

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

Without Price Since 1910

'Loving His Appearing'

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Be ye therefore
merciful, as your
Father also is
merciful.
LUKE 6:36.

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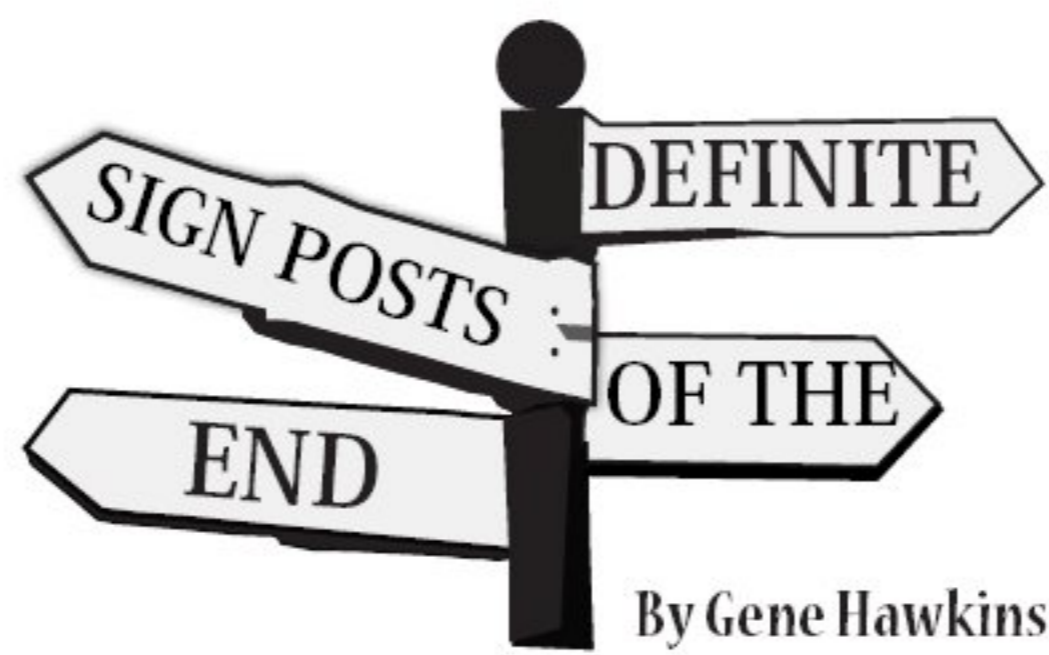
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Matt. 24:3-5

3 **T**he above text is a very familiar one. The entire chapter records Jesus’ answer to the disciples questions, “when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (age) It is rather interesting, and so applicable to our day, that this His very first response is a reference to deception. He first tells of those who would claim to be like unto Himself, then warns that “...many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” V. 11 Though some have literally tried to pass themselves off as being “The Christ,” down through the years, the teaching here is that many will purport themselves as being able to perform a WORK, that only Jesus can accomplish. The ultimate deception will be when the Jews are duped into making a covenant with the antichrist, supposing that he is the great savior for whom they have been searching.

However, the “false prophets,” who shall deceive many tell us of the overall atmosphere of deception that will pervade the entire world. Paul likewise gives many very telling characteristics of the “perilous times” that will descend upon mankind in “the last days,” one of which is that “...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” II Tim. 3:13 This condition does not simply refer to various isolated events, but rather bespeaks a general world-wide climate of deception, which includes the entire planet, **socially, nationally, politically and religiously.** “Twisting” the truth of God’s Word has been a ploy for centuries to “turn the truth of God into a lie,” and thus deceive men into believing that which is contrary to His Ways. Such a practice literally robs people of what they could have had, for only truth has the power and design to make men free.

It makes no difference the sectors wherein lies are published.

Satan puts them forth for the specific purpose of deceiving an intended victim. James said it well when he admonished: “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” Jas. 3:14-16 Such “evil work,” is surely manifest in all the above mentioned walks of life, and as Paul affirmed, it will “wax worse and worse.”

We noted last month, in these pages, that religious deception has become paramount, in these last days, because men will simply not adhere to the truth of God’s Word. It is also rather apparent that such a practice, among the masses, will continue unabated. Our world is also presently faced with great political deception, as men literally clamor for power, trying to gain an advantage over one another. We know from scripture that one world government, under the leadership of the antichrist, will emerge bearing all the claims and characteristics of “The Messiah.” He will be preceded by the false prophet, who will convince the world that this “superman,” has all the credentials and power to bring about the utopia which only Jesus can actually accomplish. Jesus warned that the deception would be so strong “...that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt. 24:24

4

This represents the very height of mass deception, which will come to pass, well into the tribulation period, but we must understand that it has already begun, as men are becoming “masters of their trade,” even at this present time.

Scripture plainly declares “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32 This verse has a multitude of applications in our lives, but one “freedom” truth brings is rest and satisfaction. Contrariwise, lies and deception produce confusion and unrest. Every parent knows the tremendous discomfort and consternation which comes from a child who will not tell **all the truth**. Husbands and wives have had to endure the tremendous pain and uncertainty because unfaithful spouses became so very adept at hiding their actions.

Those same feelings prevail in the spirits of many today who have gained no satisfaction from the limited reports and half truths that have been published in regard to a multitude of scandals in our own country. Even Delilah apparently found rest in her own spirit, when Samson “told her all his heart.” Jud. 16:17 We are certainly not seeing men tell all that is in their hearts today,

and it is no wonder that so many are so ill at ease because the facts surrounding “Fast and Furious,” “The IRS,” “Benghazi,” and the secret lists associated with “the VA” are still shrouded in mystery. The political word used to describe such deception in recent years is “spin.” It is simply an acceptable and “politically correct” term for refusing to tell the truth, a tactic whereby men slant things to their own political advantage, and it is used world-wide.

Proponents of “Climate Change,” or “Global Warming” did not help their cause when they were caught in a web of deception altering scientific data to enhance their point. The world at large, and especially China, has come to believe nothing put forth by the Malaysian government, due to the many conflicting and fact ignoring reports published around their vanished airline.

Iran continues to hold the world at bay with their nuclear program. They insist that it has nothing to do with nuclear war- heads, but no nation on earth believes them. This latest report from Lignet News describes the failure of the latest talks with this headline: **“Iran Talks: Despite Optimism, 'No Tangible Progress'”** The article goes on to say that “The fourth round of nuclear talks between Iran and six world powers ended Friday, with no new progress . . . U.S. and Iranian officials described the talks as “slow and difficult” . . . Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Iranian media “there was no tangible progress in this round of the talks” . . . current sticking points include the size of a nuclear enrichment capability Iran is allowed to retain... there has been little progress on a final nuclear accord with Iran, despite an initial flurry of optimism when the world leaders reached a preliminary accord with Iran last November . . . since that agreement, which reduced sanctions in exchange for Iran’s agreement to international monitoring of its nuclear program and halts on nuclear development, talks have largely stalled...”

Saddam Hussein used these same delay tactics of deception concerning his WMD, and such nations will continue to pursue the same paths because, in their own minds, they do produce the desired results.

Vladimir Putin completely ignored his agreement with Ukraine, as noted last month, and Russia’s current actions of an apparent “stand down,” cannot, in any wise be taken seriously. Furthermore, wonder of wonders, Russia does not trust the U.S.! This article from Newsmax details their intent to hit them where it hurts. “Russia cast doubt on the long-term future of the

International Space Station, a showcase of post-Cold War cooperation, as it retaliated on Tuesday against U.S. sanctions over Ukraine.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said Moscow would reject a U.S. request to prolong the orbiting station's use beyond 2020. It will also bar Washington from using Russian-made rocket engines to launch military satellites.

Moscow took the action, which also included suspending operation of GPS satellite navigation system sites on its territory from June, in response to U.S. plans to deny export licenses for high-technology items that could help the Russian military.

"We are very concerned about continuing to develop high-tech projects with such an unreliable partner as the United States, which politicizes everything," Rogozin told a news conference.

Washington wants to keep the \$100 billion, 15-nation space station project in use until at least 2024, four years beyond the previous target.

Moscow's plan to part ways on a project which was supposed to end the "space race" underlines how relations between the former Cold War rivals have deteriorated since Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea region in March.

At a time when Moscow is struggling to reform its accident-plagued space program, Rogozin said U.S. plans to deny export licenses for some high-technology items were a blow to Russian industry. "These sanctions are out of place and inappropriate," Rogozin said. "We have enough of our own problems."

Paul very aptly put it, "deceiving and being deceived." Scripture is very plain announcing that this same pattern will continue until the antichrist takes his place and ushers in his own regime. Until that time, we can rest assured that all these nations will be battling for their own upper hand, using any means necessary to achieve their own objective.

China is, in no wise, lost in the mix. This report from Lignet News, along with their analysis, shows that a number of nations are involved in recent power disputes surrounding Asian Waters. "Three emerging crises in the Asia Pacific illustrate China's new offensive posture and the need for a strong multinational response. Recent moves on China's north and south Pacific flanks include establishing an air defense zone over the Senkaku Islands, building a base on a disputed reef in the Spratly Islands, and moving a deep-water drilling rig into coastal waters off Vietnam.

The long-simmering dispute re-emerged in April when

President Barack Obama said during an official visit to the region that the U.S. “treaty commitment to Japan’s security is absolute, and Article 5 covers all territories under Japan’s administration, including the Senkaku Islands.” Administration of the islands should not be “subject to change unilaterally,” he said.

China’s aggressive acts have opened the door for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to reorient his country’s defense posture and reach out to countries that have historically distrusted Tokyo. However, Beijing is seeking to throw the administration off balance by blaming Washington for forcing China to make aggressive moves. At a Pentagon news conference Thursday, Gen. Fang Fenghui, chief of staff of the People’s Liberation Army, said “the [Asian pivot] strategy of the U.S. has stirred up some of the problems which make the South China Sea and the East China Sea not so calm as before.” Fang said China would respond forcefully to any attempts to interfere with what it believes are its sovereign rights, adding, “We do not create trouble but we are not afraid of trouble.”

7 China is finding support from another revisionist power: Russia. After Obama concluded his trip to Asia, Russia and China announced plans for joint naval exercises near the Senkaku Islands in May. Since the United States has shown no willingness to stand up militarily to Russia in Europe, a potential Sino-Russian naval entente in the Pacific poses greater dangers than China would by acting on its own.

Beijing and Moscow are exploiting the characteristic unwillingness of the United States to respond forcefully as they unilaterally change the facts on the ground. Whether in the Spratlys or in Crimea, China and Russia are simply seizing territory and daring the international community to respond.”

We have noted previously that these two powers of Russia and China may well be the two kings left standing in Rev. 17:10. It is not hard to envision them collaborating together against a common foe, as seen above, to achieve their own ends, and once again fulfill Paul’s prophecy of those who deceive, with themselves also, being eventually deceived.

These deceptive and conniving tactics of men will continue both nationally and internationally. Satan has effectively used deception throughout the ages to implement his agenda. Jesus said that such a cloud would be so strong that even the elect, his chosen remnant at that time, would be deceived if it were possible. Paul specifically warns Christians, “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 The context of this portion is that some were trying to tell the Thessalonians that Jesus had already come and they had been left behind. Paul establishes the truth, once again, that "...ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The truth here is that the falling away must come and the antichrist revealed before all doors of salvation will be closed. Paul assures them that such a thing has not happened. The number one priority, for our lives today, should be ensuring ourselves against this end time climate of deception. Paul again tells us why men open themselves up to deception. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:" II Thess. 2:11 The "cause," of which he speaks, is found in the previous verse. "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." These words specifically address those who will be duped by the false prophet, but the principle is the same on any level of our experience. To the degree that men deny truth in their lives, they make themselves 8 vulnerable to deception! The apostle said it thus in Eph. 4. "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:" V. 14-15 The little word "That," is a reference to the truth published by the "gifts," which Christ gave unto men when He was raised from the dead. Only God's Word has the power to sanctify us, and separate us from the effects of the lies and deceit set forth by Satan. John 17:17,19

We have heard, both in personal report, and advertisement by certain T.V. evangelists, that people should "stockpile" foods that will last up to 20 years in preparation for calamitous days. It begs the question. Why? We have known many who have wanted to be prepared for a "rainy day," which is scriptural, but why do some seem to be preparing for a time of such long duration? Do they not have the glorious hope given to the Philadelphia assembly? "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee **from** (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10 Do they not know that the entire tribulation period will

last just 250 days short of 7 years? Are such as these preparing to go into, at least part of, this devastating period? The love of the truth, meaning our active pursuit of truth in our own lives, will preserve us from such prospects, and devastating fears, as these.

Matthew 24:25-28 also warns of those who will be greatly deceived if they do not know the truth. “Behold, I have told you before. (of gross deception. V. 23,24) Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” The warning here is to those of national Israel who will endure the worst of the tribulation period. They will be earnestly searching for a “deliverer,” but Jesus warns them NOT to look somewhere in the world. Rather their deliverance will appear, “...as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west;” when Jesus Himself comes openly, rather than in secret, pouring out the horrendous judgment, resulting in Armageddon. Only by knowing such “truth,” will they be able to guard against the deception of vainly searching, for Him, in the desert or some other secret chamber.

That same pattern is for us today. We must arm our selves with the truth of God’s Word if we would be preserved from any lie perpetrated by the enemy. Our eyes too, must be fixed firmly on the heavens “.....from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:” Phil. 3:20

In The Twinkle Of An Eye

‘Tis near that glad and holy day,
When Christ shall call His bride away,
From East and West in raiment gay,
Changed in the twinkle of an eye.

Oh hour of bliss when we shall hear,
The trumpet peal so loud and clear
And sail away to yonder sphere
Changed in the twinkle of an eye.

Then we will see our Bridegroom’s Face
And praise Him for abundant grace,
That brought us to perfection’s place
Changed in the twinkle of an eye.

Mary M. Bodie

THE ACCUSER

Paul N. Smith

“ AND THE GREAT DRAGON WAS CAST OUT, THAT OLD SERPENT CALLED THE DEVIL, AND SATAN, WHICH DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: FOR THE ACCUSER OF OUR BRETHREN IS CAST DOWN, WHICH ACCUSED THEM BEFORE OUR GOD DAY AND NIGHT.” Rev. 12:9,10.

Here is the eternal cry of triumph which all Christians are waiting to hear. This event will occur just before the middle of the seven years of tribulation right after the 144,000 are taken to heaven as symbolized by the Man-Child. What a cry of victory ! Saints have been longing for that day for centuries, and no wonder, for that will be a notable achievement. The tormenter and accuser of the brethren will finally be kicked out of the place he has occupied with his forces from before the foundation of the world.

He is the accuser of the brethren, which fact we want to emphasize. He has been the accuser as long as there has been humanity. He has a hatred for humanity, especially righteous humanity, because his place and authority will be taken over by Christ and the new creation. The devil has tried to defeat God's purposes since his display of pride long before man was put upon the earth. He is actively waging a war against the children of God, because they are his most powerful enemies, and present a threat to his domination. It is no wonder that he is waging such a hot and torrid battle in these last days, for he knows that his time is short, and if he is going to defeat God through His creatures, then he must do it quickly. Satan has failed thus far, but that has not deterred him from his original purpose. He will continue to try to defeat them through any methods he can devise. His methods thus far have been subtlety, deception, suspicion, doubt, and lies. He clothes himself and his purpose in garments of respectability and religious hypocrisy.

A notable example of his tactics is found in the life and experiences of Job. We need not be unaware of his devices today, because he hasn't changed his style, only the circumstances, and

environment are different. In Job's case, we know that he was a man who "was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." God had this opinion of Job, and when Satan came into God's presence one day, this is what was said to him: "And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Let us note at the outset that God is always defending His people, and will not receive an accusation against them. The only reason that He bargained with Satan was to prove that Job was indeed a perfect and upright man. He knew it already, but Satan did not believe it, nor did Job realize it.

11 Satan began his accusation by saying that the only reason Job was perfect was because God let nothing adverse come his way; in other words he never had any trials or testings so why couldn't he be always in victory? Let's see him under stress and in sorrow; will he still praise God? Another point to notice and always remember are the words of the Lord next, "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power (authority), only upon himself put not forth thine hand." Satan could not, and cannot today, touch anything concerning us except it is allowed him by God, and God puts the limits on what Satan can do. We know that even though Job lost all his possessions and his children, yet he remained faithful to God and did not complain. In this respect, he was perfect. Note his reaction to all the reports of evil, "Then Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." This is a clue to the way to victory — worship God first, and acknowledge God only, in setbacks and severe loss and hardship.

Satan is not through, however, as is always the case, and comes back for another attack. This time he says, yes, but touch his body and he will curse you, because a man will do anything to save his life. God answers again with permission and limitations, "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand; but save his life." Again we emphasize, that if we are trusting the Lord absolutely, the devil can never take our lives away from us. If we go to the grave trusting the Lord, it is not defeat; it is the will of God! The Lord Jesus Christ, by tasting death, has through death destroyed him who had the

power of death, that is the devil. Heb. 2:14 Jesus Christ has the keys of death, and no child of God enters therein except by His permission.

Sickness and pain touches us more deeply than anything else can. Sorrow does, in time, fade away: but constant suffering cannot be ignored. This is Satan's most effective weapon today. And in Job's sickness, he not only had to bear the humility and pain, he had to listen to the devil's accusing voice through his three "friends." Satan even spoke through Job's wife, as she told him to curse God and die. That is exactly what Satan wanted him to do. His friends tried to crack his invincible wall of righteousness by telling him that he had sinned horribly and God was punishing him. In all this, we see Satan's crafty plan to defeat Job and make God a liar. These tactics did not end with Job. The devil has been using the same methods throughout the ages, and is busily engaged in his espionage and intervention in God's affairs. We should never become obsessed with the pain, the sorrow, the ones whom Satan uses, but realize it is the same battle as of old. Victory will come quicker if we realize that God is allowing the trial because -1. Satan is accusing; and - 2. God is working in us. 12

In Job's case, God was doing something for Job that Satan did not know anything about; He was bringing Job to a place of greater victory and perfection than when, Satan first accused him. So, you see, God is never defeated. He uses Satan's methods to perfect His people and bring defeat to the devil. Through all this adversity, Job was finding out just what was in man, and how weak he was, and how strong God is! The talk of his friends and his answers taught Job some things that he did not know before this. And it is always so; our trials always reveal our weaknesses if we have any. We may think we are able to stand any onslaught of Satan, but a trial or test will prove something, to God and to Satan and to us. Job was brought to a realization that he was too weak to stand the battle with the enemy on the basis of his own perfection. He never cursed nor charged Him foolishly, but now he learned that God was his Strength and Deliverer. He learned the path of absolute trust in God. We can only come to this place through the trying of our faith. We may know that the Bible says that the Lord is our strength, but we never really know it except by experience. How do we gain the reality of these truths except through experience? At the end of his trial, Job was absolved of any blame whatsoever. God spoke to the friends of Job and said, "My wrath is kindled

against thee . . . for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right; AS MY SERVANT JOB HATH"—Job 42:7. These accusers were false, but God let them rant and rave at Job to bring him to the place where He wanted him. If any trial is prolonged we know that God is still working in us. When Job learned the lesson that God was teaching him, his captivity was turned into greater victory than ever before. Now Job had more than he had before, but the greater gain was inward; he had learned to acknowledge God in everything. Oh what a victory! There are never any second causes. We will never acknowledge that so and so is the cause of our failure, or blame circumstances, etc., but God is back of it all, working in us, unto perfection.

The New Testament answer of this battle of strategy is found in Rom. 8:31- 39. We learn immediately that someone is against us, and of course that is Satan and his forces of evil. Verse 31 says, Who can be against us? He is against us and is exercising his power in a threefold way to defeat us in these last days. The first method of operation is found in Verse 33, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" In other words, Satan comes forward, as in Job's case, and brings accusations against every one of us, who are yielding to God and overcoming. The methods he uses are varied. We may be accused by a human instrument, or Satan himself may begin a whispering campaign behind our backs, and he even whispers in our own ears. He tries to convince us that we have failed God in some way, and if we do not realize that it is Satan, we begin accusing ourselves, and thus fall right into the trap he has set for us. Will God accuse us when He has already justified us? The obvious answer is, "No." Then if God is not accusing us, it must be Satan. Are we going to believe God, or Satan?

The next method is found in verse 34, "Who is he that condemneth?" So Satan seeks to condemn or judge us. We may be a little weak in faith along a certain line, and if the devil sees any crack in our armor of faith, that is where he attacks. He will condemn us for a certain stand or a step of faith, etc. Others are used in this attack also, and if we listen to the cries of judgment, we will doubt too, and then we lose that step of faith, and our walk is temporarily disrupted. But let us think for a minute when we are judged by someone, and ask ourselves this question, Will Christ judge us when He has died for our sins? Will Christ judge us when He has been raised from the grave for our justification? Will Christ judge us when

He is interceding for us at the right hand of God to give us victory? If Christ is not judging us, then who is able to judge us? Christ has been given that judgment, and let no one usurp that place, even ourselves.

The third method of Satan is found in verse 35, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" If the devil finds us invincible concerning the former taunts, he will try this one. We know that we will never be actually separated from Christ's love for us concerning our eternal destiny; but Satan seeks to destroy the faith that God loves us when He allows us to be tempted and tried to the uttermost. This is a separation of our own knowledge and faith that Christ's love is still manifested to us when it seems that He does not hear our cries for deliverance, and lets us go on in want and suffering. This is a favorite weapon of Satan in these last days. He will try to cause a breach in our sweet fellowship with Christ by thinking that the Lord does not care for us as He once did. We didn't use to have these trials, and the Lord always answered us before this in previous years. A little doubt, a little variance, a little difference in spirit, can cause a separation in spiritual fellowship. When this happens, people generally turn to the arm of flesh for comfort and deliverance. When we do this, we are not perfectly trusting the Lord, or believing that God still loves us as He did. Then Satan says, Well, if God loved you, He would have answered before now; you must have done something to hurt Him. So, you see, the same old tactics that were used on Job are used on us. So beware! Notice that things are used to try and cause us to fail in this way.

"Who shall separate us from the (knowledge or assurance) love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword," or daily death? Then we are given Paul's emphatic answer to all these things. "NAY, IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THRU HIM THAT (or Who) LOVED US." It is through these adversities that we become conquerors over Satan and his devices. We are not ignorant of his devices, and God manifests His victorious life through these trials, and proves to Satan *and* to us, that we are truly more than conquerors. Should we question then, why are we being tested? Should we feel then that God does not really love us? Should we believe the whispered lies of Satan? Not if we are really conquerors! If we are still in a trial, then know that we are not yet as perfect as God desires. He has purposed a certain perfection for us

— an inward spiritual perfection — and He will keep working until that perfection is reached; provided, of course, that we have desired that place. Then, all the trials are God's tools, and Satan is the one whom God uses to bring this about. God always brings victory out of defeat; life out of death; realities out of things that be not. Can you defeat God? Can Satan defeat God? The answer lies with us, as individuals.

(Reprint 1960)

The Kind Word

God make me kind! -

So many hearts are breaking
And many more are aching
To hear the tender word.

God make me kind!

For I myself am learning
That my sad heart is yearning
For some sweet word to heal my hurt.

Oh, Lord, do make me kind.

God make me kind!

So many hearts are needing
The balm to stop the bleeding
That my kind words can bring.

God make me kind!

For I am also seeking
The cure in some one's keeping
They should impart to my sick heart.

Oh, Lord, do make me kind.

God make me kind!

So many hearts are lonely.
The kind and tender word.

God make me kind!

To all who mutely ask it
Before they fill the casket
Or bouquets may be wreaths one day.

Oh, Lord, do make me kind.

Duncan McNeil

A Wise Man Did Not Know Why?

Helen White

“THERE BE THREE THINGS WHICH ARE TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME, YEA, FOUR which I know not ... And The Way Of A Man With A Maid.” Prov. 30:18, 19.

Here we have King Solomon's admission that, "I know not," concerning the “way of a man with a maid.” Yet he is acknowledged, and acclaimed, as the world's wisest man. His wisdom was God-given, so that he might be able to rule the people of Israel with an understanding heart. Israel, at this point in her history, had reached her peak in glory and fame, as never before nor since. All was peace and quiet because David had won all the wars. Solomon was Israel's most colorful king, as he so rightfully figured his Messiah, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He built the beautiful temple and filled it with its equally magnificent furnishings. Everything he did was on a wholesale scale. The cherubim were larger than the ones Moses had made, their height being ten cubits, and each wing five, wherewith they touched the ceiling. He made not just one laver but ten. And surely a sight to behold was the molten sea. It was held up by twelve oxen, three facing South, three facing East, three facing North, and three West. What a mind he had, still he did not know about "the way of a man with a maid."

16

Socially, he did not need to be puzzled about the question, for he had more wives than any man on earth ever had. Thus, we need to look deeper for the answer.

Who is the all time riddle solver concerning God's purposes for all Ages? Our own Apostle Paul. God gave him the key to all His mysteries, and in Ephesians, 3:3 he writes — "By revelation He made known unto me the mystery: when ye read ye, may understand my knowledge of Christ." In other words, because of Paul's revelation of "the man and the maid," we will not need to say "I know not." Rather, we may declare, "I know and understand." The apostle then continues with verse 5 — "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men." It was definitely not God's plan to have a bride for His Son in the age of law, for she was to be a product of grace. Therefore, this mystery was hidden from Solomon by God, for if he had known about it he would have wanted to be part of the

bride company, so he had to say, "I know not," though he had a strong hint about it, because of his divine gift of wisdom. God gave him his gift of wisdom to rule His great people Israel. That same God also imparted unto Paul, his wisdom to espouse the Church to Christ. The chief apostle to the Church, further states that he was the least of all saints, not a great and mighty king, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles, that it might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. We may have all the knowledge and wisdom of God, while other men of other ages only had what they needed for their age and purpose of God for their day. We may have all He has for this age, and other ages, even that which was before the foundation of the world and in the ages to come. What an opportunity! What knowledge! What wisdom! Better yet the love of Christ passes knowledge.

Jesus said of Himself in Luke 21, "Then shall ye see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." He called Himself a Man. In John 14 He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life."

II Cor. 11:2 records "the maid," of whom Solomon simply did not know — "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

So we have all the pieces to the puzzle—Christ the way—Christ the Man, and the bride or full-overcomers, as the maid.

"The way of a man with a maid." We conclude that all Paul's epistles are "the way with the maid!"

(Reprint 1953)



NOT ANXIOUS

I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize the Lord is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places one or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me, for in the easiest position, He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult, His grace is sufficient. —

J. Hudson Taylor

REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS

. . . From the Editor

“But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.....Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us.... was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen..... II Cor. 18-20

What a glorious message of assurance we have, even in the midst of a very unstable and chaotic world! It was a message that Paul had proven for himself first, and his confidence is expressed numerous times. He cries out “We know...” in the 5th chapter of this book, as he assures us that the promises of God guarantee “...that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” He further asserts “we are always **confident, knowing** that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:” and “We are **confident**, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” V. 6,8

18

It is so very gratifying and comforting for us to **know**, in time of need, rather than simply “hope for the best.” Job repeatedly claimed this glorious privilege throughout his long ordeal. His assurance in Job 9:1-2 is in response to Elihu’s accusation “...God will not cast away a perfect man,...” Ch. 8:20. Job countered with “I know it is so of a truth:...” That is, Elihu, “you are right,” but Job also knew “This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.” V. 22 He further answered the false accusations of his comforters with an unequivocal “Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I **know** that I shall be justified.” Job 13:18 Such confidence in his God, and the path he travelled, is also reflected in V. 15. “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.” This man was so “sure of himself,” that these same “friends,” later assessed: “What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?” Job 34:7

Such confidence carried this select worthy of faith, beyond

his present circumstance, even into the realms of eternity. He could shout with unbending faith in God's promises ".....I **know** that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;" Job 19:25-27 These promises, now a part of God's Word, were not even written at that time, so Job had only faith, in the revelations of truth God had given him, to make such a bold statement!

His path of faith ends with this glorious conclusion: "I **know** that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Job 42:2 This "knowledge" came after long experience, and the grueling 72 question test which God Himself administered. The concluding record in this chapter reveals that Job passed with flying colors. We too must come to that place where "I **know**....," that all God's promises are indeed
19 "....yea, and in him Amen...!"

GH

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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Love Beckons

Part 4

Ken Trujillo

“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

“I WILL GIVE YOU REST.”

There is no making or composing of musical melodies without rests! One of the all-time classic melodies written, which is now standard piano repertoire, is Ludwig van Beethoven’s “Für Elise,” written in 1810 as he was going deaf. Within that musical masterpiece there are numerous rests! Without them, this most familiar, and sweetest of melodies, would be chaotic, unidentifiable and unpleasant to listen to.

20

God created man on the sixth day. On the seventh day, He ended His work, and then He rested. Gen 2:2 This powerful phrase “He ended His work,” has a wonderful two-fold meaning in the Hebrew. (1) He completed His workmanship, and (2) He dispatched a representative! God’s completed design was consummated in His Rest, and His Rest is in His Son, that is to say, His Representative, our precious Savior! We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus, as stated in Eph 2:10 (the same word as His work in Gen 2:2). Workmanship is found 7 times in the Bible, the number of spiritual completion. Seventh is “Shaba” in Hebrew and means to adjure (to appeal earnestly with a solemn oath or promise). Jesus has made His earnest appeal to us so magnificently personal, as He states, I WILL GIVE! Not the world, not family nor friends, not our job, not finances; only Jesus understands the need and weariness of our journey. He so tenderly invokes our acceptance as He once again assures us I, and I PERSONALLY, WILL GIVE YOU REST.

On the seventh day, He ended His work and then He rested. The numbers 7 AND 70 refer to the numeric “seventh”. To rest in His Son, as God rested on the seventh day, aligns so perfectly with His Word in that spiritual completeness, the number 7, times the number 10, responsibility according to ability, i.e. our testimony (7 x 10) = the number 70. The number seventy means RULERSHIP! We have God’s power and authority dominating

over every circumstance we encounter. Our spiritual responsibility is to allow Him, by faith, to complete the good work, which He hath begun. When we “rest in Him”, He gives us that confidence “in this very thing...”(Phil 1:6) He passes His ability to rule over every circumstance, toward our ability to rule over every situation we face! We have an example of rulership in Enoch. His name means “dedicated” and prior to his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Heb 11:15 Enoch was also the seventh from Adam. Jude 1:14 He was spiritually complete and ready for translation when God said it’s time! Precious saints, what a glorious picture of what is being offered to us. The world says after a hard day’s work, we deserve a little R & R, that is, rest and relaxation. God’s formula is R + R + R meaning His Rest enables us ready to Rule & Reign! For God so loved that He gave, that we may have the opportunity of the eternities to come as we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus! Eph. 3:14 What an incredible blessed REST is ours!

21

The brutal affliction that was laid upon Jesus as He suffered at Calvary made it possible for us to enter into, and be partakers of, this precious rest. Praise His Holy Name! His rests are not to be omitted, for to do so would disturb the melody in our hearts that so grace His Ears. As the song writer penned: *“Tempests may rage, sin’s surges may beat, Ne’er can they reach Thy sheltered retreat; free from all danger and dread alarms, Resting so safe in His mighty arms!”* As we embrace His Rest, concerning our prayer life, the weights and chains, that so entangle us as we begin our day, are broken and released. His Rest is to experience a refreshing peace and confidence, as well as, COMPLETE FREEDOM. Freedom from fears, freedom from anxieties, freedom from insecurities, freedom from aggravation and anger, freedom from defeat! Rest does not mean freedom from annoyances, circumstances, infirmities, sadness, disappointments, or even financial obligations, but rather freedom from being inundated, entangled and confused within by these circumstances. Rest is believing and having confidence that God is greater than ANYTHING you are facing, that is to say, the fiery trials that rise-up across your pathway day to day, hour by hour, minute by minute! He can, and will, enable us to endure those challenges with an expectation that, through it all, it will be working for our good

and He will be glorified. God's Rest prepares us for the journey and the job ahead of us. THIS PREPARATION IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL WELFARE! It not only gives us a second wind for the upcoming battles we will face if we are to be victorious as an over-comer, but, we have His Mind, His direction and plan of action, in the matter! This rest is three-fold. First, rest for preparation to face those giants in the land as we sojourn day to day. When we are impatient, impulsive, and fail to make this preparation, we fail spiritually. King Rehoboam sets forth a graphic example of unpreparedness. He had prior victories during his reign and was filled with spiritual zeal, but one day, he became lackadaisical in seeking God's direction, and, as is mentioned in Proverbs 6:10: A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands took place and he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord (II Chron 12:14). Note these two very telling words. "DID," refers to his actions, observations, accomplishments, productivity and acquisitions. "EVIL," shows that he was displeasing to Jehovah in his thoughts and choices, as well as, injurious and hurtful to others. King Rehoboam, unfortunately, never returned nor recovered victoriously. Secondly, rest in believing the battle is already won! II Chronicles 20:15 so sweetly commands ".....Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude (fiery trials); for the battle is not yours but God's. Verse 17 continues with the promise that, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye STILL, and see the salvation of the Lord with you. . . ." What an assurance is ours!

22

Finally, the third element in this rest assures us that, after the battle is won, we will enjoy the refreshing rest by still waters. The Lord instructed Elijah to hide by the brook Cherith where he would drink of the brook and be fed by the ravens. Cherith means cutting, signifying a separation unto God, in deep intimate and refreshing fellowship with Him. What a glorious refreshing that can be! One of my favorite promises in the God's word is found in Psalms 37:3 "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." His promises never fail for HE IS OUR FAITHFUL GOD!

We cannot earn His rest, nor purchase it, nor even beg for it. It is rather, a gift! It is also personal, meaning that ONLY YOU

can accept it by faith. Allow the Holy Spirit to impart that rest to your HEART and your MIND and that application will release the pressure of overwhelming circumstances that seem to pounce on you like a roaring lion. Such a rest bestowed by the Holy Ghost equips us with an inner peace, soundness of mind, confidence and judgment! Having that confidence, we expect His aid on our behalf for He cannot deny Himself. II Tim 2:13 This spiritual confidence, is not confidence in man but confidence in His Word, and in His Promises, even as the apostle Paul exclaimed in Phil. 4:19. “My God shall supply ALL YOUR NEED according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” When we are unsettled and feel the urge to take control and allow compulsive thoughts to enter, we will be led to compulsory actions and lean upon our own understanding, like unto the children of Israel, when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Jud. 17:6 And again, when they chose to look to an earthly king to reign and to make sound judgments for them, RATHER THAN GOD. I Sam 8:6-7

23

In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths Prov 3:6. The word acknowledge means “to know, to expect, to anticipate with confidence!” Precious dear saints of the High Calling, let us look completely unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, (Heb 12:2) and be not compulsive in matters and decisions, but REST IN THE LORD, waiting patiently for Him: “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself” Ps 37:7 God forbid that we would grieve the heart our Precious Lord, as God was grieved when He said to Samuel concerning the children of Israel in I Sam 8:7 “ they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” Are we embracing His rest and allowing His rest to reign in our hearts, or are we rejecting?

Note one important fact: we cannot fully embrace His rest until we embrace His “contentment!” Brother Copley, so aptly, defines the Book of Philippians as the “Race course of the Sons of God,” and in Ch. 4:11 ‘Brother Paul exhorts: “for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” The thought, in the Greek, for this word “content,” is “to be INDEPENDENT FROM EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Independent from rulership of natural situations and conditions.” We are now the Sons of God, and are not to be taken hostage by the world and its way of thinking , its trends and

circumstances which, at times, are far beyond our control, howbeit, **THEY ARE NOT BEYOND HIS!** Complete rest is a progeny of complete contentment. Again, Rest in the Lord and **WAIT PATIENTLY** for Him and fret not thyself..” The term, “**WAIT PATIENTLY**, in this text means “to squirm and twist; to be pained to hold oneself back from impulsive action.” Waiting patiently can be a most uncomfortable state of affairs! Remember the annexation of Texas into the United States? During the “battle of the Alamo,” which was fought to gain independence from Mexico, Colonel Travis, who was in charge of the volunteers inside the Alamo, begged for help, from General Sam Houston. The General decided to wait until sufficient reinforcements were available so his army could completely destroy the enemy and thus capture the Mexican General, Santa Anna, who finally relinquished the territory now known as the State of Texas. Houston, as he waited, no doubt, was in a painful state of affairs filled with anguish. Many lives were lost for the sake of freedom and independence. Without Houston’s decision to wait and hold out for the greater victory, Texas might not have ever been a state!

24

Rest means to be silent, to be confident, and still to have His peace and be astonished. **ASTONISHED** you say? Absolutely! Astonished to know, to expect and to anticipate with confidence the outcome victoriously, working for your good, as you trust completely **IN HIM**, and **HIM ALONE**, with praise and thanksgiving for the victory that “overcometh.” John 5:4 His Rest completely envelops and surrounds us and no opposing force can penetrate that Divine Protection! In I Kings 5:4 Solomon declared it thus: “but now the Lord my God hath given me rest **ON EVERY SIDE**, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.” (impact)

“TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU.” To enter into ones hold, or possession, by voluntary action, one must take hold and seize the opportunity. What a privilege is ours to have access to His Yoke and by faith allow it to be placed upon us! When taking something given to us, naturally speaking, from a friend, we reach out to receive it. When we take something given by our Mighty God, we reach upward in complete surrender to possess it! It is written Jas. 1:7 that “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights....” His yoke is individually fitted

for us and He dwells within His yoke. His Presence, His Holy Spirit and His Word create a sheath around and about us for the sword of the spirit to take residence. Taking this armament allows us to wield it skillfully and fight the good fight of faith!

25 The yoke, as in farming, stabilizes and balances a pair of oxen to plow a field so as to yield a good harvest. This yoke has just enough weight when placed upon the neck of the ox, keeping its vision straightforward, so as not to stumble and veer off course to the left or right. Let it be said of each of us as, was the testimony of the young boy king Josiah, “and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.” II Kings 22:2 Placement within the yoke also enables the ox to be guided in the path of its master as he leads and designs the plan for the plowing of good soil throughout the field! Ezekiel 1:10 depicts one of the four living creatures having the likeness of their faces as an ox (gospel of Mark). The root meaning of an ox, means a traveler or sojourner, that is, to reside in a temporary dwelling, and then forever be homeward bound! This word “yoke” also means joined with another. The Greek word is “syzeugnymiz” which means THE BOND OF MARRIAGE! Blessed be the Name of Jesus, as the fellowship of the mystery of Christ, and the Church, unfolds to us! Eph 3:9, 5:32 His yoke provides balance, for stability, harmony and symmetry. What a perfect relationship! STABILITY produced by the mind of Christ for discernment and sound judgment in all matters that pertain unto life and godliness. II Pet 1:3 HARMONY, so as to be in agreement and in one accord, as spoken in Amos 3:3. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Finally, the yoke provides SYMMETRY, which includes perfect balance and synchronization. Science has documented that vocal choral groups have synchronized heartbeats. Researchers in Sweden have monitored the heart rates of experienced singers of all ages and have found that when singing in unison and harmony, synchrony occurs because breathing is coordinated. How much more can we be synchronized together with our Lovely Lord when, while within His yoke together in the battle, we have a song of praise and worship in our hearts and upon our lips!

The Shulamite exclaims, in S.O.S. 5:16, that her Bridegroom, “...is altogether lovely.” She reaches this

conclusion following the “nine-fold detailed” description of His Features, wherewith she was intimately acquainted, because she had spent much time with Him. He is portrayed as One Who is perfectly proportioned and symmetrical, from the crown of His head to the soles of His feet. The number nine is mentioned 49 times in the Bible. We know that forty, is the number of perfect testing. Thus, Divine Completion (9) plus Perfect Testing (40) combine to present a state of PERFECT READINESS as we rest within His yoke. “Perfect readiness,” when that first trumpet sounds, is what we can aspire to. “Soaring ambitiously!” What an incredible culmination of our earthly journey, which will mark “the beginning of the eternities with Him”... PRAISE YOU LORD JESUS! Saints of the High Calling His Love Truly Beckons!

Enoch Walked With God

26

Oh, He walked with God, could greater words be written?
Not much of what he said or thought
Nor even where or what he wrought is mentioned.
He was not laid in sod,
Oh words of fadeless gold, he walked with God!

How many souls he succoured on the journey,
With his prayers and faith and cheer?
How many hearts he helped throughout the year?
We are not told, we don't even know, but this,
He walked with God while here below!

And after the long years of holy walking,
One day he walked far and God said
Come, Come my son, you are weary Come Home.
Haste to your blest abode in Home above,
Enter into My Rest, forever dwelling in Love!

Mary M. Bodie

The Overcoming Glory of Infirmities

Lynn Bishop

“And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High” - Psalm 77:10

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong.” - II Corinthians 2:9-10

27 **H**ow precious to consider these verses from the Psalmist Asaph, in the Old Testament, and from the Apostle Paul, in the New. Both had infirmities that made them cry out to God from the depths of their souls. Yet amidst the distress, there is more than just a hint of overcoming glory in these two precious brothers. Asaph cries out, “I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High” (God’s mercy and power) while Paul shouts, “Most gladly I will glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

The 20 verses comprising the 77th Psalm are a beautiful journey, from the depths of despair to the heights of glory. Asaph begins by crying out to God: “In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.” By the time he reached the plight expressed by verse four, he was so pressed he could not even speak. His heart was shut up with anguish. We do not know exactly what was happening in his life, but it seems that he was pressed beyond measure and cries out to God: “Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.” V. 7-9

Such cries are, in no wise, of the light sort. They are rather pleadings of the soul, expressing the deep inner burdens of one who is pressed to the point wherein he feels no comfort and wonders if God is even present. But then, comes the victorious cry of our opening text: “This is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.” V. 10

Asaph realized his own weakness, which reduced him to a state of not even being able to speak. Trouble had shut his mouth and quieted his speech. But this silence was a blessed silence, springing from a heart pressed out of measure. We would do well to remember Psalm 46:10: “Be still, and know that I am God” – and to consider that stillness comes **before** such deep knowledge.

Asaph also remembered the years of the Right Hand – The Powerful Hand – of God. It is an “infirmity,” for a believer, to think only of himself, and draw false inferences from what he sees or feels. It is his strength, on the other hand, to remember the Right Hand of the Most High, and to meditate upon the changeless truth and mercy of our God, Who has committed Himself in Holiness to our salvation by causing The Son of His Love to suffer in our stead, bearing the dread reality of the ultimate silence, --- death!

This word “infirmity” in this verse carries the meaning “*to be rubbed or worn, weak, sick, afflicted.*” It indicates a patient work done over time, a work whose end is to rid us of ourselves, that our lives can be softened and molded into God’s ultimate plan. It is an absolute necessity to an overcoming saint’s life. David wrote in Psa. 119:75 of the faithful and patient work of God in afflicting us: “I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”

Scripture records “infirmity” or “infirmities” 24 times – the number of Priesthood. Hebrews 7:28 declares: “For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, which is consecrated for evermore.” God first consecrated His Son, and then, through the blood of the New Covenant, He consecrates us. Christ fulfilled the law entirely by His Divine Love, through the shedding of His Own Blood. We are in Christ, and we live by His resurrection power. Paul wrote of this resurrection life in Galatians 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” We are a new creation, created by God to the praise of the glory of His grace! Eph. 1:16

Truly our High Priest, Jesus Christ, is well acquainted with our infirmities. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Heb. 4:15 If we are to be

made conformable to Him, we must become acquainted with His sufferings. Those who will jointly rule and reign with Jesus and be glorified with Him, will know Him, and the fellowship of His sufferings. Rom. 8:17

The Apostle Paul echoes the cry of the overcoming saint in II Cor. 11:30: "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern mine infirmities." He likewise speaks of "the man in Christ," caught up into the third heaven, asserting: "Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." II Cor. 12:5 Just as Christ never gloried in himself, neither did Paul. Both knew that the trials were the divine paths that would lead to eternal glory.

Besides making us conformable to Christ, infirmities also make us relatable to, and compassionate for, the sufferings of others. The example of a priestly heart is found in Hebrews 5:2: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself is also compassed with infirmity?" The word "compassed" means "*to be in bonds with.*" We are yoked together as we share the burdens and infirmities of others.

Paul also instructs the spiritual or "strong," "...to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Rom. 15:1 This is not referring to those who are strong in themselves, but rather those who have developed strength by leaning on God and trusting in the shed blood of the Lamb. This blessed passage relates directly to our prayer life and holding up our brothers and sisters in Christ, to God through praying in the Holy Spirit. For we know that very Spirit "...also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26 When God's Spirit dwells in us, He will cause us to want to pour out to others, to lift the weary hands and to be vessels unto honor. Romans 12:10 likewise exhorts us to "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another."

Paul took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses --- for Christ's sake. He knew that when he was weak, then he was strong. The end of the matter is this: our strength is made perfect (complete) in weakness. Only total reliance on God and a deep realization of the work

of the cross will ever make this real to a saint's life. Infirmities are so very necessary to the life of one who, by God's grace, is an overcoming saint and will finish the race with full joy. That fullness comes when we glory in our infirmities, when we, like Paul, "take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." Our utter weakness gives opportunity for the very power of Christ to rest upon us.

Although trials are not easy to bear, they are the means by which God is simply Faithful to His Word as He tries, and presses, us. We should not be surprised when varied afflictions come our way, and we would do well to heed the words of Peter: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." I Peter 4:12

As God presses us in the tender areas of our lives, let us remain steadfastly thankful that He is mindful of us at all, for truly the breath in our nostrils and the life within, is but a vapor. Let us be fully aware that the glorious end of these things that try our souls is found in KNOWING Him, of Whom we are so well known. This kind of "knowing" reflects that intimate knowledge between a husband and a wife. Christ and His Bride are deeply, intricately acquainted with each other. They jointly suffer and they will jointly reign. They will be glorified together. Such is our life in Christ even now, living as the Readied Wife.

30

Jesus Christ, as a Man, knew the overcoming joy of infirmities by experience in His life. The Apostle Paul travelled exactly the same path, and if we want to truly know Jesus as Bridegroom, we also must know it by experience in our lives. We too must follow these striking examples and not only embrace them from His Hand, but also **glory** in them, that we may likewise, be most glad with exceeding joy.

* The Bible does not apologize for its characters. It paints them just as they are, bad, foolish, unholy — but it also paints a Christ who is able for all their sin and need.

* You cannot be neutral toward Christ. You must accept Him, or reject Him.

REVISED VERSION

I Corinthians 13

31 I will show you a better way. If I can speak the language of men and even of angels and have no love I am only a noisy gong or clanging cymbal. If I am inspired to preach and know all the sacred truths and possess all knowledge and if I have such perfect faith that I can move mountains, but have no love I am nothing. Even if I give everything away that I own and give myself up, but do it in pride, and not love it does me no good. Love is patient and kind. Love is not envious nor boastful. It does not put on airs. It is not rude. It does not insist on its rights. It does not become angry. It is not resentful. It is not happy over injustice. It is only happy with truth. It bears everything, believes everything good, hopes for everything and endures everything. Love will never die. If there be inspired preaching it will pass away. If there is ecstatic speaking in tongues it will pass away. If there is knowledge, it will pass away in the greater knowledge that shall come, for our knowledge is imperfect and our preaching is imperfect, but when perfection comes then the imperfect will be gone. When I was a child I talked like a child, thought and reasoned as a child, but when I became of age I put aside childish things. Now we are looking at a dim reflection in a mirror, then we shall see face to face.

(Author Unknown)

We are to serve God:

In humility—Acts 20:19.

In faithfulness—1 Cor. 4:2.

In diligence—Rom. 12:11.

In love—Gal. 5:13.

In grace—Heb. 12:28.

In sacrifice—Rom. 12:1.

ISAIAH 20

Gene Hawkins

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.” Prov. 29:25

These words from Proverbs, which book corresponds with this 20th chapter of Isaiah, are surely borne out in the experiences of Israel which prompted the following verses. Isaiah 20:6 asserts Israel’s expectation as “Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?” History shows that their expectation was not from The Lord. They did bow to the fear of men, and were indeed brought unto a snare, because they did not “trust in the LORD” to keep them safe. They also found the path described in Prov. 16:25. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

The background for their dilemma is found in II Kings 17:3-6 where Ashdod was besieged by Assyria. Isaiah writes, in our present chapter, that “In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;” V. 1 “Tartan” is actually not the name of a person, but rather a title of rank, describing one who is next unto the king. (II Kings 18:17 likewise refers to “Tartan,” who was sent by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, to Hezekiah.) This is the only time “Sargon” is found in scripture, and according to Faucett’s historical record, he finished the assault on Ashdod, which was started by his predecessor, Shalmaneser. “Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.” II Kings 17:3. Sargon, according to this same history, was the father of Sennacherib, who later came against Hezekiah in II Kings 18. According to our text here in Isaiah, it was Sargon, who “came unto Ashdod..... and took it.” II Kings 17 describes how “...**the king of Assyria** found conspiracy in Hoshea:.....” This unnamed “**king of Assyria**,” referenced repeatedly in these verses, is undoubtedly Sargon, for Isaiah specifically designates him as the one who “fought against Ashdod and took it.” V. 1 The details of this campaign is found in II Kings 17 declaring that “...he (Hoshea) had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the **king of Assyria**, as he had done year by year: therefore **the**

king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.” II Kings 17:4 Hoshea, the king of Israel, apparently took the “present” which should have been sent to this **king of Assyria** and tried to hire, the Egyptian king “So,” for protection against him. That plan, “which seemeth right unto man,” backfired, and Hoshea was imprisoned. “Then the **king of Assyria** came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, (capital of Israel) and besieged it three years.” II Kings 17:5 This final assault on Samaria ended when, “In the ninth year of Hoshea the **king of Assyria** took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.” II Kings 17:6 Thus, the record here in Isaiah declares that the ten tribes of Israel have now been taken captive by Sargon, king of Assyria, and only Judah remains in the land. We note also that this same King of Assyria “..... brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.” II Kings 17:24 This is why the Samaritan woman whom Jesus met at the well declared that “the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.” John 4:9 They were considered to be “corrupted” by the heathen.

Though the ten tribes have now been taken captive, God had apparently used Isaiah as a living example of His intentions, during the three year Assyrian siege of Samaria. “At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.” Isa. 20:2-4 The message here seems to be especially for the benefit of Judah, who had watched Isaiah walk barefoot and naked for three long years. They are now to watch both Egypt and Ethiopia, for they considered these nations, as being their own protectors. Israel tried to put their trust in Egypt and it failed miserably. Now Isaiah’s message is that both Egypt and Ethiopia will fall prey to Assyria following the same pattern

as the ten tribes of Israel. They too will be barefoot, unable to flee, and the shame of their nakedness will be quite manifest, for there is absolutely no righteousness displayed before The Lord. Judah shall likewise "...be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory." V. 5

Just as the nation of Israel tried to buy the favor of Egypt in that long ago day, so also shall it be in the end time. "...the inhabitant of this isle shall say **in that day**, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria:" V. 6 Assyria is, once again, typical of the nations which will be gathered together against Israel in the end time. There will initially be a coalition of ten, which will then be reduced to seven. Dan. 7:8 Five of those will be removed, leaving only two, one of which will emerge as the antichrist. Rev. 17:10 Israel will try desperately to defend themselves against their enemies, enlisting the help of various nations at that time, just as they put their confidence in Egypt when Sargon came against them. All those efforts will fail and they must learn yet again that only the one that "... putteth his trust in The LORD shall be safe." Prov. 29:25 They will likewise understand perfectly that "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," (Prov. 16:25) a reference to the covenant of death they will sign with the antichrist, which will then be disannulled after they finally know, of a surety, that real deliverance comes only from The LORD. "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it." Isa. 28:18

This chapter concludes with this pointed question. "...how shall we escape?" V. 6 The painful answer is, that there is none, outside of that which comes only from The LORD. The good news is that Israel will learn that glorious lesson by experience. They will "be trodden down," but they shall never be destroyed.

* Some folk live all their lives in the society of the unforgiven: others break into the society of the forgiven, the haven of the weary and heavy-laden.

* "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro thru-out the whole earth," and though a planet may escape His gaze, a broken, trusting heart cannot.



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R

eturn unto me,
and I will
return unto
you, saith the
Lord of hosts.

MALACHI 3:7.