

Grace and Glory

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whole counsel of GOD

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Loving His Appearing

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The Lord
is good, a strong
hold in the day of
trouble; and he
knoweth them
that trust in him.
NAHUM 1:7.

FIRST PRAYER IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The "First Prayer in Congress" made by the Rev. J. Duche, as found in Thatcher's Military Journal, dated December, 1777.

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, High and mighty King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the Kingdoms, Empires, and Governments; look down in mercy we beseech Thee, on these American States, who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves on Thy gracious protection, desiring henceforth to be dependent only on Thee; to Thee, they have appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give; take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care; give them wisdom in council and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries; convince them of the uprightness of their cause; and if they persist in sanguinary purpose, O, let the voice of Thy own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle!

Be Thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly; enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may be speedily closed; that order, harmony, and people may be effectually restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety prevail and flourish among Thy people. Preserve the health of their bodies and vigor of their minds; shower down on them, and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come.

All this we ask in the Name and through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, THY SON, OUR SAVIOUR. AMEN.

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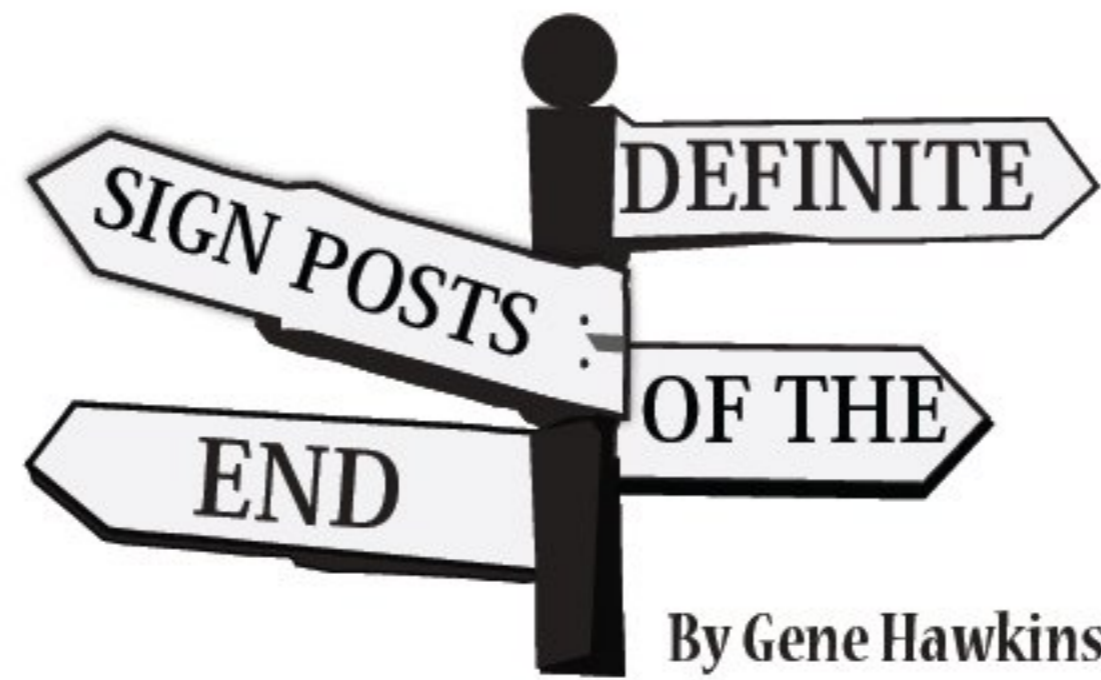
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” II Thess. 2:3

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” I Thess. 5:2-3

3 **T**hese are very familiar verses to those who are anxiously awaiting the coming of Jesus, but when we compare them with other citations, there is a very distinct consequential order to them. Paul wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonian saints, in an endeavor to convince them that Jesus had not already come and left them behind. He declared plainly that “that day,” the day of the Lord will not come “except there come a falling away **first.**” He concludes this verse by declaring that the “man of sin,” the antichrist, must be revealed. Thus there must, of necessity, be a very wide gap between these two events, for though the “man of sin” will be one of the active political heads of the seven nation coalition which will prevail at the **beginning of the tribulation**, he will not begin his official 1260 day reign, until 250 days before the middle of the week.

We have been in the “falling away” period for some time, and it has become progressively more apparent. Paul, the chief apostle to the Church, announced this same message when he wrote to Timothy. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall **depart from the faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” I Tim. 4:1 Those who have gone before us have testified and grieved over the spiritual declension seen in this country and around the world for quite a number years, and there is no doubt that they would be absolutely appalled by the events of ungodliness unfolding at this present time.

Paul informed these Thessalonian believers that there would also be a time of “peace and safety,” followed by “sudden destruction,” and many, down through the years, have

thought this meant that a peaceful lull could occur just prior to Jesus' coming for His bride. When she was taken away, then would begin the devastation of the great tribulation. We have wondered if that scenario might prevail, for history has basically proven that when things go well for the Church, it leads to a rather passive, lackadaisical atmosphere, wherein men simply take their ease with no manifestation of fire or fervor for spiritual things. This would describe the sleepy, lukewarm, attitude of the Laodicean Church, which depicts the very end of this Church Age just prior to Jesus' Second Advent.

In view of the horrendous present day declension, however, it seems that men do not even need such a push. This passive, unconcerned, lukewarm, and overall care-less attitude of total disregard for the tenets of Scripture, even among Christians, is absolutely rampant at this present time in every corner of the earth.

The peace and safety, which will be immediately followed by sudden destruction, will not actually come to pass until after Jesus is on His throne (Rev. 5) and opens the first two seals of judgment. Revelation 6:1-4 outlines these two extremes as John plainly declares. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one (the first) of the seals,And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the **second** seal,.....there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." The rider on the white horse is none other than the antichrist. He had a bow, but no arrows are mentioned, meaning that he conquers and captures the hearts of men through peaceful means. This white horse of peace is very quickly replaced by the "red horse," of war and bloodshed, as the time of peace and safety comes to a very abrupt end. We are persuaded that the time of peace and safety will be very short lived, but there is a very clear likelihood that it may be the consummation of the "falling away," wherein men are persuaded that they can completely ignore the purposes and decrees of God, because they are perfectly capable of solving all of their own problems. Will there come a time when they will loudly trumpet the perceived fulfillments of their dreams as a time of peace, safety, and prosperity? President Obama has, for

some time, been trying to rid the world of nuclear weapons. He began his Presidency with that goal, and continues to vigorously pursue it, as is indicated by this recent report from Lignet News. “On June 19, standing at Berlin’s historic Brandenburg Gate, President Barack Obama renewed his pledge to achieve “a world without nuclear weapons,” saying the United States would reduce its cache of nuclear weapons by one-third if Russia does the same. Russian President Vladimir Putin dismissed the offer, but made a counter-offer. It’s an offer that Putin would love the United States to accept, given that it would cripple the West’s defenses.

5 With Russia, China, North Korea and Iran, all making rapid progress toward improving their nuclear capabilities, President Obama’s renewed effort to reduce to zero the number of nuclear weapons in the world, a movement referred to as ‘Global Zero,’ raises some serious questions. The most immediate one is this: How many nuclear weapons does the United States need to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent?” Scripture is very plain that nuclear weapons **will not** be eliminated. Revelation 8 graphically depicts the effects of nuclear war, when the seventh seal of judgment is opened, and we would wonder, with all the above mentioned nations pursuing them, how “peace and safety” could ever come about. Not only so, but Vladimir Putin’s “counter-offer,” stated in this same report, is one that no other concerned nation could possibly accept. “Russian President Putin responded by reiterating Moscow’s concerns that U.S. and NATO anti-missile systems and U.S. conventional weapons could upset the strategic balance between the two countries. Putin insisted that any negotiations in further reductions of nuclear warheads had to involve other nuclear weapons powers besides the United States and Russia. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin accused Obama of “either openly lying, bluffing and deceiving, or demonstrating a deep lack of professionalism,” by asking for further nuclear weapons reductions while the United States is building missile defenses.” This article concludes with this opinion. “Vladimir Putin implicitly has made President Obama a counter-offer. Moscow may be willing to negotiate further nuclear reductions if Washington persuades its allies -- Britain, France and possibly Israel -- to reduce or Global Zero their nuclear deterrents; if Washington limits or Global Zeros U.S. and NATO missile defenses; and if Washington limits or Global Zeros high-precision conventional bombs and missiles.” It sounds as though

the Russian President does have visions of ruling the world, a desire shared by many national leaders. We know from scripture that one leader of that end-time seven headed coalition will achieve such a dream, but he surely is not manifest at the present time. Current events seem to make it quite evident that achieving “peace and safety,” in the immediate future, is almost impossible.

This peace and safety era will eventually ensue, as prophesied by scripture, undoubtedly affecting every area of society, for the “falling away,” could well be perceived, and applauded, as finally achieving that which is right. Note that the scripture says; “when **they say** peace and safety,” “they,” meaning those who are trying so desperately to implement their own agendas. This phrase also means that such a statement is only their opinion, and does not reflect the reality of a genuine peace. We caught a glimpse of such a celebration, recently, as the “falling away,” reached a new low in gross immorality. Many Christians were literally sickened over the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn DOMA (Defense of marriage Act.) We would applaud Justice Antonin Scalia who wrote the dissent to this despicable decision. He was joined by Justice Clarence Thomas, and Chief Justice John Roberts, in saying that “Today’s opinion aggrandizes the power of the court to pronounce the law. It will have the predictable consequence of diminishing the power of our people to govern themselves.” This last statement was undoubtedly a reference to the fact that the choice of Californians on prop. 8, was completely negated by this ruling. Not everyone felt this way, for many applauded the supreme court decision as a step forward, bringing the country closer to achieving what could be perceived as a portion of “peace and safety” for all Americans. Former Pres. Bill Clinton who signed DOMA into law in the first place, along with Mrs. Clinton, issued this joint statement: “By overturning the Defense of Marriage Act, the Court recognized that discrimination towards any group holds us all back in our efforts to form a more perfect union. We are also encouraged that marriage equality may soon return to California. We applaud the hard work of the advocates who have fought so relentlessly for this day, and congratulate Edie Windsor on her historic victory,” President Obama likewise highly approved the decision, and The Boston Globe reported that he “vowed to try to ensure that

such couples who marry in states where their marriages are legal still retain their rights when they move to parts of the country that have banned gay marriage.” Even more disturbing, than the opinions, and leadership, of these political “shepherds,” is the attitude of mainstream America, reflected in the polls, on this matter. CNN posted the following headline: “Polls: Plurality support same-sex marriage ruling.” It is followed with these statistics. “A USA Today poll released Monday indicates that 48% of the public favors the high court ruling..... According to the USA Today poll, which was conducted in the four days following the Supreme Court rulings, 55% say that marriages between same-sex couples should be recognized by law, with four in ten opposed. The 55% figure is an all-time high in USA Today polling. Fifty-five percent of Americans questioned in a CNN/ORC International poll conducted prior to the high court rulings also supported same-sex marriage, up 15 points since 2007.” These numbers simply indicate that the “falling away,” continues unabated, and we are certain that it will get even worse.

7 Scripture declares this despicable practice “an abomination,” (Lev. 20:13) yet society approvingly calls those who sanction it as being “progressive,” showing clearly that the majority of Americans agree with the Clintons “that discrimination towards any group **holds us all back** in our efforts to form a more perfect union.” Thus, it seems that, in this particular instance, the “falling away,” from the standards of God’s Word, is being applauded, as finally achieving that which is right, while those who would adhere strongly to the tenets of scripture are charged with preventing them from reaching their utopia.

Contrariwise, as noted earlier, given the volatile and fluid state of the nations at this present hour, there seems to be not even a glimmer of hope for world leaders, to achieve any semblance of the foretold “peace and safety, before Jesus comes for His bride.

Egypt is the latest casualty of turmoil, and unrest, joining Syria, Libya, Iran, Israel, and Afghanistan, to mention just a few. Isaiah wrote specifically of Egypt, and while Bible Scholars have long accepted this nation as being representative of the whole world, the current difficulties there are surely in line with the prophet’s announcement in Isaiah 19. The entire chapter records “the burden (doom) of Egypt,” and will eventually apply to the world as a whole, but verses 14, 15, could have been written

specifically around the developments, of the last few days and weeks, following the ouster of Egyptian Pres. Mohammed Morsi. “The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit. Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.” Once again, these words will one day be graphically applied to the entire world, but at present, they are dramatically seen in news reports out of Egypt. The “perverse spirit in the midst thereof:” is clearly seen in this breaking news from Newsmax.com. “On Wednesday, Egyptian Army chief Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi announced that President Mohammed Morsi had been removed and was replaced with the chief justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court. He also suspended the Islamist-backed constitution and called for early presidential elections..... Morsi’s ouster as the nation’s first elected leader comes two years after the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak in another popular uprising.....The Arab world's most populous nation has been in turmoil since the fall of Mubarak as Arab Spring 8 uprisings took hold in early 2011, arousing concern among allies in the West and in Israel, with which Egypt has a 1979 peace treaty.” Lignet News adds these comments, confirming the volatile and perverse atmosphere in Egypt as well as the critical economic crisis because, as Isaiah declares, “Neither shall there be any work for Egypt.” “Resistance by Egypt’s main opposition coalition to the interim president’s plan to amend the constitution and hold new elections within six months indicates trouble ahead for the transition process. If the interim government cannot win over major opposition groups, the transition is likely to be seen as unrepresentative and no better than the Morsi regime..... Regardless of whether the transition plan wins the approval of most opposition groups, unless steps can be made to prop up the economy, mass protests are likely to continue. The interim government’s decision to name economist Hazem al-Beblawi as acting prime minister is a strong indication that it understands this and plans to implement economic reforms. The loans and grants pledged by Saudi Arabia and the UAE are a promising development in this regard and could be a vote of confidence by major Arab countries for the interim government’s economic reform plans..... Reforming the economy, however, will require painful economic

austerity efforts and cutting food and fuel subsidies. Al-Beblawi told an Egyptian newspaper last month that these subsidies were unsustainable and had exceeded reasonable limits, accounting for more than 25 percent of the budget. Without such cuts, the government cannot salvage the economy or win a much-needed and long-delayed loan from the International Monetary Fund.”

We would conclude, from accounts such as these, that neither Egypt nor the world, is anywhere near a time of “peace and safety.” The good news is that the coming of Jesus for the first rank of the Church is actually not predicated on such an atmosphere. Many instances of great deliverances have occurred in the face of great calamity. There was no “peace and safety” when the Egyptians were in hot pursuit and God opened up a path through the Red Sea to deliver Israel. Lot was forcefully removed from Sodom, even while fire and brimstone were falling from heaven. The days of Purim were in no wise peaceful, as Esther was instrumental in plucking the Jews from sure destruction, during a very troublous and chaotic time in Persia. Likewise, it seems that the Shulamite, typical of the bridal company, could have been whisked away during a rather calamitous situation because we hear the very plaintive cry “return, return, O Shulamite.” She is then defined as “a company of two armies,” undoubtedly a company that was desperately needed for protection. S.O.S. 6:12,13

Paul plainly states that “... the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.” II Thess. 2:7 This mystery of iniquity is none other than a culminating part of the “falling away,” and “he who now letteth,” (hinders) will continue to hinder or resist the forces of evil “until he be taken out of the way.” Some have defined “he” as the Holy Ghost, but scripture is very plain that this active agent of the Godhead will not be taken away, even during the dark days of tribulation. He will still be on hand convicting the hearts of men and providing power and deliverance for true ministers of God, such as the two witnesses during the tribulation period. “He who now letteth,” is rather a reference to godly men of faith who, even now, are “...holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth,...” Rev. 7:1 They are the same staunch worthies of faith whom Paul instructed to “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Eph. 6:11,12

When this company is removed from the earth, and is no longer “hindering” the forces of evil, there will undoubtedly be the cry from those left behind “Return return, O Shulamite.” It is not our imagination that ungodliness, the mystery of iniquity, has increased just in the past few years, as many contemporary worthies of faith have gone home to be with The Lord. They have not been replaced and the powers of darkness have greatly increased, as is evidenced by the wickedness which has prevailed around this earth ball. Though we will never “turn this world around,” our mission is to stand and withstand the power of the enemy with every fiber of our being, as we hold back the powers of darkness by walking in the Light. Perhaps today, we will be snatched from our post, as was the Shulamite. Perhaps today, even in the midst of this tumultuous world, as we look for our Lord from heaven, we too may be rewarded and see firsthand that “....behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, **Come up hither,.....**” Rev. 4:1 **PERHAPS TODAY!**

10

The Life That Loves

**I have a life from God above,
That can do nothing else but love,
A life that dwells in loftiest height
And conquers Satan in each fight.**

**It is a life, fed on the Word,
And learns the things by man unheard,
A life which has a single light,
That counts by faith and not by sight.**

**A life that has an upward ear.
The will of God to, do and hear,
A life that cannot ever die,
But longs to be with Christ on high.**

**The life I have is Christ in me,
The hope of glory, great and free.
It is for all who will believe,
And with the heart, this life receive.**

H. C. Good

Go Forward!

Ray Quintana

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.” Ex 14:15

The natural mind might well perceive this march into The Red Sea as a trap, and any general leading his army into such a place would have been put to death for gross incompetency. But God is in command here, and if the word “trap” is to be mentioned, it was set for Pharaoh. The Lord protected Israel with a cloud of darkness, and Egypt could not come nigh them.

His command came. “He said unto Moses, tell the children of Israel, to go forward.” There is no word of reproach, but time to take action. Fighting the enemy can be so laborious that we don’t even want to get off of our faces. But Moses “wherefore criest,” prayer was already answered; and now Moses is thrust front and center, and every man to his post. God’s Word was pledged to bring His people safely through the Red Sea. We must always pray, but the time for action was at hand. In times of difficulty God asks for obedience, and true faith walks in it. Unbelief cannot hide itself behind a form of devotion. How are we to go forward practically and spiritually?

The Israelites probably never dreamt it would be through the Red Sea. Help usually arrives from unexpected ways. “God’s path is in the deep waters, and His footsteps are not known.” Psalm 77:19.

Israel was to go forward through the Red Sea on dry ground, but was it to climb Mount Sinai? No! Heb 12:18-20 says of Mount Sinai, “for ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire,For they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.” Even an animal could not touch Mount Sinai. The law is pure and it cannot be touched with one sin. “And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.” V. 21 The demands of the law likewise make us quake with fear. Mount Sinai is typical of the law, while Zion represents grace. The law can never be climbed. It only produces death.

Abram also gives us an interesting view of how we are to go forward. “The LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”

Gen. 15:1 We have a new beginning here. Abram is now ready for a greater revelation of God's Will and purposes concerning Himself. Abram, for the first time, is pronounced righteous by faith, though this was not the beginning of his faith life. This had begun when he left Ur of the Chaldees at the command of God. Now the Lord witnesses to his justification by faith, and answers Abram's questions, which are important and comforting to every believer as we go forward in our walk. First is assurance from God, "Fear not Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Abram must have feared, just as we do at times. Sometimes after a great victory, there comes a drop in our emotions. The enemy attempts to take advantage and discourage us. He tries to make us fearful. But God is there to encourage us to continue forward. Abram is comforted, but he could not take in all God's purposes of grace for him. His faith was not yet perfect; but he was going forward. Such is the case with every Christian who goes Abraham's way. Our faith develops as we go forward in our walk with God. God was Abram's portion! This is for us as well. What grace is ours!

12

Abram is now given the second assurance that he will inherit Canaan. The Lord said unto him, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees to give thee this land to inherit it." Then Abram's second question, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Gen. 15:7,8

God then presents Christ before Abram, as the pledge of his inheritance. "And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst,....but the birds divided he not." V. 9,10 Thus God answers Abram's second question, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit the land?" All the wondrous fullness of Christ and His obedience unto death is set before him, as the guarantee that his faith will be rewarded. It was all secured to Abram by promise on the ground of sacrifice. We have everything secured to us by Jesus Christ and His sacrifice at Calvary. According to God's Word, Abram went forward. He divided the animals, as instructed, but the birds he did not divide. We, as well as Abram, are taught by the type, that our Redeemer, having been laid open on the cross, His body broken for us, is the basis of all the promises of God. Abram, and our own responsibility, is to believe God, yield to His Word, and

accept His mercy extended to us. Go forward into the precious promises that await us each day, for the journey will soon end.

Abram's story of going forward, continues in chapter 16, as Ishmael's birth is recorded. Abram had been lax in accepting God's provision and was allowed to do for himself. Ten years had passed since the first declaration of the promises and still he and Sarah were childless. Waiting is just what the natural heart finds so hard to endure, especially in our daily walk. Figuratively speaking, the patriarch took his place under the dark sinister shadow of Mount Sinai. He desired to merit God's favor by the fruit of his own works. When we give grace the place, which is hers, we walk by faith and the law takes a back seat, but what happened to the children of Israel when they went forward by the law? The same was true of Abram; the fruit produced was Ishmael. He would "...be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, ... And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram." Gen. 16:12,16 He was 86 six years old, and there is no record that God even spoke to Abram again until Gen 17:1. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; **walk before me**, and be thou perfect." It was 13 years later when God finally spoke to Abram again. What is the meaning of the number 13? Rebellion! When we begin to take things into our own hands, we shut off God's grace and become rebellious. We do not go forward but we spin our wheels. He had to finally come to the place where he was dead. He could not produce the kind of fruit that was pleasing to God until he was finally dead at 99 years old. "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." Gen 17:11 We too, must come to this place of death, and in weakness, God strengthens us.

How is it that we walk before God? The answer is given by the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 11:1. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." It is as we follow the truth demonstrated by the chief apostle to the Church.

Abram continues forward, and his name is now changed to Abraham, but a huge test awaits him. The foreshadowing of the Savior's Death and Resurrection is before us and we must also now be willing to lay it all on the altar and go forward? "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt (test) Abraham,

....And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest,and offer him there for a burnt offering.....” Gen. 22:1-2 Here, as nowhere else, we are shown the Father’s Heart. We also see the Divine side of Calvary foreshadowed. Yes, the Lord Jesus was marked out for our sacrifice from all eternity. He was, in the purpose of God, “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Abraham could not just kill Isaac; he had to take the wood, symbolic of the cross being laid upon Jesus. There is no mention of Sarah, or motherly love and comfort for Isaac. Abraham and Isaac must be alone. He had to be willing to lay his only son Isaac on the altar. Abraham took the fire of “Divine Judgment” in his hand. It expresses the Divine Holiness which burns against sin. It is the perfection of the Divine Nature which cannot tolerate that which is evil. But here in our type, it pointed forward to that awful storm of Divine Judgment, which fell upon the Head of Jesus Christ as He hung upon the Cross, bearing the sin of all mankind. “And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said,where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.” Gen 22:7-8 God alone supplied that which would satisfy Himself. Nothing of man could meet the Divine requirements. The “lamb” was not only provided by God, but it was also, for God. Before blessing could flow forth to men the claims of Divine holiness and justice must be met by the burnt offering.

14

We must go forward through the trials. As Abraham, we learn grace, faithfulness, and His sufficiency. Gen 22:12 “And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: **for now I know** that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” God knows! Do you desire to stand before the Lord one day and have Him say, “well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Matt. 25:21 God saw his heart.

Abraham left his country at God’s command, and he never went back again. He went forward! The proof of faith lies in perseverance. There is a sort of faith which doth run well for a while, but it is soon ended, and it doth not obey the truth. The Apostle Paul tells us, in Heb 11 “And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now

they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” V. 15,16 These had many opportunities to return, to have settled down comfortably and tilled the ground, as their fathers did before them; but they continued forward to follow the uncomfortable life as wanderers with weary feet, who dwelt in tents, who owned no plot of land. They were aliens in the country which God had given them by promise.

Our position is a very similar. We who have believed in Christ Jesus have been called out and separated unto Him. I trust we know what it is to have gone without the camp bearing Christ’s reproach. Henceforth in this world we have no home. Our home is in the heavens above. We are looking for it among the unseen things. We are strangers and sojourners, as all our fathers were; dwellers in this wilderness, passing through as we press for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Had it not been for divine grace, where would we be? Faith must be exercised. He intends that the faith, which he gives, should have its test, and should glorify His name.

15

Brethren, do we desire something better than this world? Then continue forward in the race before us and, “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” Heb. 12:1

Abraham made a few mistakes along the way. Jacob had found a wife, or two, in Laban’s land, but he was not content. Nothing we may find in this world, can compare with what heaven holds. Our citizenship is in heaven, and we cannot rest anywhere but there. The reason why the Christian cannot go back, though we have many opportunities, is that through divine grace God has produced in our heart, desires for something better.

How is it that we **practically** walk this journey and go forward? It is by the Holy Spirit and the meal found in the provisions of His Word, which will take us forward through our journey. This is the grace way.

Today many are suffering, “according to the will of God.” He Who is too Wise to err, and too Loving to be unkind. He thus mixes the medicine and hands it to us. If only we could always realize this. True, we do not suffer all the time, for God tempers the wind according as our case requires, and graciously grants us brief respites.

I am reminded of the scene at the stoning of Steven, where

“....the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.” This young man later became the Apostle Paul, and we can only imagine the thoughts he had to leave behind for what he had done. He said in I Cor. 15:9; “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” Then, by the grace of God, he pens so many wonderful encouragements for us to go forward. For example, “but this one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind**, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.” Phil. 3:13 Go forward! Reach the mark! Win the race! Brethren, “for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. **Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**” Go forward and win the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, Who came the first time to bleed and suffer, that he might wash the world from its iniquity, is coming a second time to reign and conquer, that He may clothe the earth with glory; and the day shall arrive. We will be with Him! Go forward! “For we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. 16



THE CHECKBOOK KNOWS

Philip Guedalla, writing the biography of the Duke of Wellington, said the most difficult matter was not the finding out what Wellington did, but in discovering the sort of man he really was. The most dependable evidence he found was in the Duke’s checkbooks covering several years. Here was the evidence of what the man really cared for the most.

Did you ever study your checkbook critically and learn what you care for the most?

—Selected.

The old, venerable and beloved, black brother was perfectly correct when he remarked, “Dere are two sides to de Gospel; de believing side, and de **behaving** side.”

THE PROOF OF INSPIRATION

“Produce your cause saith the Lord. Bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show us what shall happen....Declare us things for to come. Shew the things that shall come hereafter that, we may know that ye are gods!” Isa. 41:21-23.

Fulfilled prophecy is the greatest evidence of the truth of the Bible. God calls to men to produce something like He has done. He challenges them to prove their cause, by ability to declare the future. He has done this. Thousands of years before events happen, He declared that they were to come. The very first prophecy that was given (Gen. 3:15) relates to Christ's first - and second coming. His heel is bruised in the first part of the prediction; but the serpent's head in the second part. In the study of prophecy, we learn the plans and purposes of God. We thus come to a realization of His thoughts concerning all things. He declares His thoughts to be far beyond our thoughts, and His ways are not our ways; hence we have to be brought to a knowledge of His thoughts and His ways by a study of the revelation of Himself which is found in His Word. Isa, 55:8,9. The Lord Jesus Christ based all His claims to the Messiahship upon the correctness of His predictions. John 13:19 & 14:29. His disciples asked Him for a sign of His coming and the consummation of the age, and He did not reprove them. Matt. 24:3. He gave them many signs, celestial and terrestrial, and it pleases Him when we study prophecy and endeavor to know the hour of the day in which we are living. What time is it on the dial of God's clock? is what we want to know. We want to be ready for Christ's coming. He admonishes us to watch, that we be not taken unawares. Let us therefore study prophecy more and more, that we may know God's will and purpose.

(Reprint 1949)

* Where God has put a period, do not change it to a question mark.

*The greatest use of a life is to spend it for something that outlasts it!

REFLECTIONS

. . . *From the Editor*

“Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them,.... Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.” Neh. 13:17-18

We could well use a Nehemiah in our day, to remind men that God simply will not always turn a blind eye and deaf ear, to the ungodly practices of men. Here, the subject is the sabbath and Nehemiah accurately proclaims that one major reason for the captivity of Israel was because their forefathers profaned it. Jesus Himself, also proclaimed that when He comes again in judgment, it will be because men have continued with the same evil practices that prevailed in Sodom and Gomorrah, and in the days of Noah. Luke 17:20-37 Evangelist Billy Graham declared quite a number of years ago, that if God did not judge America, He would have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Nehemiah, and those who know God’s Word, also realize the truth of “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” Heb. 13:8 This great worthy of faith knew that, even now, after the 70 year captivity in Babylon, God had not altered the decrees that invoked that trek into bondage. If such misconduct brought judgment to their forefathers, God would not excuse the current generation for committing the same offenses. We hear much in our day about love, and the God of all grace, but love and grace do not excuse sin and unrighteousness. Nehemiah took some rather decisive action here as he shut the gate to Jerusalem and threatened to “lay hands,” on those merchants who were waiting to get in. He also saw a problem with Israel intermarrying with the “heathen,” and “...contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.” Neh. 13:25 Can we even imagine what would happen today if a political leader would exercise such authority?

Elijah is another who defied the “political correctness,” and “conventional wisdom,” of our day, and would undoubtedly

be completely ostracized both by the religious and political communities as he addressed the prophets of Baal, and "...mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." I Kings 18:27

The days of Nehemiah and Elijah are long gone, and there will be no "revival" in this country, or the world, in our day. However we can hearken back to the days of Asa, and claim this glorious promise for our own lives. "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him....." II Chron. 16:9 God is Faithful and, even today, He is literally searching for hearts such as those of Nehemiah and Elijah, in the midst of devastating spiritual decline. Jesus said "...when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Lk. 18:8 We trust that He shall find it in us, and our prayer must be like unto that of Nehemiah. "Remember me, O my God, for good." Neh. 13:31

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CD's on Ezra

GH

We now have lessons on Ezra, by Bro. Albert Astle transcribed from audio cassette to CD. These are deep and spiritual lessons presented by a tremendous icon of the Grace message. You may order them from Grace and Glory, P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Mo. 64030 or by e-mail at gjhawk1@msn.com

Bible School Opening

Classes will begin once again on Sept. 9, 2013. If you desire an in depth study of God's Word, we would encourage you to take advantage of this glorious opportunity. Four classes are offered: Synthesis, Exposition, Doctrine, and Prophecy. These are the same as those offered when the Bible School was founded back in the 1930's and many have gone on to learn and publish this glorious message of God's Glorious Grace. Ample housing is available in the area.

Labor Day Meeting

We simply did not feel the leading of The Lord to have the Labor Day Fellowship meeting this year. Perhaps we will simply meet in the air.

The Uttermost Salvation

A. S. Copley

“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;...”
Heb. 7:24-26.

The theme of my message today is The Uttermost Salvation. The character of the Priest determines the character of His priesthood, and the character of both, determine the nature and character of this uttermost salvation. The Greek word "panteles" here rendered uttermost literally means, all-complete, all-perfect, entire, absolute, fully accomplished: Hence, the translators could not have chosen any other word to more fully express the fullness, completeness and duration of this great salvation.

20

The High Priest

Here are seven salient sayings concerning Jesus Christ which stamp our salvation with a character, or nature, like Himself. This is the most basic fact and deserves unspeakable emphasis. May the Holy Spirit give us to realize who indeed is our High Priest. Then we will not treat our salvation so lightly and flippantly as many do. We will not think that we must add to it, or fix it up by our own carnal tools of wisdom and effort.

First, Christ is "**holy,**" not by imputation, nor impartation; for He was born holy. Aaron and his sons, the typical priests, were unholy by nature. They could be counted holy only by divine imputation and impartation, and that upon the basis of the holiness of Him of whom they were the types. But Jesus, their anti-type, is intrinsically holy; that is, holy in Himself. His holiness does not depend upon another man. He was born holy, and never can be unholy. And more. He imparts His holiness, to unholy men who believe on Him; so that God counts them holy and they are holy in Christ; for the Holy Spirit begets within them a holy nature the moment they

believe on Jesus unto salvation. They are "**partakers of Christ, of the divine nature.**" Therefore, our salvation is a holy salvation, an uttermost salvation. Glory! And that divine, holy deposit, can never be anything less, or anything else, than holy. "Whosoever (that which) is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." I John 3:9:

Second, Jesus is "**harmless;**" literally free from sin. Hence, He could never do anyone any harm, by word or deed. He could do good only. His silent presence bore blessing. But the Aaronic line were sinful by nature; hence, in themselves were harmful. Only as the Lord used them could they be any blessing to others. Now, when sinners, accept Christ as Saviour, and obtain a holy nature, a new heart, a new spirit, they possess a harmless life, a sinless life. As "they learn" to judge "**sin in the flesh**" and count the old man: dead, they are harmless too. "**Because as He is, so are we in this world.**" I John 4:17. The uttermost salvation is not to be blamed for the harm Christians do to one another. The people are to blame, because they do not appropriate it. If Christ reigns within us; if we walk in the Spirit, we will be God-like in our conduct. He is able to save us to the uttermost in our daily lives.

Third, Christ is "**undefiled,**" or untainted. He was in the world, but not of it. His holy nature could not be stained in the least degree, though mingled with men, heard their criticisms, taunts and flattery and felt their polite and vile carnality. His holiness recoiled from it all, or threw it off. Jesus- is able to save us to the same degree. He can so fill us with the living, energetic Word, that-we will not respond to the defiling effects of a corrupt world. We will recoil instinctively from the fawning flattery of carnal believers. We will not yield for a moment to their indifference, compromise, or selfishness. The legal cannot make us hard. The cold cannot chill our ardor. The halfhearted cannot hold us back. No sort of atmosphere, whether worldly, pious, polite, or cruel, need move us. He is able to save us to the uttermost.

To this end, the need of knowing God's Word is imperative. The bewitching power of big religious

efforts, the subtlety of the words and acts of people, who are strong in themselves, is appalling. They hide their self-conceit by their pretended sanctity. A heart knowledge of God's Word is the only means by which the Lord can save us to the uttermost from such defilement. That word **pierces to the dividing asunder of Soul and spirit** and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. Ninety-nine percent of religious effort is soulish, though its zeal, and apparent greatness, fools people and they think it is spiritual. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked." We need not be deceived. Let **us "be filled with all the fulness of God"** in practical, every day experience by learning the whole Truth. Let us walk in the Spirit and we will be borne above the defiling, corrupting religious influences around us. Jesus is able to save us to the, uttermost from men, movements and things. 22

Fourth, Jesus is, "**separate from sinners.**" The Diaglott reads, "having been separated." His harmlessness depended upon his intrinsic, innate holiness. His undefilement depended upon His complete, clean-cut separation from men through taking the place which the Scriptures foretold of Him. At the age of twelve, it was revealed to Jesus that God was His Father and, that His was a distinct mission in the world: "**Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?**" He said to His anxious earthly parents. Luke 2:49. Hence, He took the stand of absolute separation from men and watched daily for the unfolding of the Father's will concerning Himself.

Likewise, the uttermost salvation separated us from sinners, world sinners and religious sinners, when we were born again. Jesus said, "**Straight is the gate and narrow is the way** that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." We did not understand it all at first; but the Holy Spirit seeks to make us know the completeness and depth of this separation. Oh, how many saints slip over Paul's five fleecing questions in II Cor. 6:14,15. Hence, they *become* unequally yoked together

with unbelievers, most of whom are among Christian. Therefore, God cannot receive them into full fellowship, and He cannot be a Father to them. Defilement is inevitable. Oh, yes, if we walk clean with the Lord and separate from all men, some will pronounce us narrow and over much righteous. Well, we must bear all criticism as suffering with Christ. The uttermost salvation shows us the will and the way of the Father and enables us to walk therein. His name be praised!

Fifth, He *was* "**made higher than the heavens.**"

Yes, Jesus ascended on high and is seated at the right hand of the Father. All things are under His feet. But we too have an exalted position in Christ. The **Father "raised us up together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus."** Eph. 2:6. He counts us there now. Hence, He asks some saints, "**Why as though living in the world,** are ye subject to ordinances, which all are to perish with the using?" Col 2:20-22. We should count ourselves, and one another, there. Paul writes, "For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God? We are now living in the heavenlies, though "our members are upon earth," and are to be mortified, or treated as dead. Col. 3:1-5. Let us reckon ourselves in heaven with Christ. Then this uttermost salvation will enable us to reign as kings now, over all circumstances, and place us finally, with glorified bodies, on the throne with Christ in glory. We may now enjoy "**Christ in us the hope of glory.**" Col. 1:27

Sixth. Jesus Christ "**continueth ever.**" He will never cease to 'be who He is --- even "Lord Jesus. Anointed." Aaron died. His sons all died. All his descendants died. None of them continued. The anti-typical Priest died once, but is alive forever more. He will never die again. This stern fact lends eternal value to the uttermost salvation. It determines its duration. Recently, someone wrote me, saying, "What is eternal security? People accuse us of teaching it." My friends, does not the uttermost salvation of God make us eternally secure? It certainly does! Ah, yes. Jesus Christ is able to save us to the uttermost of the longest and most tempestuous life—even straight through to the end. Hallelujah! Remember,

that the character of the High Priest determines the character of our salvation. If He continues, our salvation must continue; for He is our salvation. Psa. 27:1. If He lives forever, we have everlasting life; for "**Christ is our life.**" Col. 3:4. Oh, they, who talk of being saved today and lost tomorrow, are blind to God's plan, purpose, and power. They do not know the Savior. They are shamefully ignorant of God's salvation for man. Luke 2:30. Some folks put more confidence in a deed made by men, than in God's Word. They feel safer about their property when the deed is recorded in the court house, than they do concerning their souls in Jehovah's infinite care. They think that those who are "graven upon the palms of His hands," (Isa. 49:16) and "whose names are written in the book of the life of the Lamb" (Rev. 18:8), can be erased. You can destroy an engraving only by destroying part of the article upon which it is engraved. Saints can be lost only if Christ their Savior can be lost. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away, Behold, all things have become new." II Cor. 5:17. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life and shall never perish." Jesus is able to save through all eternity those who believe on Him now.

Seventh. Christ was made High Priest "**with an oath.**" "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament;" for "the Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." "Men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." Heb. 6:16 and 7:21,22. How much more should God's immutable counsel, settle the eternal security of salvation. If God made promise to Abraham and confirmed it by an oath, that, through his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blest; if He made His Son to be Priest forever, how dare anyone say that our salvation is dependent upon our faithfulness? Nay, nay; these seven sane sayings, the sevenfold voice of Jehovah, lend a sevenfold conviction to the eternal duration of the salvation which we now enjoy.

The Center Of The Universe

Aaron Blair

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. I Corinthians 15:40-41

It is hard to believe that only a few hundred years ago, people believed that the earth was the center of the universe and all celestial bodies revolved around the earth. Sadly, there are many in Christendom, as well as the world today, who believe that everything revolves around them. It has become quite apparent that they either do not know, or do not care to know, about the order of God.

The sun is set in place and cannot be moved by man. So also is the Son. We know that Christ will not be moved. Scripture describes Him as a Rock, as Israel “...did drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” I Corinthians 10:4 Paul also portrayed Him as “.....being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:” The corner stone is the unmoving anchor of a building.

Just as everything in the universe revolves around the sun, our lives must revolve around Christ. As sad as it is, men of this world revolve around Christ, more like the earth revolves around the sun. A portion of the world is in the light while the rest of it sits in darkness. There are also varying degrees of light, depending on the position of the earth to the sun, at any given time. The brightest part of the day is around noon and then you have varied degrees of brightness from dawn until dusk.

This really speaks of Christendom’s testimony from the beginning. There are those who will learn the truth of God’s Word and make it practical in their lives, wherein they become brighter and brighter. Others however, depending on the level of the knowledge of God’s Word they receive, often become dimmer and dimmer. Our prayer for those, is that the darkness will eventually give way to light and then the dim light will shine much more brightly.

I had a conversation with one recently who tried to convince me that because the moon is mentioned after the sun in our opening text, that the moon is the type of Christian we want to be. Scripture is quite plain that such a scenario

cannot be so. Revelation 22:16, declares plainly that Christ "...is the bright and morning star." If He is This Star, and we are to be like Christ, then should we not also be stars?

There are some definite facts about the moon, that confirm this even more. The moon is the closest celestial body to the earth, and only **reflects** light. The moon is not always visible, nor is it always in a position to reflect the full light of the sun. The moon is large, in comparison to the stars, because it is much farther from the sun. These same facts are also seen in the lives of Christians.

First, as Christians, and more specifically the bride, we are to be in the world but not of it. We need to distance ourselves from the ways of the world, and be changed from glory to glory, as we are moved closer to the Son.

Next, we must assume a position to take in the light of God's word, before we can give it out. There are many who can put on a good persona but that is where it stops. They never allow the seed to fully take root on the inside. They are putting out the plastic or wax fruit that really has no worth other than something nice to look at.

When a Christian falls back into the ways of the world, he or she is said to be a carnal Christian. A carnal Christian is a person who has walked in the ways of God, and of course believed in Christ, but they have moved out of the light and back into some degree of darkness. Just as the moon has different phases, carnal Christians do also.

Lastly in referencing the attributes of the moon, the closer that you get to the Son, the smaller the group, of believers, gets. The bride of Christ will obviously be the smallest portion taken out and thus John contrasts the Church, as a whole, as being "...a great multitude which no man could number." Rev. 7:9

The stars stand in great contrast to the moon. They are closer to the sun, and stars are not all located the same distance from the sun. The stars continuously **absorb**, and then reflect the light of the sun, thus shining in different glories. I Cor. 15:41 Stars have also been used to guide people as they travel. The characteristics of the stars, likewise, portray Christians.

First, a Christian who is truly seeking after the Lord is, of course, drawing closer to the Son. A deep meaningful relationship with God requires us to have that closeness with Christ. A successful marriage requires the husband and wife to develop a personal closeness that goes far beyond the boundaries

of a casual friendship. Likewise, the Bridegroom must have that relationship with the Bride, and The Song Of Solomon provides a beautiful example of the intimacy necessary be a part of that bridal company. Without the closeness, how is He able to see the beauty of his love's teeth or lips or neck? S.O.S. Ch. 4 & 6 From a distance, the beauty of these cannot be clearly seen, and appreciated. The two must be hand in hand, face to face, eye to eye, for Him to truly behold her beauty.

Secondly, just as the stars are at different distances from the sun, Christians are at different distances from the Son. We all came from sin, as far from the Son as you can get, but because of the grace, mercy and love of God, we can be changed from glory to glory to glory. In other words, God can bring about changes in our hearts that will bring us a little closer to the Son, and then a little closer and a little closer. This will continue, until he bids us home.

27 Thirdly, in order to truly give out the word, or "shine," we need to take it in and make it practical in our own lives. In Mark 7:15 Christ tells us "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man." When looking at the world, and everything that takes place, it is easy to find yourself in a conversation that you should not be in. You may hear, or take in, some of the conversation, but your immediate response at the moment, may defile you. If we are taking in God's Word, which is righteous, and make it practical in our lives, the light of Christ Who is the Word made flesh, will be seen in us. So, as we appropriate more of God's word, the brighter the light will shine in, or through, us.

By way of contrast, with those who shine like the moon and whose façade appears as the wax fruit, Christians who take in the word, allow God to plant a seed in order to take root within them. When God's Word takes root on the inside, the fruit that is produced will be valuable, and can be taken in, by others, to bring about spiritual growth. Real fruit contains its own seeds, which can then be replanted in another location, or in this case another person, and if allowed, the cycle can start again. This is not something that is just done sporadically. We must constantly absorb, and then reflect, the light of the Son. This does not mean that we have to read God's Word without stopping, but it does mean that we actively receive that message, meditate and reflect on it, as we go through each day. Such a process teaches

us to look at, or judge ourselves according to the Word, which will, in turn, reflect or shine outwardly, for the benefit of others.

Finally the last trait is that stars were used to guide the way when one was on a journey. Captains of ships, before the days of GPS, would use different references such as the North Star, big and little dipper, Orion's belt, etc... to find their way. Christ likewise tells us to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:16 This of course is not speaking of the works of men but of the works that come from faith.

We need to be those bright and shining stars for all who come in contact with us. We need to be like a neon light on the front of a store that attracts people to what is contained inside. If we are shining in this manner, then it is the light of Christ that will be manifest for all to see. Let us be as the stars in the sky that others can follow to learn the ways of God.

We would close with these exhortations. Let us keep our sights set on the stars, the higher things of God, for thus shall we be changed from glory to glory to glory so that others may see and follow. It is imperative that we do not expect everything to revolve around our lives but rather around the Son.



RUGGEDNESS

Never once was He gently led. He was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was led by men filled with wrath to the brow of the hill that they might cast Him down headlong. He was led away to Annas; led away to Caiaphas; led into the council of the elders, the chief priests and scribes; led to Pontius Pilate and into the hall of judgment. And then, He, our Lord Jesus Christ, was led as a sheep to the slaughter; led away to be crucified! Verily, "His way was rougher and darker than mine."

—Frances Ridley Havergal

"Christianity is not 'ethics,' but experience. Not 'morals', but the 'Master.' Not 'standards,' but the Savior Himself. It is not principles to practice, but power to perform.

SOWING AND REAPING

*"Whatsoever a man soweth,
that shall he also reap" - Gal. 6:6-9.*

Strictly speaking, this Scripture deals with the matter of the financial support of those who minister the Word of God. In verse six we read, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." The teacher should share with the one who is taught. He should reap prosperity in material things for the sowing of spiritual things. For the Lord has "ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." I Cor. 9:14.

We know that the law of agriculture governs in the natural realm. It is the pattern used here by Paul in the spiritual realm.

The niggardly giver or sower will reap a meager harvest; for his sowing is before the eyes of the Lord. "God is not mocked." But He sees the amount sown, and He will remunerate accordingly. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" - Verse 8. Everlasting life is indeed God's gracious gift; but, we may increase our inheritance of it, by an abundant investment of our carnal substance in the spreading of the Gospel.

Farming is slow business generally. There are rainy seasons, and the husbandman must wait for the early and the latter rain to ripen the grain for the harvest; likewise, in the spiritual. We must wait God's time for the reaping; hence, we are exhorted to not "be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" - Verse 9. For, even though men may forget us, God will not forget. Sometimes teachers are neglected, because it is thought that they do not need the carnal substance of those whom they have served. Hence, the latter give their tithes to others whom they deem "more needy." It is not a question of need, but of

worthiness because of service rendered. "Honor to whom honor" is due - Rom. 13:7. Paul declares that the one taught, should give to the one who has taught him. It is his due. Those taught, owe the teacher their tuition. It is an obligation of love for benefits obtained. What is due him should not be given to another. If the taught has received spiritual riches, should not the teacher receive from him corresponding material blessings? There is much ignorance along this line; therefore, much giving is not of God, and it will receive no reward from Him here, nor hereafter.

The Word is plain and clear. The tithes belong to our teachers and pastors. We may give freewill offerings to others if we so desire; but we must see to it that those who labor among us are served first. Many times, the ox that treadeth out the corn is muzzled. That is, he is not allowed to reap the field which he has plowed and planted; but other oxen, that wander around and stroll in, are fed and filled with the abundance. The Apostle inquires, "Does God take care for oxen? Or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that plowed' should plow in hope." I Cor. 9:9,10. It is no pleasure for a farmer to plow, plant, and thresh, without hope of a reward. He will soon grow tired and despair and give up the work. Paul advises further: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" He had authority to demand the corresponding remuneration. Nevertheless, he did not exercise that authority; but suffered the lack and served at his own expense, lest the Gospel should be hindered. But the fact remains; which he desired us to know, that they who "minister about holy things live of the things of the temple. And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar." I Cor. 9:13. He sets before us the priests and Levites of the Old Testament as our examples. They served in the holy things and shared in the things wherein they ministered; and so should the priests and ministers under the new covenant.

(Anon. Reprint 1964)

ISAIAH

Gene Hawkins

Chap. 10 Concluded

31 **I**saiah, the poet, next explains that these men are only instruments in God's Hand, and absolutely must not magnify themselves against Him. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood." V. 15 The message here is that God uses these rulers as tools, but they assume they can dictate the entire program not realizing that He is the One Who "heweth" with the axe and "shaketh" the saw. They are totally unaware that they are only puppets in His Hand, absolutely powerless to do anything of themselves, and that God Himself must teach His Own lessons. "Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;.." V. 16,17

These words would most assuredly apply at the time of Isaiah's writings, but the greater fulfillment will be when "the light of Israel," Christ Himself will come "like a burning fire." He will bring to pass the severe judgment recorded in the following verses.

The above description seems to include both Israel and the nations. "His fat ones," would indicate His ownership of Israel, in their "fat" independent ways and attitudes, while the thorns and briers describe those who will be consumed because of their excessive punishment of God's elect. The "glory" of His judgment continues, "And shall consume the glory of his forest, (gentile nations) and of his fruitful field, (Israel) both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth." V. 18 Though these enemies claim a "forest" of defense, nothing they can do will deter this fire which will sweep down upon them. They tried to be the "standardbearer," against Him, but could in no wise stand in His path. Thus "... the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them." V. 19 This rather peculiar verse simply means that the devastation will be so severe, and yet so plain and obvious, that even a child could "write," or describe

it. Men would not need a ready scribe to record the fact that only a small remnant of this forest of defense actually remained.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.” V. 20 These words describe a different remnant than that of the forest and this is what God has been waiting for since the very birth of this nation. They are often called “the faithful remnant,” which will “in that day,” (the day of severe trouble) bow before their Messiah, refusing to “stay” (lean or rely) upon him (the nations and antichrist) that smote them,” but will finally give their complete allegiance to “the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.” V. 21,22

This vast nation, which did indeed prosper as “the sand of the sea,” in accordance with the promises of the Abrahamic covenant, is now reduced to a very small band, but that band will be the nucleus of a full-fledged nation which “shall overflow with righteousness,” even the righteousness of Jesus. The decreed “consumption,” (pining, destruction of the tribulation) will spring forth into this glorious righteous nation. “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction. And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.” V. 24 -26 “Therefore,” or because Israel shall emerge overflowing “in righteousness,” you need no longer fear the Assyrian. The indignation (against Israel) will cease and this enemy will be destroyed. Bear in mind that these are promises to Judah and Jerusalem, but the declaration “he shall smite thee,” is directed toward Assyria. They would be smitten after the same manner of plagues that fell upon Egypt, and as “his rod was upon the sea,” (Red Sea) and “according to the slaughter of Midian....” Jud. 7 All of these incidents record God’s resounding supernatural intervention in behalf of Israel and this one would be no different.

The local fulfillment is found in II Kings 19. “Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city,.... For I will defend this city,.....And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.” V. 32-35

The result at that time, and also when Israel as a nation returns unto The Lord, is found in our next verse. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.” V. 27 The “anointing” is a clear reference to Jesus, The Messiah, or Anointed One, and His Glorious Presence will bring freedom from the bondage Israel has suffered since 606 B.C. This nation has been oppressed and abused by the nations throughout the period known as Gentile Times. When Jesus takes His throne and liberates His people, that era will be over and thus “the yoke shall be destroyed.”

The remaining verses of this chapter describe the complete victory “the anointing” will take over all the enemies of both Himself and Israel. This list recalls some notable places in Israel wherein God has already made His Presence known, but they are only typical of the greater destruction He will bring on those who would dare resist Him. “He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages: They are gone over the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.” V. 28,29 This is the only time “Aiath” is mentioned in scripture, but its name, meaning “heap,” is symbolic of the coming destruction which will befall these nations. Migron (hurling down) and Michmash (poverty) along with Gibeah and Geba are featured in I Sam. 13-14 where God wrought a tremendous victory over the Philistines, despite the unbelief and rebellion of King Saul. He truly did “lay up his carriages,” or weapons against them, beginning especially with the stupendous victories won by Jonathan and his “armourbearer.” I Sam. 14:10-16 But “Ramah is afraid....” This was the city associated with Samuel, and seemingly the only “spiritual” place remaining in Israel, but now even that is no longer a safe haven.

“Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth. Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee. As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.” V. 30-32 These verses continue with the relentless march of judgment brought on by “the anointing.” The local context of this entire portion seems to follow the path of Assyria, as they marched toward Jerusalem for “he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.” Sennacherib could only “shake his hand,” against the beloved city at that time and though Jerusalem will be trodden down in the end time, the ultimate fulfillment of these prophetic words will be when “the anointing” indeed allows the nations to march against His city of Jerusalem, in order to bring His people to repentance. When the Jews finally bow before Him, He will then bring intense judgment, even more severe than the examples cited above, upon the offending nations. “Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.” Thus Assyria of old, is only typical of that end time coalition wherein King Jesus will topple the pride and arrogance of the antichrist and the nations as “the high ones of stature shall be hewn down and the haughty shall be humbled.” He will cut down their armies and Lebanon shall surely fall by this “mighty one,” The Deliverer of Jerusalem.

34

God Is Faithful

There has not failed us one good thing
Of all the Lord has said.
What He has promised He has done;
And hitherto has led.
Tho' we grow old as years go by,
And hoary is our head;
He will not leave, nor e'en forsake,
Those for whom He bled.
Then what have we to ask beside?
His love will ne'er grow cold.
Amid the further strain and stress ---
His Hand will still uphold.

Mary M. Bodie



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