

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

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'Loving His Appearing'

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Seek the
LORD
and his strength,
seek his face
continually.

I CHRONICLES 16:11.

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DIVINE HEALTH



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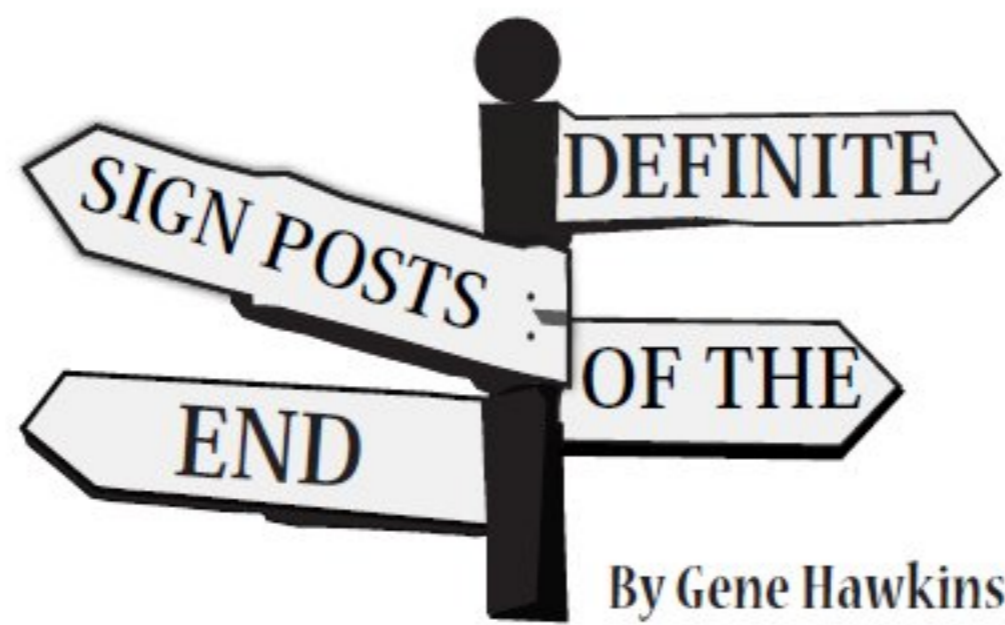
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Luke 21:31

3 **T**hese “things,” for which we have been instructed to look, are actually harbingers of Jesus’ soon return, announcing tragedy, pain and tremendous distress, as outlined in verses 17-26 of this chapter. “And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be?.....And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ;But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass;..... Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons,And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren,..... And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.....And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.....For these be the days of vengeance,..... for there shall be great distress in the land,.....And they shall fall by the edge of the sword,.....and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles,..... And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;.....Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”

Jesus plainly warns of wars, indicating “warfare, battle fight, or commotion, confusion, and tumult.” His list of “things” also includes other catastrophic phenomena such as “great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven,” (V. 11) all of which are evident at this present time. It seems that “personal suffering and turmoil,” particularly for the Jews, will precede this particular avenue of dire trouble, as announced in

V. 12. “But **before all these**, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.”

Many of these “things” will not actually transpire until well into the tribulation period and trouble seems to escalate with the announcement that the entire city of Jerusalem will be besieged by multiple armies, and “desolation,” (desolate, solitary, come to nought) will ensue. V. 20 Other prevalent terms in this passage are “vengeance,” or punishment, “woe,” signifying “grief,” along with “distress, wrath, sword, all portraying extreme pain suffering and untold misery. However, scripture is very plain that the period known as the “beginning of sorrows,” portraying many of these same characteristics has already begun.

Paul likewise describes such days as being “perilous” meaning “dangerous, difficult, and fierce.” The apostle further warns us that these will be times of destruction, travail, and darkness. I Thess. 5:1-4 The word “travail” here is the same term which Jesus used in Matt. 24 when he terms the early signs of Jesus’ coming as the beginning of “sorrows.”

4

The Master also described further upheaval in this earth due to the tremendous chaos which will take place in heaven. “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” Luke 21:25 These “signs,” are already appearing and will most assuredly, and dramatically, increase as seen in Rev. 6:13. “And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.”

We are, for the most part, already extremely weary with the constant barrage of tragic news streaming from multiple news sources in these last days. 2014 has proven to be a complete year of chaos, corruption, violence and deceit, which have produced untold tragedies and human pain world-wide, some of which, is due to the despicable actions of men. We are certain that there are many Christians, around this entire globe, who are as disappointed and grieved as we are, with the chaos, corruption, and deceitful conduct found in their own respective governments,

which contribute to the unrest, both in and between the nations, of the whole world. All these things are simply a part of the “signs,” for which scripture instructs us be very acutely aware.

Though such things abound, literally “piling up” one on top of another, to the degree that we could easily fill these pages with countless news items, we would rather begin this year by following Jesus’ admonition “.....when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” We cannot become so obsessed, with the news of our day, that we fail to realize, and act on, what we are to do about it. Many, at this present time, are busy trying to thwart the damage done in our world, both politically and religiously, trying to assure the masses that if we only take the right steps, we can turn all this tragedy and misery around. The rhetoric of some is that we can save our respective nations and religious endeavors and bring in somewhat of a utopia. Scripture loudly refutes such a premise announcing that “.....evil men and seducers **shall wax worse and worse**, deceiving, and being deceived.” II Tim. 3:13 We also read that we must “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 This “falling away,” from God and the tenets of scripture, is surely coming to pass before our very eyes.

So what are we to do with the knowledge of these signs which are appearing so rampantly around us? It is certain we cannot ignore them, as some seem wont to do. Rather Jesus’ **immediate exhortation** is that, the very manifestation of these calamitous signs, must literally incite us to “know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” These words for us (The Church) mean that we are to be ready at a moment’s notice to be taken out of this world and into our heavenly kingdom. Verse 28 of this same chapter clearly promises: “And when these things **begin** to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

The whole Church will eventually be transported to glory, but the special promise imparted to the Philadelphia assembly is that “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 I Cor. 15 likewise asserts: “For as in Adam all die, even

so in Christ shall all be made alive. **But** every man in **his own order**: (company or troop) Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." V. 22 Make no mistake! Every member of the body of Christ will not follow Jesus' admonition to "look up," when these things "**begin**," to come to pass. One of the signs of our day is the passivity, of the sleeping Church. The Church at Laodicea, which depicts the overall dispensational condition of the Church today, is severely reprimanded for being "lukewarm," meaning that men are simply not interested in the treasures of God. They are not looking earnestly into the heavens for the promised redemption, which is bodily deliverance out of this world.

The book of Revelation clearly portrays the "order" which will prevail at Jesus' coming. The four living ones and twenty four elders depict those who were alert to God's "signs" and will be rewarded with a trip into the throne room, where Jesus will be crowned **before** the night of tribulation even sets in. Rev. 4 The "...multitude, which no man could number, of all nations,..." recorded in Rev. 7:9, represents the "second order" or troop, transported to glory and they are plainly described as "...These are they which **came out of** great tribulation,..." V. 14 These were NOT taken out BEFORE the hour of temptation with those of Philadelphia. Finally the third order of the Church is not found in heaven until "midnight" or very near the middle of the tribulation week when the "man child," that is, the 144,000, the five wise virgins, are "caught up unto God, and to his throne." Matt. 25. Rev. 12:5

6

We would once again emphasize Jesus admonition to look up when ye see these things begin to come to pass. Scripture also abounds with other instruction as to how we are to respond to these "signs," which are streaming so rapidly before us.

Peter touches on the upheaval in the heavens, which Jesus announced, with these words. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." II Pet. 3:10 We know that this phenomenon will not fully take place until well into the tribulation period, but the apostle's instruction is surely for us today as we behold the beginning of such chaos surrounding these elements at this present time. Men of our day

are spending billions of dollars trying to protect this earth from the “greenhouse gasses,” which they insist are destroying the planet and making it hotter, but Peter tells us plainly what our response must be if we would comply with Jesus’ admonition to look up. “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,.....?” Rather than succumb to the consternation prevailing around these things which are truly beyond the control of men, and trying to prevent what has clearly been prophesied, the apostle exhorts us to turn our attention inward and be much concerned with what our own lives are to reflect “in all holy conversation and godliness.” Our attitude must also be one of anticipation as we “hasten “unto the coming of the day of God...”

7 Paul, the chief apostle to the Church, likewise counsels us, as to our conduct, during these days when the Church as a whole has elected to be very lukewarm and passive, for the most part, simply ignoring the real message of the end time. We, like the Thessalonian saints, are privileged to know “...the times and the seasons...” We too have been warned, “....that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” However, this is not the time to give in, to the sleepy, drunken atmosphere which prevails throughout the world today, as men simply ignore the signs before them. These signs must rather incite us to turn our attention inward and realize that we, “...brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light,Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” I Thess. 5:1-6

Ours seems to be a day when men want “to do something,” but more often than not, they invest their energies toward programs trying to stop those things which have already been prophesied as outlined above. Both Paul and Peter strongly urge us to take heed to ourselves in an endeavor, not to save the world, but rather to be delivered out of it. Paul is very specific in his instruction of how to accomplish that end. “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” I Thess. 5:8 The “breastplate of faith,” is found in The Word of God, for faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. 10:17 Sadly, The Word of God has taken a secondary place to all the programs and endeavors

of men. It no longer is the priority in Christendom today, and thus Jesus counseled the Laodicean Church. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Rev. 3:18 All of these glorious provisions are found in The Word God as revealed by the power of The Holy Ghost, but it seems that men are more interested in concentrating on the “gifts of the spirit,” with their emotional appeal to men, rather than pursuing the primary ministry of the Holy Ghost, which is to “...guide you into all truth:...” John 16:13

The “helmet of salvation,” to which Paul alludes in the above text, is designed to guard our minds during these days when we could be overwhelmed by all the “things” that are going on round about us. That helmet is, once again, none other than The Word of God, which clearly promises our deliverance out of the chaos which prevails upon this earth.

John also gives us counsel for these last days. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. I John 3:2-3 Paul exhorted us to put on the “hope of salvation,” as an helmet to guard our minds. John asserts that that same hope also has a glorious purifying effect upon us, making us even like unto Christ Himself, which is the very essence of Paul’s message to the Church. We would ask the question: How can men be purified in these last days if they completely ignore this message of Jesus’ coming? All these “things” whereby Jesus exhorted us to “look up for your redemption draweth nigh,” should have the effect of turning our hearts to the glorious hope of being caught away unto glory, thus purifying us and causing us to pursue the state, which Peter described as “what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,....”

Finally we are exhorted to “.....consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, **as ye see the day approaching.**” Heb 10:24-25 The day of which Paul speaks here, is the same day emphasized throughout this article. The fact that

some would assemble themselves together is one proof that they do see that day approaching. The question here is what does Paul mean by “the assembling our ourselves together?” There is a great deal of assemblage in our world today, even in Christendom, but what is the purpose? The assembling of the early Church is described in Acts 2. “And they **continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and **in prayers**.....and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And **all that believed** were together, and had all things common;... And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, **continuing daily with one accord in the temple**, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and **singleness of heart, Praising God**, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” V. 42-47 Many have tried to re-create this atmosphere down through this Church Age, but the unity of the first seven years after Pentecost were, in reality, simply a foretaste of the Kingdom Age which is yet to come. Israel, as a nation, rejected their Messiah with the stoning of Stephen and The Church age was officially inserted and underway. Thus, the glorious atmosphere described in these verses, was short lived.

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We would again emphasize, however, that one major purpose, and theme, of their gathering together was in pursuit of God's Word. We are told at the outset that they “continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine,” specifically designating “all that believed,” and that they continued “with one accord in the temple,” with “singleness of heart, Praising God.” All these should also be the reason for our assembling together today. However, as we have noted in recent issues of this magazine, some are convinced that you must dispense with “doctrine,” in order to achieve unity. That means that The Word of God, must be eliminated and thus we fear, that The Church as a whole, has indeed forsaken the deep tenets and mysteries of God's Word, despite the fact that there may be much “assembling together,” for one purpose or another.

The good news is that our own hearts can have a “singleness” toward God and His glorious doctrine in these closing days of the Church Age. We know of many who have complained again and again that they are not able to find a Church

which will preach the depths of God's Word. Some have stated that music takes center stage, rather than the scripture. We do rejoice that God is Faithful. We have stated time and again, that if people truly want to know The Truth, God will move heaven and earth to show it to them. Modern day technology has proven to be a real tool in publishing the gospel and we do glory in the fact that even though the mysteries of God are not always found in the languishing modern Church, there are CDs, the internet, and literature available, freely making known the end time message of Jesus coming again. Even when we cannot gather physically with some, we do gather in spirit, sharing by phone, or by letter, or other electronic media, the glorious and primary theme of Jesus coming again. We are also joined together as one, as were those in the early Church, when we stand in prayer and faith for one another against the forces of darkness which permeate the entire world in these last days.

We do surely proclaim, to all around us, that we do "see the day approaching," when we follow these practices. So let us not give in, to discouragement and fear, or devastating sleep, but rather "...when these **things begin to come to pass**, then look up, and **lift up your heads**; for your redemption draweth nigh."

10

Look Up

O, look not back at all the wasted years,
The fruitless hours, the failure and regrets.
Leave them with Him Who wipes the record clean
And lovingly forgives and then forgets.

Look not around; let not fears and doubts assail:
For storms and tempests rule upon life's sea,
So dark the night; so filled with sin and woe,
That vain's the hope of comfort there for thee.

Look not within; for wretched thou' shalt be.
There's naught in man wherein to put thy trust,
Tho' he perchance appears both great and wise,
He is a broken reed, creature of the dust.

Look up to Christ. He is the One to trust.
No one will fail who leans upon His breast.
He rules the sea; the wind is in His fist .
He'll comfort thee and give thee blessed rest.

Mary M. Bodie

THE FAITH OF GOD

Walter Anderson

Above all human reasoning is the assurance of faith. This, to be sure, reaches to the heavens above. Faith has its origin and purpose in God and His blessed Son Jesus. This makes it stand forth, beyond the grasp of mere intelligence and reasoning. So faith *always* has its beginning in God Himself, Who remains as its cause and means, and end. It is not a human development in itself, but is a gift of grace.

From the Holy Scriptures, it is called, "**The faith of God.**" Rom. 3:3. It is also given as, "The faith of the Son of God." Gal. 2:20, This makes it far beyond the scope of human ability to attain unto. It brings forth, as rays of eternal Light, the Knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ! "**And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not.**" John 1:5 It is rendered also in the R.S.V. as "The darkness has not overcome it."

11 Darkness has always prevailed over mankind since the fall of Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, this darkness, in the minds of men, has not been able to overtake and obliterate the true LIGHT of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. The nature of this darkness, is the power of Satan, and is idolatry --- the worship of the creature above the creator. This is the most hideous evil that has beset the human race. "**Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**" Rom. 1:21

So the present activity of Satan, the god of this age, is to blind the minds of men to the glorious light of God's grace. This blindness always leads to some kind of perversion and false delusions of human grandeur. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world (age) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." II Cor. 4:3-4 As the Lord God brought forth physical light to illuminate the darkness and chaos of the pre - Adamic earth, (Gen. 1:2,3) He has brought forth spiritual heavenly Light to illuminate our hearts with GLORY. Only faith has the power to grasp and secure this state of blessedness, happiness, and deliverance. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor. 4:6

Here in this verse, is a remarkable parallel concerning light.

The first light here, "to shine out of darkness," is the physical light in the cosmos, Naturally, we may behold it through our eyes. It effects our sense of sight, so that we may contact the world about us, and understand its meaning to our life in the flesh.

Now, following the entrance of physical light in creation, comes the invisible **spiritual light**. This is far superior; and is, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." This is incomparable! Its very rays show forth the glory of God in the *face* of Christ Jesus; in heavenly glory and wisdom.

As these lights are revealed together, they both compliment each other. Furthermore, a rule of Scriptural interpretation is revealed in I Cor. 15:46 "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." So in God's order, the first is a natural creation, and then follows the spiritual creation. This is true in every believer's life. We were born first of the flesh or natural life. When we were "**born again**" or "**born from above**," we were born into the spiritual Kingdom of God. This is a spiritual, invisible life in Christ.

Another guide post in this interpretation of Scriptures is found in Rom. 1:20 "**For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:**" Here, "the invisible things of him," are the attributes and movements of God, Who is not seen by sight whatever. Nevertheless, this eternal power and wisdom of God is now clearly understood in the things that are made. So the natural creation bears witness to God's eternal power and Godhead! Furthermore, this natural creation, in its multiple figures, and forms, and composition, relates to the spiritual creation also. This is very true of light itself. The natural light which we all recognize so easily, explains the invisible spiritual light. Both creations must agree for a competent witness of God and His Blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. So all the properties of light, with its full spectrum of color, reveal to the spiritual minded the manifold wisdom of God.

As light brings life to the natural world, and causes it to grow and mature, so likewise does the spiritual Light of the Glory of God, effect all who believe. Only faith can comprehend the True Light of God! On the other hand, unbelief is so vicious and evil, that it repels all light. This is declared in Heb. 3:12-14. " Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you

be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."

Our Blessed Lord pointed out the difference between mere religion without faith and the true inception of light by faith alone, apart from all works. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Matt, 6:21-23

13 Firstly, He points out that, "**treasures upon the earth,**" were only fleeting, and would only last up to death. Nevertheless those who were of the Kingdom of heaven should much rather store up "**treasures**" in heaven for eternity; and against all loss. Furthermore, "the light of the body," is in one organ only. This is the "eye," and it alone has the power and ability to receive light, and give its substance to the body. The eye, to be sure, also stands for our spiritual understanding. In other words, how do we receive the light of knowledge which is given to us? Does it bear the true image without any distortion? Such an image must be Christ in Glory:

In view of this manner of reception, what is so important? This is shown here --- "IF THEREFORE THINE EYE BE SINGLE," which means, whenever it gives a true focus. There cannot be a double vision, whatever. Without a proper focus the image it gives is faulty, and even blurred. As, a result, the brain receives the wrong impression. Notwithstanding, when the "**eye be single,**" there is no defect in the vision. This shows a perfect result. "**thy whole body shall be full of light.**"

This natural condition relates to how we receive the truth of grace. If we accept error, as leaven it brings a distortion. This will effect our spiritual life in Christ. Only in this new creation is found the perfect order and balance, and glory. II Thess. 5:21 declares it thus: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." In the example, which our Blessed Lord has given here He shows how treasures affect the mind and heart. If our hope for riches is only on earthly substance, we will be fooled, and only becomes a slave to "**mammon.**"

Christ continues to explain the importance of placing all our hope and dependence upon heavenly riches and glory. They do not enslave and bring us to the bondage of idolatry. They rather liberate the heart and mind toward Christ, as the giver of every good and perfect gift

from above.

"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" When, "thine eye be evil," it is full of "coveteousness," that is, a craving and lusting after fleshly appetite; apart from the faith of Christ. In all self indulgence of the mere creature, there is darkness. This will blind our spiritual vision and give perversion. Without the heavenly light of grace, we cannot have a true perspective of our life.

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." I Cor. 2:15 We can only be spiritual when we live in the Spirit. Here, grace alone will give us perfect sight to judge.

So, without a holy judgment based on Wisdom, our whole being is affected. If the, "eye be evil" the, "whole body shall be full of darkness."

In this darkness of the carnal mind, and its enmity against God, we behold a false image of a false god. He brings fear and slavery, in his rule of misery and poverty of true and lasting heavenly values. 14

Now, in this state of affairs, there are only great delusions, that give false hopes. Worry also gives its pangs of uncertainty and dread. So it follows, **"if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?"**

ALL idolatry brings the delusion of a false light. Its image answers to Satan's offer --- **"and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil."** Gen. 3:5 The self image now becomes the idol of our lives. If we accept this fearful error as light, then how great is our darkness?

We cannot deliver ourselves from this image of our own imagination! Only the light and, glory of the gospel of grace, brings out such a condition of wretchedness and fearfulness. The presence of such an image provokes God to jealousy. Let us hear the scriptures. "Thou shalt have no other gods before." Ex. 20:3 Also Exodus 34:14 shouts **"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:"**

Whether under law, as Israel was, or under grace, the Lord God Almighty proclaims His authority and presence in the secret depths of our hearts! He will not tolerate any god of our own image to rule our hearts. It is now God in Christ Jesus, who

must have all authority to rule over our own will and purpose. Only the Blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ can say, "**Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.**" Isa. 44:6 This very claim, that only God can make of Himself, is also attributed to Christ. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. 1:8

Now under the New Covenant of Promise, The Lord Jesus Christ, as GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, proclaims His Rights and Authority over every redeemed soul. He will never lessen His claims to be the FIRST and LAST of our lives!

Because we are purchased by the precious blood of Jesus, we are redeemed from all sin, and from the power of darkness that would overcome our spirits. Yet this is still not the end of His Eternal Purpose. There must be a new beginning in a new creation. In this glorious Kingdom of LIGHT, God seeks to implant in our hearts by faith, a new holy and glorious Image of His Dear Son, Christ Jesus! Our self image "I," is judged at the cross; and has no right to control our lives, as he did when we were in the flesh. This transformation and power of grace is now given in Gal. 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.**" All of our creature existence, and self proclaimed image as "I," is condemned at the cross! This is our day of judgment at Calvary's cross.

Now, instead; our faith will say - "**nevertheless I live.**" There is now a new identity from heaven. Our old creature self, whom we all dearly loved and served, has been replaced by a new "I." This is not nature's best; it is the gift of graces. Our new personality is, Christ in me the hope of glory. It is the will of God that we be conformed to the image of His Son. Rom. 8:29 Works could never avail here; it is the very glory of grace.

With more directness, the Lord declares our necessity in exercising the freedom of choice. We cannot escape the issue of our own servitude. Our freedom will depend upon our choice. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24

To serve "**mammon,**" (wealth) is only slavery which will bind

up our vitality. Then we will be possessed with a delusion of happiness and security. The greed of covetousness entwines its victims tighter and tighter, always demanding more time and means, to no real end. **"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."** Prov. 13:7 He that is poor in spirit, may be rich in faith. Note also Prov.28:22. **"He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him."**

So, contrary to covetousness, we are to love and serve God out of a pure heart, which will bring perfect Liberty. This is freedom's purpose; where bondage cannot reign.

Now, in love's pure delight, we behold Wisdom in faith. "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!" Prov. 16:16

Oh how purely, the Bride of Christ expressed herself in wisdom above all else. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee." Prov. 4:7-9

Oh the depth of faith that unveils the secrets of wisdom in the apostle Paul's espousal of the Bride to Christ! Here Wisdom herself is revealed in all mystery! As the Bride, Wisdom has searched out and understood the Great Mystery in its holy marriage relationship. Such a blessed union is found in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Here, the faith of God by the Holy Ghost, brings forth the greatest delight of Love.

Stewardship
(I Pet. 4:7-11)

1. Stewardship in prayer.....V. 7
2. Divine Love.....V. 8
3. Hospitality.....V.9
4. Oracles of God.....V. 10-11

Stewardship is expressed by two words in the Greek. "Epiteopos," is used three times, in scripture, signifying the one to whom treasure is committed. The other is "oikonomous," and is used twelve times, meaning "proper management of a house." This latter word is the one which Peter uses in this text.

Missionary News

Bro. Cecil Royalty, former student of Grace and Glory Bible School and subsequent Missionary to Paraguay and Argentina, was born Aug. 21, 1922, and went home to be with The Lord Nov. 7, 2014.

Following are a number of testimonies from those who have become a prominent part of the legacy he left, in publishing this glorious gospel of divine grace.

"I give thanks to God for Jesus Christ and I thank the Lord that He sent to Paraguay this missionary and messenger of the Grace and Glory of God-Superlative message. Bro. Siso-felt like a paraguayan in the midst of us. He even declared one time that Paraguay was his second country. I've known him since 1966 in person, but I had heard of him back in 1955 when he took the Gospel in land, along with Bro. Braulio Bernal (Pastor of the church in City of the East, Paraguay), then only 15 years old. Many more things to say but leave off with this- He came to us and made himself one of us, sat down and drank maté or tereré- became a paraguayan to the paraguayan." Bro. Widilfo Diaz- now in Asunción, Paraguay

"The testimony of the best memories of what he has left in my life with his visits to Paraguay and Argentina---- The Word that he planted in my heart. Noelia Gauna-originally from Paraguay & Argentina, now in Madrid, Spain. (She was a bible school student when Bro. Cecil taught at the G&G in Villarrica, Paraguay).

"Bro. Cecil, planted many seeds and the fruits are continuing to be produced. We Rejoice in his Victory in Christ". Alejandro Mainero -originally from Argentina Now in Asunción, Paraguay.

Brethren in City of the East (where Bro. Cecil established the message of grace) "don't believe in coincidences, but believe that as a result of Bro. Siso's home-going: provoked a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Tremendous revival took place here at a Ministers meeting, Friday thru Sunday. (Nov.7-9, 2014)" (Many different congregations were represented at this meeting)."I have admired and learned that the labor of the pastor is not solely in the pulpit for one hour. I try to emulate his labor for Christ". Bro. Isacio. Others there also stated-"We are so blessed to have seen his labor of love for the Lord and that it continues to grow."

"He was, and is, a beloved brother, and we will always remember he was one of the pioneers of the Grace Message. It gave fruit to my life and that of my husbands..today we serve the Lord with all our beings, awaiting the Lord's soon return. The message he shared, and others along with him, has caused us to seek to be the Bride of Christ. He has left the testimony of a faithful brother of whom can be said-'Imitate my faith in Christ'". Sis. Andrea Fabiana del Piero- Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Bro. David Cloud, long time Missionary to Mexico, also relates that Bro. Royalty was instrumental in translating many articles of the grace message into Spanish.

REFLECTIONS

. . . From the Editor

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind,.....” Acts 2:1-2

Wind, in scripture, is symbolic of spirits. Those spirits include the Spirit of God as well as Satanic forces. Daniel saw “the four winds of heaven,” as they “strove upon the great sea, And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.” Dan. 7:2,3 Those beasts represent the four world empires which have emerged during Gentile Times under the power and influence of Satan. John likewise speaks of the saints of God holding back these four Satanic winds of the earth, in Rev. 7:1

The “wind” of our opening text is, however, the very Spirit of God, depicting great power and force and the ability to accomplish God’s Work. IT shows the force to bring forth change and indeed, the Power of The Holy Ghost initiated the great change of ushering in the Church Age. He also dramatically changed the lives of the 120 gathered in the upper room.

God has demonstrated that power down through the ages. It was a rushing mighty wind which also gave Israel victory over the Egyptians in Exodus 14, when “...Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night,” V. 21 The story here is of Jesus, Who offered Himself through the wind of the “eternal spirit” at Calvary, leaving the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore and Israel walking on the “dry ground” of resurrection, into life eternal.

Further personal victory for us is found in the 15th Ch. “Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.” V. 10 This is the same glorious victory outlined in Rom. 8:11-13 “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies..... Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh,.... For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” The same mighty

“Wind,” which raised Jesus from the dead, will render a death blow to the any pursuit of the flesh in these mortal bodies today.

The Shulamite also discovered the glorious power of “The Wind.” “A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits;with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters..... Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.” Song 4:12-16

This choice woman is typical of the Bride of Christ. She has had many varied experiences in this book, and now has both the knowledge, and will, to call upon the “winds” of God to further her development. She is “a garden inclosed....a spring shut up...a fountain sealed,” all depicting the tremendous spiritual qualities of a life filled with Christ. But this woman knows that this life must be “developed” and thus calls upon the varied “winds” of God to implement that. Both the North Wind of adversity and the South of enjoyable blessing and comfort, are necessary to produce the full fruitfulness of this garden, which will first, be a benefit to her Beloved, and then to others who may be close to her. Those who would aspire to the attainments of this choice company, must have all the varied “Winds” of God’s Spirit “blowing into their lives today,” to produce the changes He so desires to make in them. We simply do not know what “winds,” may be in store for us as we enter this new year, but we are extremely confident in the ability of He Who controls them.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President’s Day Weekend Convention

Living Waters Tabernacle

February 13-15, 2015

Come join like-minded saints for a time of fellowship and encouragement in the things of eternity during this annual gathering in Denver, Colorado. Sermons, studies, and plenty of food will be provided throughout the weekend. You won’t want to miss it - you’ll be refreshed in the Lord!

THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

Gene Hawkins

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:” Psa. 92:1

The word good means “best, beautiful, bountiful, cheerful.” We were privileged to hear a man speak on this Psalm, emphasizing the “tone” of thanksgiving. Though David expressed it as a “good,” or cheerful, exuberant thing to give thanks unto The Lord, the attitude of some might simply be rather passive or nonchalant, reflected in expressions such as “I guess it is alright to give thanks, or surely there is nothing wrong with it.” However, David’s exuberance and excitement is clearly evident as he cites specific reasons for his enthusiasm. His very spirit of thanksgiving surely agrees with Paul who shouted “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” I Thess. 5:18

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The heading of Psalm 92, “A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day,” is a part of the text and expresses the fact that we must find Christ as our Sabbath or Rest in order to fully understand the glorious benefits for which the psalmist gives thanks. It is only as we appropriate and experience these blessings in our own lives that we too can shout from the very fiber of our being, “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD...”

David begins his paean of praise as he speaks of showing “forth **thy** lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.” V. 2 Whether he speaks of “himself,” showing such grace to others, or of God showing it forth unto him, the meaning is the same. All grace and mercy originates with God. It is truly **THY** lovingkindness. This truth is found repeatedly in scripture as we read, “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.” Psa. 106:1 It is only as we experience His grace or lovingkindness in our own lives, that we have the ability to show it forth unto others.

Note also that such grace comes forth “in the morning,” meaning that we must render thanks in anticipation of the grace that God will show to us throughout the entire day, then we are able to give thanks unto Him for “thy faithfulness every night.” We can rejoice and give thanks directly because we have been the recipient of His faithfulness to show forth such matchless favor unto us.

The sweet psalmist continues with even more specifics of giving thanks unto the Lord declaring that "...thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." V. 4 David surely understood the "works of thy hands," in creation, but this is more of a reference to His "works" in the King's own life. He could surely identify with Paul who exclaimed "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,..." Eph. 2:10 We must likewise overflow with praise because we too experience the work of this Heavenly Craftsman in our own individual lives. Ours also is a spirit of victory because we too "triumph in the works of thy hands."

The REASON, for God's work is even more stupendous. "O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." V. 5 These works are still toward US and they are because of God's "deep" thoughts, expressing the glorious mysteries of truth which He desires to make a part of our lives and experience. There are glorious depths, hidden in His Word, which He deigns to make practical in us, if we but give Him the opportunity to do so. David was overwhelmed with that prospect and gave thanks for it.

The Apostle Paul follows much this same pattern for thanksgiving in Colossians 3. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." V. 15 This verse comes very near the end of a long list of spiritual treasure for which we must give thanks. Paul issues the exhortation, "be ye thankful," almost as a command, and surely he does not speak of giving thanks just for the "peace of God," recorded in this one verse.

This list begins in V. 1 with "If ye then be risen with Christ,..." If we have been born again, we most assuredly must "give thanks," because we have been raised up with Christ in newness of life, out of the depths of death, sin, and despair. Our destiny was changed the day we accepted Him, and for that we most assuredly must be thankful. The next item worthy of thanksgiving is "...seek those things which are above,..." God raised us up from death and destruction, but He has also "...blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:" Eph. 1:3 Can we not give thanks because we have not only the opportunity, but the desire to actively and aggressively search out those glorious spiritual blessings. This is truly one

of the major differences in Christians today. Some are rather apathetic toward these glorious heavenly treasures, while others pursue them and give thanks for them.

Our list of thanksgiving continues with “Set your affection on things above,....” V. 2 We must be thankful that we now have the ability and power to direct our “affection,” or mind toward the purposes which God has chosen for us. The word “affection,” is exactly the same as that translated “mind” in Phil. 2:5. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:” Paul then describes the overall attitude, motivation, and resolve of Jesus in performing that which was pleasing to His Father. Thus, mind, or affection, does not simply mean the intellect, but rather reflects the inward desires and dedication to that which God would purpose for our lives. We must rejoice because we do have the same power that Jesus exhibited in following the path which God had chosen for Him.

There are many other causes for thanksgiving in these verses but verse 12 presents a beautiful summary of the traits, attributes, and characteristics embodied in the new creation. Paul begins here asserting that we are indeed “the elect of God,....” The word “elect” means “to select,” signifying that which is “favorite, or chosen.” How could one not be ecstatically thankful because The Very God Of The Universe saw fit to reach down and deliberately pick one of such “nothingness,” and show him such divine favor as we have in Christ Jesus! Such a thought should lift our spirits out of the depths of any despair and cause each of us to exult with John “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:...” I John 3:1 We SHOULD feel so gloriously blessed and privileged because we personally were the object of such choice!

The apostle then describes the tremendous qualities which have been freely given unto us directly because we are the chosen of God. We can now “Put on,” or display in our own practical lives that which is “holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;” All of these are traits of God! Just as David discovered the “lovingkindness” of God, we likewise experience all the manifestations of divine favor and then we are able to show such favor to others. It is a fact of scripture. We cannot give what we do not have. However, once God gives it to us, we are then free to distribute that same

glorious wealth unto others, whether it be truth, grace, meekness, longsuffering, or any other characteristic of the new creation life. Thanksgiving must surely be rendered unto God for His marvelous acts or works in our lives.

Verse 13 follows as a glorious manifestation of more grace for which, once again, we must be thankful. “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” It is an absolute fact that all men on this little earth ball, have “offended” or “have been offended,” at one time or another, but the same grace is available for all. Paul gives this same glorious message in Eph. 4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

If we are the “offended” we must believe God to forgive, as God has forgiven us, meaning that such forgiveness is granted purely on the basis of divine grace, with no strings attached. Our forgiveness, from God, came free for the asking, and Paul instructs us, in these verses, that we are to follow the same pattern when we have been offended.

There is a severe consequence if we fail to believe God for such grace. The chief apostle to the Church again instructs us to “Follow peace with all men,... Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;” Heb. 12:14-15 If an offended person fails to “look diligently” for the grace to forgive an offender, even as he himself has been forgiven by God, a root of bitterness will soon spring up within him, defiling both himself and those around him. Bitterness must not once be named in our experience if we would attain to the highest works that God has purposed for our lives.

On the other hand, if we are the “offender,” it is imperative that we believe God for “grace” to ask forgiveness. Otherwise, guilt will be our constant companion. Thus Paul’s words of exhortation here indicate we must be thankful for the grace of God that will release us from our burden and lift us up on high whether we be the “offender,” or the “offended.”

We are next instructed “...above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” V. 14 This is the same love as that of I Cor. 13 and all 16 attributes are to be incorporated

into our lives. Love is simply Christ, reproduced in all His splendor, to be poured out in blessing to those around us. Then are we able to "...let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." V. 15 We must indeed be thankful for all the glorious blessings of God including the very peace of God which now rules or dominates our hearts, but Paul's list is not quite finished, for we are now admonished to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." V. 16-17 The choice is ours to "let" the word dwell in us. The word signifies that we are to act as an "umpire." Indeed, the decision is ours, to let this message of God's wisdom take up residence in us.

Paul closes this portion in the same manner as David opened Psalm 92 where he announced that "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises..." unto His Name. The New Testament shepherd of the Church also reinforces this thought of thanksgiving as he instructs us to sing "with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God and the Father by him." It truly must be deemed a good thing as we sound out a cheerful, bountiful, and beautiful tone of constant thanksgiving unto The Lord!

Said the Robin to the Sparrow,
"I really should like to know
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so."

Said the Sparrow to the Robin,
"Friend I think it must be,
That they have no Heavenly Father,
Such as cares for you and me."

James And His Works

Mary M. Bodie

WAS NOT ABRAHAM OUR FATHER JUSTIFIED by Works when He Had Offered Isaac His Son upon The Altar? . . . Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way?" Jas. 2:21-25.

So many Bible teachers and preachers have the idea that Paul and James are opposed in their teaching upon the doctrine of justification, but this is a mistake. They are in perfect agreement. Harmony reigns between them. They shake hands on the subject, as it is plainly seen as we study the whole of their writings, which are a part of the Scriptures.

25 In Acts 15, where the findings of the first convention held by the leaders of the church are recorded, James and Paul are in perfect alignment as to the way of salvation; and also in their writings there is one-accordness in respect of justification before God and man. They both emphasize the FAITH way.

James in his one little epistle, apparently disagrees with Paul, but it is only because folk do not understand his letter. He is emphasizing works, but WORKS OF FAITH, the practical side of the Christian life, that which justifies man before man. Paul, on the contrary, sets to the front justification before God by FAITH without works. This is his theme. The objective side of salvation is stressed; but works of faith are not forgotten. He continually emphasizes the fruit of the life of the new creation, even as Jesus said, "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be of like character." Matt. 12:33 The Apostle Paul leaves room for the words of James when he declares of Abraham, "that if he were justified by works, he had whereof to glory, but not before God." Rom. 4:2. The question with James is as to the reality of profession. Christendom today is a mass of profession; "but what doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works?" James enquires. "Will such faith (which is only profession) save him?" That is a fair question. Then he illustrates his point.

If anyone is naked and lacking in daily food, and one say, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," would that profit the needy person? Would that profession of pity and sympathy put any food in the needy one's stomach or any clothes on his back? No, it would not. There must be the deeds to prove the sincerity of his words, otherwise the sympathy and charity will be abhorrent to the needy. Likewise is the case, spiritually. Profession of faith is evidenced as possession is by works—not before God—but before men. God sees the heart and needs no such evidence. Men see the works and need practical deeds to prove that the faith is real. They judge by the sight of their eyes and the hearing of their ears. Someone may say, "Show me faith without thy works," but James says, "I will show you my faith by my works." Amen! So will we.

Then the striking illustration, as quoted above, is given. Abraham's and Rahab's works are brought forward as evidence of their faith. James first cites the case of the Patriarch, to whose faith God bore witness and counted it unto him for righteousness—Gen. 15. But he does not say, as Paul does, that it was by this FAITH he was justified—Rom. 4:3. Was this true? Most assuredly it was; but James is on another side. He is declaring that this faith which justified Abraham before God evidenced itself in works, which later justified him before men. He is not speaking of the earlier display of his faith when he walked before God in a perfect way and pleased Him (Gen. 13:18) but of the magnificent showing of his work of faith in the renunciation of his son on Mt. Moriah in giving him over unto death (Gen. 22) from whence also he received him in a figure.

And herein is a marvelous fact, a secret to the wise and prudent. It is a challenge to every law keeper in the world. It ought to shut them up from ever boasting in works. James, the legalist (as he has been called) points to a work of faith on Abraham's part which if he had really carried it out would have been the breaking of one of the ten commandments of God. It plainly NEEDS FAITH TO JUSTIFY IT. Otherwise he was in the act of committing murder when he was stopped by the voice of the Lord. Before God, it was as tho he had really slain his son (Heb. 11:19) and thus his faith was shown as being perfect. James says

that the Scripture was now fulfilled which said, "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." He argues that Abraham's conduct at this juncture justified God's words of acknowledgment of his faith of an earlier date. It proved that he really believed God. This is the greatest refutation of works as a means of salvation, in the Scriptures. It is astounding! a hard nut for the legal soul to crack.

In Rahab, we find a more conspicuous case of the fact that faith only can justify us before God. She is named "Rahab the harlot," by James, the zealous advocate of the practical life of good works. This is truly enough to make the boasting, self-righteous man squirm in his boots. There was in her case absolutely no good works—moral, beneficent works of mercy to be seen, as men would speak—to justify her before God or man. Her good works were simply the evidence that she believed God. In this alone was there value. She broke the law in doing these good works with which James credits her. She received the messengers from Israel as servants of God. It was because of this fact that *she* entertained and protected them tho they had come to spy out and destroy her city and home. They were her enemies, as it were; but she bows before the verdict of Jehovah and owns Him as in authority. Otherwise, her works were not only unprofitable, but evil. It was God who was pronouncing the judgment against her people and city, hence how could she resist Him? She had faith; but it did not ennoble her, according to men's thoughts. It was accompanied by deception and falsehood. If James was taking up moral deeds as an example of faith, he would never have brought these works of Abram and Rahab to the front and exhibited them. There was no natural excellence in their good works, rather otherwise; but they show the point James is emphasizing—their faith before man. These two examples illustrate the fact that these parties believed God to the uttermost. He was a living reality to them. They put their lives in jeopardy before men because of their faith in God. Abraham would have been apprehended as a fanatic, a madman or else a murderer, if anyone had known his secret. Notice that he did not even tell Sarah, nor the young men who were with him as to his errand.

There are some things God would have us keep secret. Paul

advised, "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God"—Rom. 14:22. We say, If the folk had surmised Abraham's intention of slaying his son in obedience to the Lord's command, they might have slain him. Also in the case of Rahab. She *was* a traitor to her country and government. She hid the spies who came in the interests of Israel, and falsely directed the officers who came to arrest them. She allowed, yes, helped them to escape because she believed God. Her act would not be considered "good" by the standard of the day, nor judged by the law, but she acted according to the light she had at that time. It was little. She was a Gentile and knew nought of the ten commandments of Mt. Sinai. She did not know that it was a transgression against God to lie or deal falsely.

She knew only that these men of Israel were the servants of the true and living God and she must protect them if she died for it. And God appreciated this faith. It is by faith that we please Him. She did not die. And when Israel entered the land of Canaan, she and her family were the only ones that escaped destruction. Her house remained standing on the wall of Jericho, while all the surrounding part fell down flat.

Imagine such a miracle of God's power out of respect for Rahab's faith. And that is not all the reward meted out to her. She came into the family of Israel and was one of the five women mentioned in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. O the limitless boundary of the grace of God! He has no respect of persons nor of their so-called good works. He bows His respects to faith and delights in its works and acknowledges and rewards such, whether they are in harmony with the aesthetic ideals or morals of men, or not. He is Arbiter and Judge. He knows the heart that believes. HE SEES THE FAITH; while men see the works. Praise His Name forever.



* True service does not consist in great activity necessarily, but in profound subjection to the will of God.

* God knows the way out of the woods. If you trust Him, He will take you out by the shortest and surest route.

ISAIAH 26

(Ch. 26 Concl. - Ch. 27)

Gene Hawkins

The story will be far different in Israel, for “Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.” V. 15 The Jews have indeed been “removed” even “unto the ends of the earth,” but a great change awaits them. They will now be greatly “increased,” and the reason is found in V. 16. “LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.” V. 16 The reference here is to the great tribulation, especially the latter part of it known as “the time of Jacob ‘s trouble. Jer. 30:7 They have now “visited,” or literally “kept an appointment” with The LORD in that great day of trouble, for they have responded to His chastening Hand upon them. They are likened unto “.... a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.” V. 17 These words bear a strong resemblance to the analogy Jesus gave in Matt. 24:8 when He described the calamities that will descend upon this earth in the end time. “All these are the beginning of sorrows.” The word “sorrows,” describes a woman in the throes of child birth contractions. They become much more intense, and frequent, as the actual delivery draws nigh. This is the same pattern that will prevail, especially wherein Israel is concerned. The early days of tribulation will produce “mild discomfort,” for the entire world, but will escalate into great tribulation before Isaiah’s prophecy of the fledgling nation is fulfilled. “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” Isa. 66:8 The ultimate result of all these “birth pangs,” will be the birth of Israel. I Thess. 5:3 likewise relates the same story. “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.” The word “travail,” is the same word translated “sorrows,” in Matt. 24, and describes exactly the same scenario; the birth of a nation which will become the leader of nations in the new world order over which Jesus Himself will preside.

“We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.” V. 18 These words, once again, describe the futility of Israel’s own efforts desperately trying to effect their own deliverance. They have been in horrendous pain for hundreds of years, but their own strength and expertise has produced nothing but “wind” or futility. They have brought forth no lasting peace to themselves or the rest of the world and have not been able to bring about the fall of their enemies. However, the next verse shouts forth the great victory which is yet in store for this Chosen Nation, after they surrender themselves unto The Lord. “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” V. 19 “Thy dead men,” bespeak God’s dead men, who will rise up as “my dead body,” even as the dry bones in Ezekiel 37. They will most assuredly “Awake and sing,” for a new day of “dew,” with the freshness of resurrection will have dawned for them. Thus they are exhorted to “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” V. 20 These words are uttered BEFORE the great victory of V. 19 is achieved and attests to the fact that Israel must become a nation of faith, believing those things concerning them which have not come to pass as yet. They will have only hope to sustain them, and must therefore “hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” That hope, even during the unprecedented agonies of tribulation, will be enough, however, because they are holding on vehemently to the promise of V. 21. “For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” There will be that glorious time when The LORD will come “out of His place,” of silence and pour out intense judgment upon those who have committed all the gross atrocities against the Jews throughout the ages of Gentile Times. No longer will they be able to “cover her slain,” as though it had never happened, for all the earth shall be forced to “disclose her blood.” There will come a “day of reckoning,” whereby He will punish such “iniquity” and all of these enemies of Israel, who have committed such ungodly

acts against “the apple of His eye,” will be severely “reimbursed” for their efforts, even as Zechariah prophesied so long ago. “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” Zech. 2:8

CHAPTER 27

Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.” Dan. 10:4

“The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” Dan. 7:18

“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Dan. 7:27

The overall theme of Daniel describes how God committed the world government into the hands of the Gentiles for the period known in scripture as “Gentile Times.” However, the prophet’s personal burden is found in the texts above wherein he was greatly concerned about the welfare of his own people, the Jews. Daniel saw the 70 year captivity in Babylon coming to an abrupt end, as recorded in chapter 9, but he did not see any signs of their restoration. Thus he begins a great prayer of intercession for them. “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God,....” Dan. 9:3,4 God answered him and caused him to “understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days:...” Dan. 10:14 Those same latter days, wherein Israel will be restored and blessed, are also the theme in this 27th chapter of Isaiah. Verses 12-13 record this summation and we would once again point out the very significant phrase; “**in that day.**” “And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to **pass in that day**, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt,

and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”

The beginning of the chapter likewise announces that “**In that day** the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword (the power of His Word) shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.” V. 1 “That day,” is a reference to the very dawning of “the Day of The Lord,” which actually begins with the days of tribulation after Jesus is crowned King of kings and Lord of lords in Rev. 4. During the process which will usher in His Millennial Kingdom of Peace, Satan or “leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent;...” must be dethroned, even as we read in Rev. 12:9-10. “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.” We would also note that Isaiah specifically says that “...he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea,” meaning that it was Satan himself, who stirred up the sea of Gentile nations against Israel. His removal will ultimately result in the glorious song of victory found in V. 2

32

“In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine.” Israel is herein described as a “vineyard,” and the “red wine,” portrays a nation washed in the blood of the Lamb. No longer is it a vineyard bringing “forth wild grapes,” as seen in Isa. 5:4, but “in that day,....” it will truly be “his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it.....” Isa. 5:1,2

God Himself extends the utmost of care to this “fenced “vineyard even as we read: “I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.” V. 3 This has always been the case, even in the dark days of difficulty throughout Gentile Times. It will yet be true as He preserves His Own during the tribulation period, keeping His vineyard from being annihilated by hostile nations.

God further asserts that “Fury is not in me:...” meaning that The Wrath of God toward Israel is now past, but this same verse clearly reflects the fact that His Anger is yet very much

ready to be unleashed against the nation which would dare harm His vineyard, posing the question "... who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together." V. 4 He will surely do exactly that, but grace or mercy is always found in the midst of judgment, as verse 5 offers deliverance to these same nations. "Or let him (the same nations who have been against His people, Israel) take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." The essence of this invitation is that the nations will either make peace with God, or they will surely be totally burned up and consumed.

The blessing for His Own People, even as Daniel prophesied, continues in verse 6. "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." This is a "new face" for Israel, a direct contrast to that which has prevailed throughout Gentile times, where they have often ridiculed and disdained. "In that day..." however, they will "take root," meaning that this is not just a passing fancy or temporary state. It will last a 1000 years and "Israel shall blossom and bud." Their influence will also "fill the face of the world," meaning that they will have world-wide dominion over all those nations who formerly oppressed them. This "fruit," will be "spiritual fruit," and they will finally fulfill the great commission given in Matt. 18:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

"Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?" V. 7 This verse simply asks the question "Has God smitten Israel as He smote the nations who had smitten her?" The answer would of necessity be no, for though the same pattern is evident, as asserted in the rest of this verse "...according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him" (God), the intensity and result is far different. This text continues; "In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind." God's punishment of Israel is "measured." The words, "...when it shooteth forth..." is a reference to Israel's rebellion for which they must indeed be punished. The word "shooteth," literally means to depart or push away, and that is exactly what they did throughout their history

as they bowed down to other gods and forsook the God Who had chosen them. God would “debate with it,” meaning that He must decide what to do with such rebellion and the answer is that He “stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.” It means that when that “east wind” of light and righteous judgment comes, it will be “measured” for Israel and would not be as “rough” as that used against the nations, but will rather be the same “east wind” which brought deliverance at the Red Sea. The purpose for this treatment of Israel is that “By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up.” Such a “purge” was actually accomplished at the cross as God purged the sin of all mankind in the Person of Jesus, but Israel, as a nation, has finally laid hold of that glorious provision and we note from the latter part of this text that even their idolatrous ways are “beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up.” This people has truly learned, by experience, that there is but One God, and He is their Messiah!

(To be continued from this point in Feb. 2015)



WHEN MISSIONS CEASE

When may I cease to love missions?
When I have ceased to love Him.
When the Father no longer loves sinners
When the stars in their paths have burned dim,
When the blossoms no longer need showers,
Or the wild birds their sheltering nests,
When men have no need for a Saviour,
When time ceases flying and rests.
When brotherly love has encompassed
The earth and all men are as one,
When Jesus is loved and exalted
In all lands where shineth the sun.
Then may I rest from my labors,
For missions their course shall have run.

Selected



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First Day of the Week	New Birth	Water Baptism
Five Much Mores	Not Legislation, Revelation	Wheat and Tares
Five Consequences	Oneness of Christ	Why am I Not Healed

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S

eeke ye the Lord
while he may
be found, call ye
upon him while
he is near.

ISAIAH 55.6.