn****."*

Scripture teaches of a time before the end where iniquity will abound like never before on the earth (Matthew 24, Mark 13 etc.). In scripture, this dark time always precedes the coming of Christ. It is at the peak of this darkness that Jesus will return and glorify His people. Then right after, Isaiah proceeds to teach that when God’s people have been glorified, nations and kings will come to the brightness that will accompany their rising.

Quite clearly, in this portion of scripture, the dawn also refers to the resurrection. Perhaps it is more apparent here than in other places.

*Isaiah 60:4:*

*""Lift up your eyes and look about you:* ***All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm****."*

Lest anyone think that this is a promise for Israel alone, the prophet makes it clear (and other apostles, prophets and teachers confirm and explain it further) that the gentiles will also be a part of this 1st resurrection and blessing.

**The Dawn in 2nd Peter 1:19**

*2 Peter 1:19:*

*"And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the* ***day dawns*** *and the morning star rises in your hearts."*

It is apparent that the Apostles of the New Testament were also familiar with this use of the morning/dawn/day to mean the time of the resurrection/end of the age.

Peter admonishes his readers to pay attention to the word of the prophets until the day dawns. Could Peter have been instructing his readers to hold on to the teachings Prophets until the following morning? Was Peter’s counsel to his people to hold on to the promises of the Prophets only for the night? Obviously not. Cleary, the dawn of the day he was referring to was the same as used in the Old Testament.

*2 Peter 1:10-11:*

*"Therefore, my brothers,* ***be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."***

Peter encouraged his readers to make their election sure and that they would receive a rich welcome into the kingdom of Christ.

*2 Peter 1:16-19:*

*"We did not follow cleverly invented stories when* ***we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,*** *but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacredmountain. And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."*

He urged them to persist in their faith and told them that they did not make up the stories about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ but witnessed His majesty. Peter testified to havingheard the voice of God on the mountain and this made the words of the prophets moresure. So, in response to that, he admonished the disciples to pay attention to the words so that they would remain qualified for the coming of Jesus. So, the dawn in this passage refers to the time of Jesus’ return in power and glory which is also the time of the 1st resurrection.

**Features of the Morning/Dawn/Day**

It is important to point out that the morning does not necessarily refer to the resurrection itself rather it refers to the time of the resurrection. According to scripture, there will be 2 resurrections; one (the first resurrection) will occur when Jesus returns and the other (the second resurrection) after the millennium, right before this present age ends.

So, the morning (the dawn), refers to the end of this dark age (the night) and commences with the return of Jesus Christ. In other words, the dawn is the beginning of light and the end of darkness in this world. It is the period that ushers in the new age just as the literal dawn ushers in a new day. The morning is the time of the end and one major feature of the morning (as is clearly seen in scripture) is the resurrection of the dead.

**Resurrection**

As earlier stated, a major – if not the most prominent – feature of the morning is the resurrection of the dead. Every verse that contains the use of this spiritual terminology speaks of the resurrection of the dead from the grave.

**Singing**

*Psalms 30:4-5:*

*"****Sing*** *to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the* ***morning****."*

*Psalms 59:16: But* ***I will singof your strength, in the morning*** *I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.*

*Psalms 65:8: Those living far away fear your wonders;****where morning dawns and evening fades you call forth songs*** *of joy.*

*Psalms 90:14: Satisfy us in the* ***morning*** *with your unfailing love,* ***that we may sing*** *for joy and be glad all our days.*

Singing is a very common thing that happens at the resurrection. Even in revelation, the resurrected/glorified saints of God will sing a new song (Revelation 14:3).

**Beauty**

There is a common theme of being beautiful or splendid in the morning.

*Psalms 110:3:*

*"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the* ***beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning****: thou hast the dew of thy youth."*

This beauty refers to the glorious immortal bodies that we will receive when

Christ returns (1st Corinthians 15:35-44)