

Back To The Basics



Conversation 3

www.promiseed.com

Mistaken Identity

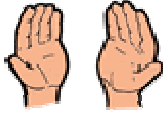
by *Paula K. Wood*

Joe: Hey God? Would you please tell me why I get into so much trouble?
And why you *let me* make so many mistakes?



God: Joe, I could answer your questions or I could tell you a story. Would you like a story and do you have a few minutes to spare?

Joe: Come on God. You know exactly how much time I have on my hands.



I would like very much for you to explain with a story. After all, I know that Jesus used parables, so it makes sense that you would do the same thing.

God: You are certainly a good sport Joe. Get comfortable and let me tell you about a case of mistaken identity.



In a land far, far away, there was a kingdom ruled a by a kind and just king. At his



side stood his beautiful wife, the queen.
kingdom Shalown, which means safe, friendly and good.

They called their

They were very content due to the fact that they had everything their hearts could desire. Land, money, jewels, power and fame. But their greatest joy was in raising their children. At any time of the day you could find at least one of the children playing and laughing almost under the feet of the king and queen. You could always count on the laughter of the children to bring a smile to the face of their parents.

The king and queen were very happy and loved all the subjects in their kingdom. They found great joy in the fact that all the people who lived in their kingdom were of equal wealth. All were also of equal value to the king and queen. The people called themselves THE KINDRED of Shalown. This is because everyone was equal in this kingdom. There was no jealousy or envy, no theft or crime of any kind. Happiness ruled in Shalown.



The people who served in the palace loved their job. No one was ever asked to work but all volunteered. Everyone wanted to be close to the royal family. Each and every person appreciated living in this kingdom and showed their appreciation by sharing time, abilities and bestowing gifts on one another and the royal family.

If ever anything bad happened to a family in this kingdom, everyone worked hard to correct the problem. People shared the good and the bad with one another so that no one ever carried the burden alone.



What a happy and pleasant place to live.

One spring day a band of gypsies wandered into the kingdom. Everyone in Shalown encouraged them to enjoy their time, and even more, everything was shared with the



wanderers. They were given places to sleep and food to eat.

Little did The Kindred know about the dark heart of the gypsy king. And even if had known, they would have done nothing differently for they had the hope of winning any dark hearts and turning them to light.

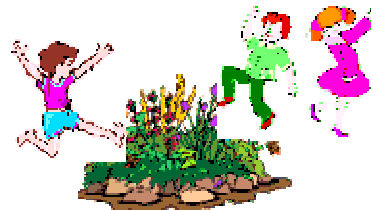
All the gypsies had to do was to mention that they desired something and it was given to them. This was because the people of the kingdom recognized that true joy was in giving not taking. The gypsies couldn't carry everything in their wagons that was given to them. And since the band had no desire to settle down and stop wandering, they took what was most valuable and pleasing and headed towards the border hoping



to sell their new wares in the next town.

The head of the gypsies was called Choshek. Although Choshek was king, his fearsome wife was the true leader. Her name was Za'avah. She was a wretched woman who knew no happiness or satisfaction in life. Nor did she want anyone else to be happy or content. It did not matter how much Choshek gave her or what he did for her, she was never satisfied. But Choshek did try to please her. What ever Za'avah wanted he got for her. If he could not buy it, then he stole it.

It was while the band of gypsies were finally leaving Shalown that Za'avah saw some



beautiful children playing in a field of flowers.

Za'avah said "Choshek, do you see those children?"

Choshek replied " Yes Za, I see them. They seem to be playing happily in the field.

She then demanded "I want one of those children. Get me the smallest one so that I

might raise it as my own child.”

Choshek growled, “Za, why do you always want more? I want to come back this way and get some more goods after we have sold what they have already given us.”

Za'avah stamped her feet and bellowed “Choshek, that is all you ever think about. What you want. You never gave me a child of my own and now you deny me a child I could call my own. Look, there are so many, one will not be missed. The mother will probably thank us for taking one off of her hands. Who could possibly afford all those children?”

Choshek marveled to himself about Za'avah's lack of understanding but said, “Za, I am sure that any mother would miss one of her children. Anyway, how do you know that they are of the same family?”

She glared at him and said, “Just look at their faces, they must have the same parents. Choshek, I WANT one. Look there! Is that baby *left alone* under that tree? What kind



of *caring* parents would leave their little baby alone? ”

Choshek looked in the direction in which she pointed and said, “Well Za, it does seem to be an infant.”

Za'avah gave her husband the evil eye and hoarsely whispered, “It is obviously abandoned. Stop right now and go fetch it for me!”

Choshek pointed at the other children in the area. “Za'avah, it is being watched by the other children. See, they are playing hide and seek with it.”

She didn't care. "Don't be ridiculous Choshek, that child is too little to play a game. I don't care if it is watched by the other children. Go get it. You're bigger than they are. Get it now!"

Choshek gave a sigh and said to his wife, "Tell you what I will do Za, I will watch to see where the child is taken and tonight when it gets good and dark, I will go fetch the child for you. If at all possible."

Ah, that is what Za'avah wanted to hear and now she could turn on the charm. "Just make it possible Shekie." "For me, because you will be finally giving me the child we



have always wanted. I forsee him to be the Prince of the Gypsies. Our child."

Choshek smiled at his wife and said, "Za, my lovely wife, my queen, I will gladly do your bidding. As soon as it gets dark."



As night fell, Choshek made plans to abduct the child and sent one of the boys in the band to secretly follow the children home while he lead the band of gypsies to the edge of Shalown.

And so it was that the child of the King was kidnaped!

The band hid the child and made their escape to a land far from Shalown.

Mistaken Identity

The child grew up believing that Choshek and Za'avah were his parents. They named him Ben. The other children and the animals were his friends. What fun he had playing and dancing and living the life of a gypsy. His parents doted on him. Of course being the chief's son he was given respect and anything he wanted. His every whim was fulfilled.

As Ben grew, he became very good at whatever he put his mind to do. Choshek taught him how to pick pockets, lie, cheat and steal.

Za'avah taught Ben how to manipulate people to get what he wanted. She also taught him how to be bossy and selfish.

Life seemed fine to Ben. He was given everything he asked for and what He wasn't given he stole. He grew up believing that he was a gypsy. He dressed like a gypsy and



he acted like a gypsy.

It was when he was a teenager one summer night Ben found himself in a small village and he decided to try to pick some pockets. Was he ever surprised when wealthy man caught him and said, "I know your father, you're in trouble now."

Ben eyed the stranger suspiciously. The band of gypsies had been camping outside the town for several weeks and his father was the king of the gypsies. Ben only wondered for a second what the man was speaking about. Then Ben spat out, "Let me go! My father is waiting for me and will come for me if I do not return soon!"

The man dropped Ben's wrist but continued to stare at Ben.

"Tell me, please, why the son of a king feels the need to take what is not his?" The man stared at Ben and uttered, "My, but you are a spitting image of your Dad."

Ben's only reply was one of scorn and he spoke it with a curl to his lips. "I take whatever I desire. What's it to you? Not only are you slow and stupid, you have failing eyesight old man. After all, my father is dark where I am fair.."

The man grabbed Ben's wrist again and said, "That settles it! I am taking you directly to your father and letting him deal with your insolence"

Ben sneered and said, "That will be fine. My father will take care of your impertinence with his fist!"

Ben did struggle to escape but the man just held on to him and said, "We will see young man. We will see. Now, come with me."

Ben quit struggling when he realized that he might as well get this over with. After all, his father would stick up for him.



It wasn't until Ben saw the castle that he realized that he wasn't been taken to the band of gypsies. He wondered to himself what this crazy old man was up to, but decided to hold his peace. If he could just get inside maybe he could

find a way to get some money or goods. This could develop into a real good situation for him.

It was dinner time and maybe he could put on a little charm and be invited to eat. What ever happened, he knew he could talk his way out of any trouble. After all, his mother had taught him well.

It was sheer amazement on Ben's face when he met the king. It was like looking into a mirror that had aged him a few decades! The king looked exactly like him. Blond hair, blue eyes, light skinned.

What a surprise for Ben and the Royal Family when they discovered that Ben was the



son kidnaped by the gypsies so many years ago!

After the truth had time to sink in, Ben was overjoyed to find his family to be not only nice, but also rich.

The band of gypsies hung around for awhile after they found out that the king and queen were not angry with them but instead said thank you for taking such good care of their son.

Ben seemed to have the best of both worlds. Two sets of parents who loved him, and now his rightful inheritance in the kingdom of Shalown.

It did not take Ben long to start comparing the greed and selfishness of the band to the giving nature of The Kindred. He did not understand why they gave so much. It seemed like nothing was held back.

There was a little trouble adjusting to his new situation in Shalown. Although it was true that he no longer need to steal or lie, he still found himself occasionally reverting back to old habits. He knew in his heart who he was. He fit in so well with his new family. Or, at least most of the time he did. He sometimes felt the pull to visit with the

gypsy band. And once he got with them, boy did the old habits come back.

Ben would find himself lying and cheating and stealing, which was pretty hard to do here in Shalown, since everything was freely given. But he did love hanging around the old gang and acting like a gypsy. After all, old habits were hard to break.

But Ben found that things were just not the same anymore. His new parents were teaching him not only manners but what his responsibilities were as a king's son. He was finding out that if he was going to have a position in the kingdom, it was necessary for him to carry out certain duties.

Ben found himself in a real fix. He knew he really wanted to be the son he was born



to be, but the old nature just seemed to pull on him.



Joe: I enjoyed your story God,  but what does it have to do with you keeping *me* out of trouble?

God: That is a good question Joe. The disciples also asked the meaning of the parables that Jesus told. They wanted to know how the parables affected their everyday life. Did you know that asking questions shows that you are a true disciple?

Joe: Sometimes I feel like you are skirting my questions. I ask you a question and you answer my question with a question. Can you just be straight with me and tell me why?

God: Of course I can Joe, but have you ever noticed how you learn better by experience than by someone telling you about their experiences?

Joe: Ok, Ok, You're doing it again and I get your point. You will be happy to know that I have been thinking about it and I do remember a scripture that talks about the difference between the old man and the new man. I'm just not sure where it is exactly.

God: You might be thinking of Ephesians 4:17-24. Here Paul talks to the Ephesians about not being like other Gentiles.

Joe: Yes, that's it. How the others have their understanding darkened because of the emptiness of their minds concerning you. That they need to put off the former behavior called the *old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. There needs to be a renewal in the spirit of mind; and a "putting" on the **new man**, which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness.

God: Not bad Joe. You are studying. That is another way you show your desire to be my disciple. I am very pleased with your new man. You are seeking after my heart. Not doing the things that men have told you that you HAVE to do to please me, but instead you are accepting yourself as I accept you.



You are finding that you already please me.

Joe: But God, I still feel like I did when we first started our conversations. I'm so imperfect, you know, sinful. I cuss every day, I yell at my family, I am never satisfied, I always want more, bigger, and better. I know that I am suppose to be satisfied with



what I have.

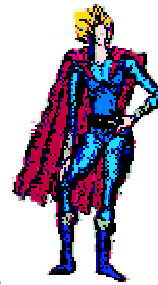
God: Those feeling are a part of your old man. That is the Adam nature. You feel like you are guilty, even though you are changing you still feel like you are bad. My son, you are not bad. You are changing into the new man which is created in My image. My image is righteousness and true holiness.

Joe: But WHY do I still *feel* like I am a sinner?

God: That is the old man Joe. You will no longer feel that way when you *accept* what I say about you

Joe: Please tell me again. I apparently need to hear it over and over again.

God: That's OK Joe, most people do need to be reminded many times. Think back to the story I just told you. Just because Ben found out that he was born into a royal family, he did not immediately feel like he was royalty. He knew that he was going to need to learn how to become the true prince he was. That was going to take some time and effort on his part. He needed to learn how to act like a prince and not a gypsy. All the old habits did not immediately go



away, even though he knew he was not really a gypsy.

Joe: That's true and I can understand how that can happen. Even though his mistaken identity had been solved and he knew who he was, he was still confused. I am like that. I know I am your son. I still feel like I am a sinner even though you have told me that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. For

by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal 2: 16)



I still feel like I have to DO something.

God: You know that all I want is for you to love yourself like I love you. It is when you love yourself that you will accept my love for you and in return you will show your love to me.

Joe: But God, when do I start acting like a true son all the time. Right now I still occasionally covet, lie, yell, cuss.

God: Joe, you will find that you will quit feeling guilty about doing those things when you begin to realize that you are my son regardless of how you ACT. I mean, look at Ben, even though he acted like a gypsy, he was still the son of royalty. Even if he chose to continue acting like a gypsy, he would be the king's son.



Joe: Everything *did* change when he found out who he was.

God: Think of it this way, a 3 year old child is loved by his parents even when he acts like a 3 year old. A 18 year old child is loved by his parent even when he acts like an 18 year old. And so on. But if an 18 year old acts like a 3 year old, then it is the parents responsibility to correct him and teach him what is acceptable actions for his age. It is my responsibility to correct you when you are acting immature. Paul says in Hebrews 12:5-7, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him for whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not?"

Joe: So, God, when you correct me, I know that I am your son. Wow, that means that I can count on you to show me when I am not pleasing to you. I don't have to hate myself when I do things wrong. I **will** sometimes make mistakes, but mistakes are just that, mistakes or a chance to learn to do it right the next time. After all, everyone makes mistakes occasionally.

God: You're beginning to understand Joe. You learn in steps just like a child who is maturing. And yes, mistakes are opportunities to learn. I don't expect everyone to do everything perfectly all the time, but as you mature in your "God nature", or your true identity, you will find that you make less and less mistakes. Even when you do make some, you will forgive yourself quicker. It is the forgiving that will enable you will go on to learn and to also forgive others when they make mistakes.



Joe: But don't I have to act a certain way for you to forgive me?

God: Let me ask you this, have you ever noticed a child coloring who makes a mistake and goes outside the lines and then says, I can't do it right and quits trying? Or there is the child who says, oh well, next time I will do it better and shortly thereafter colors again only this time does a better job. Which child do you think will learn quicker, the child who quits or the child who forgives himself and keeps trying?

Joe: The child that keeps on trying will probably learn quicker.
Oh, now I understand. We get discouraged when we don't forgive ourselves but when we DO forgive ourselves we keep on trying until we get it right!

God: That's right Joe, Forgiveness is essential to loving yourself, so that you are able to love Me. Just remember that you mistake your identity when you think that Adam is your father. You are the child of the king. I am your only father.

Joe You know God, I am going to practice recognizing who I am.
Thanks. You have really cleared up some of my thinking. Pretty soon I won't have a

mistaken identity.

God: I am looking forward to that day Joe. Start practicing right away recognizing how precious you are to me. We will talk again soon.

