

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole counsel of GOD

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'Loving His Appearing'

Volume 106

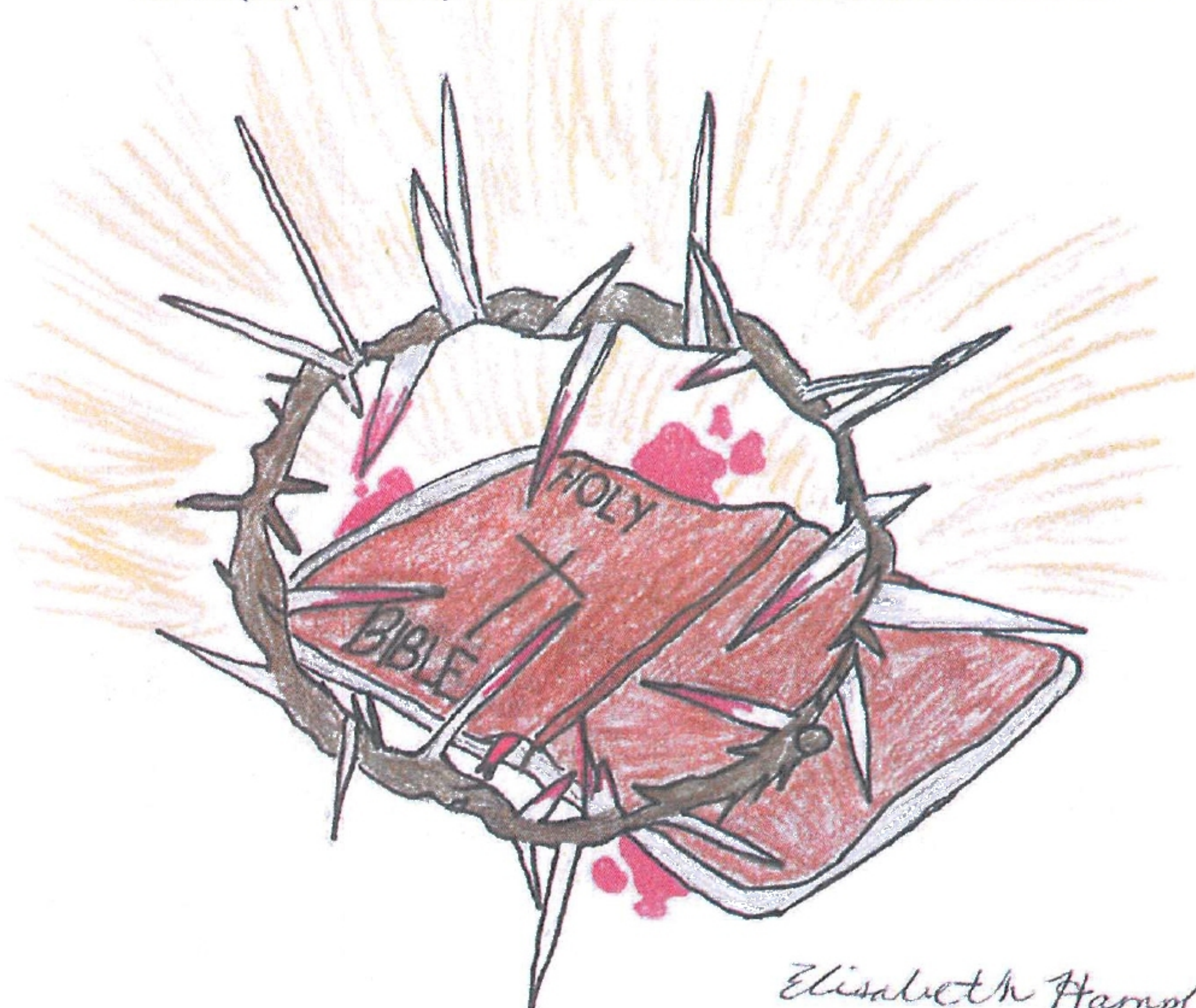
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Elisabeth Hampl

HIS PAIN...OUR GAIN

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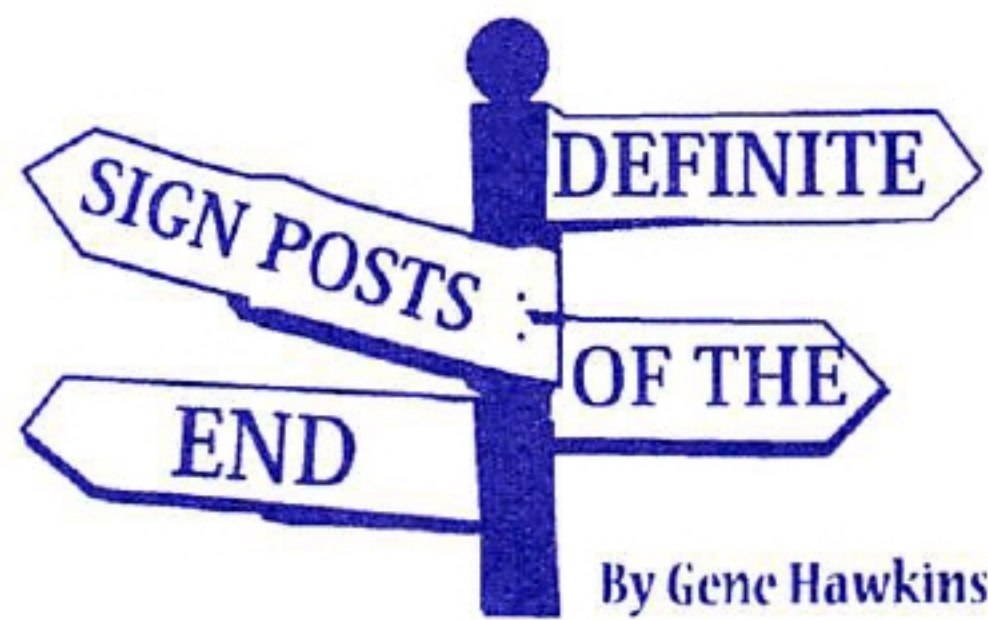
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 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. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:” Isa. 66:7-10

“Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” Eze 37:4-6

“AS goes Israel, so goes this world,” is a cliché used by many prophecy scholars down through the ages, and it is absolutely correct. There may be many reasons that the land of Israel is called the Middle East, but one of them must surely be that Israel has always been at the very center of God’s purposes here on this earth. Scripture is very clear that “When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.” Deut. 32:8

The opening text from Isaiah indicates that a nation will most assuredly be brought forth in one day. The text from Ezekiel also declares the fact that Israel will one day be raised up as a mighty army from the ashes of sure destruction. Some, of our day, have concluded that Israel’s current military prowess is the fulfillment of this prophecy proclaiming a resurrection of the dry bones, but this text clearly indicates that such a miracle will take place because The Lord GOD “... will cause breath to enter into

you, and ye shall live: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” This is a reference to the spiritual awakening in Israel rather than that of natural power and strength.

4 All of these prophecies concerning Israel will be absolutely fulfilled, but none has come to pass at this present time. Some have pointed to May 1948 as proclaiming the birth of a nation in one day, but that simply cannot be. We surely are persuaded that God resumed His dealings with Israel by virtue of the fact that she was recognized as a political nation at that time, but the real significance of Isaiah’s prophecy was in no wise manifest then or in the years since. Jesus illustrated the path of Israel by the fig tree in Matt. 24:32-33. “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” We know that time means nothing to God, and the era from 1948 to this present day would be but a nanosecond to Him. Thus, Jesus’ prophecy would most assuredly announce that “...when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” There is no doubt that God has made His Presence known in this region, even since 1948, but the nation of which Isaiah speaks will be a spiritual nation, and that nation has in no wise emerged. It is rather interesting that the fig tree produces fruit before the leaves are manifest. We learn that lesson from Mark 11 where Jesus saw a fig tree bedecked with leaves, but no fruit thereon, and thus He cursed it, meaning that Israel put forth only a “profession,” with no substance. There has likewise been a profession of spirituality in Israel during the last 50 plus years, but this nation as a whole has not accepted her Messiah.

Isaiah actually declares two births in the above text, and though related they are not the same. The order of Isaiah’s prophecy is astounding as it coincides perfectly with John’s account in Rev. 12. “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.” This establishes the time line as to when these two events will take place. John shows plainly that the man child will be taken to heaven just prior to the middle of the tribulation week, after Satan has been cast out of heaven. Rev. 12:1-5 The key here in Isaiah is that the woman brought

forth this man child **“Before she travailed...”** meaning that the 144, 000 who are all of Israel, the final rank of the Church, will be transported to glory **before** Israel experiences the 1260 day travail of Jacob’s trouble which will produce the nation born in one day. “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Rev. 12:6 Following that 1260 day period of unprecedented devastation will be the re-birth and subsequent blessing of Israel as a nation. Note also the contrast between the “man child” which has been brought forth and the fact that “...she brought forth her **children,**” a reference to the tremendous fruitfulness of Israel after she becomes the head of the nations. Isaiah also describes that time in the verses immediately following that birth announcement, in a message addressed to the nations. “Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” Isa 66:10-11 This outlines the 5
millennial state of both Israel and the nations. Israel will be the head of those nations, and all of them will literally be dependent on her to the extent “...That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations;...”

The period since 1948 has come nowhere close to this prophecy. Following, are several excerpts from issues of Grace and Glory published at that time, leading up to and following Israel’s announcement of statehood in May of that year. They describe the atmosphere at the time then present, reflecting frustration, anxiety, apprehension, and wonder, even of those who were looking diligently for the coming of The Lord. Mary M. Bodie begins her writing of the Sign Posts with a quote from the Los Angeles Examiner, “a newspaper always in favor of the Jews receiving their homeland. It is a panegyric of praise to these people of destiny. CONGRATULATIONS PALESTINE. Today we hail the BIRTH OF A NEW FLAG. Today we hail the BIRTH OF A NEW JEWISH STATE --- PALESTINE... We can see them build a new civilization. When the time shall come that the prophecy of the Jewish seers are fulfilled; when nations shall no longer raise

sword against nation; when the olive leaf instead of the laurel shall adorn the brow of the great. February's issue announced that "TRUMAN ASKS VAST DEFENSE FUND. HE SENDS MESSAGE TO CONGRESS with declaration that 79 percent of 39 billion total for military requirements is needed. And this in peace-time...WAR SPREADS IN THE HOLY LAND. Even tho' the U.N.O. has decided that the Jews shall have a part of the land of Palestine. People are living in terror as Arab riflemen range the narrow streets and lonely byways and Haganah (Jewish Defense Force) retaliated with bombing and more gunfire....

6 THE PARCELING OUT OF PALESTINE CANNOT BE A PERMANENT ARRANGEMENT for the Jewish people. It is simply a step toward their repatriation to their homeland, but this will not be in the perfection until Christ returns... THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL SUMMONED A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO RECONSIDER THE PALESTINE PROBLEM. Also adopting another American proposal, the council has requested the Jews and Arabs, pending re-examination of the Assembly's program for Palestine to make a truce for the time... IN DEADLY PERIL. JERUSALEM FACES PROSPECT OF DEVASTATING WAR WHEN BRITISH PULL OUT, so declares a writer who has recently returned from Palestine. It is threatened with fire, famine, and fury.... JEW PUT OVER A JEWISH STATE. IS THAT NOT A STRIKING SIGN? It's thrilling and significant. And they are going to make the world acknowledge them as a nation with a government. Truman has already done so, but Britain so far has not recognized its existence. In fact, they are helping the Arabs in their resistance against Israel.... THE STATE OF ISRAEL IS A LITTLE THING TODAY, HARDLY RECOGNIZED BY THE NATIONS --- but it is a TERRIFIC SIGN—THERE IS NONE GREATER ---OF THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.... THERE IS A STAGNATION UPON THE NATIONS. They are in a coma, as it were. Nothing appears to arouse them to their danger. The present condition of Europe, or lack of food, weakened, broken-up state, the growing post-war unrest, the shadows of impending doom, fail to turn them to God or stop the mad rush after pleasure... THE NATIONS REFUSED TO

HELP ISRAEL SET UP THEIR STATE. President Truman made the United States a laughing stock by refusing to take a position on Palestine in the terms of National interest and stick to it. He may have been unable to go against adverse elements to do this; nevertheless he had a wonderful opportunity before him to put his name on history's honor roll as having done something really worth while in backing Israel's purpose to constitute themselves a State in Palestine. So for better, or maybe for worse for a while, the Zionists created Israel by their own efforts.... PROPHECY IS BEING FULFILLED IN ALL THAT IS COMING TO PASS. The hand of God is manifested before men's eyes but their eyes are blinded to this fact. All that has happened and will happen in Palestine is according to what has been written. The Jews are in the limelight.... Some people do not like the Jew, nor believe that God is going to fulfill His promises regarding them. Some even say that Jesus was not a Jew, which is a falsehood. He was born a Jew, and He always will be a Jew.... THE DAY OF THE LORD ADVANCES WITH SPEED. IT WILL BE HERE IN SHORT ORDER. The Signs are unmistakable. The Jewish State is the greatest signpost of them all. It loudly proclaims the hour, even tho' it appears as a little thing. It has already come thru much tribulation. When we read some of the news reports the suffering of the Jews were terrible. We cannot understand the part that Britain played in the matter. British officers stood within a short distance from the hospital of Hadassah in Jerusalem while Arabs murdered 76 unarmed personnel.... GOD IS BEGINNING TO RESTORE ISRAEL TO HIMSELF. That is the reason of the activity and action manifested by them. Nevertheless He is hiding Himself in the midst. He is allowing them to do their utmost in their restoration. They are working in unbelief in their sure destiny as promised by Jehovah of old. They believe they must fight for themselves and so God is letting them do their uttermost... Israel has decided that its citizens shall be called Israelis --- not Israelites. Israelites was the Bible Name. Mr. Moshi Shertok, the Foreign Minister said, 'This is a modern nation. Therefore it must have a modern name.' We would say, it must have a name that declares its unbelief and independence of God." All these excerpts simply combine to show that the

announcement of Israel as a nation in 1948 really cannot be the prosperous and spiritual nation described by Isaiah. The nations clearly did not rally around them as they will in the Millennium. The following report from Paul N. Smith, who was editor of *Grace and Glory* for over 50 years, shows that conditions did not improve for Israel, or the world, during the next 19 years after Israel declared their independence. It was written on June 12, 1967 following the stunning victory which Israel won against Egypt after only six days. “Today as they (Egypt) look around at the ruins brought about by their little enemy (Israel) we wonder what their thoughts are. Surely they know by now, after three decisive defeats since 1948 that they are no match for these ancient people of God.... This modern victory is quite another story. We must admire Israel’s bravery, determination, and warring prowess; but they did not go in the strength of the Lord. Many of the Jews who rushed into the old city of Jerusalem were atheists. Some were teenagers, who know very little of God’s promises to Israel. There were some Orthodox Jews, who are looking for their Messiah to appear. It was a mixed group. There is a spirit of national pride among the people, rather than a religious zeal.... Another point of contrast is that these people went with the armor of man. They were equipped to a great extent by the United States.... But they did not go with their slingshot of faith and the stones of grace. **GOD WILL GIVE ISRAEL ALL THE LAND THAT BELONGS TO THEM.** They will not need to fight for it, as they are doing today. This shows that these people are not trusting God as they will later.... In turning to the nations for help, Israel is showing their rejection of Jehovah. This victory will bolster their self-confidence, and blind them to realities. They will not be able to trust Arab observance of these treaties, but yet they will enter into agreement with their enemies. If they trusted in God, they could boldly declare that God is their Helper, and no one could drive them out of their land.”

Current news items also indicate that present day Israel does not enjoy the prosperity, peace, and complete vibrant life and victory as described by Isaiah and Ezekiel. They are yet in unbelief as a nation. Haaretz, a very prominent news agency in Israel published the following headlines, all in one day, describing

both the spiritual and political state of this Chosen People at the present time. They clearly show that Israel has not accepted their Messiah, and there exists tremendous fear and unrest because of it. The nation of which Isaiah spoke has not yet been born! **“How some Jews have become Mormon and see no contradiction.”** Probably hundreds of Jews across the U.S. have adopted the Mormon faith, but that doesn't mean it's replaced their Jewish heritage..... **Portuguese Catholics re-embrace their Jewish roots.** The Inquisition extinguished much of the country's Jewish population. But now some Catholics with Jewish origins are taking pride in their heritage, even though they have no intention of converting.... **Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday called for establishing a Palestinian state within the pre-1967-war borders amid efforts by Beijing to assert its economic and political clout in the Middle East.** China supports the peaceful process in the Middle East [and] the establishment of a Palestinian state with its capital being eastern Jerusalem, he added through an interpreter.... **Israel Is Changing Its Approach to Syria War Amid Assad's Battleground Advances.** Russian intervention has tilted the scales, and Jerusalem is concerned of a regime victory, which would be victory for Iran as well. To prevent that, Israeli officials believe West must intervene in favor of moderate rebels.” 9

We are absolutely confident that all the prophecies concerning Israel will be fulfilled to the letter. However, there is much prophecy to be fulfilled before that time arrives. Daniel is very clear that the spiritual condition of Israel will deteriorate to the point that they will surrender the evening sacrifice. Dan. 8:11 They will also continue to make various agreements and treaties with their enemies trying desperately to get what they desire through their own efforts rather than surrender unto The LORD and let Him fight their battles. That pattern will result in signing the infamous covenant with the antichrist. Dan. 9:27 After that, horrendous devastation and destruction will ensue until finally, Israel and the world will be plunged into unprecedented “... tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matt. 24:21 Jesus said that this period would start with “... the beginning of sorrows.” Matt. 24:8 We have seen before that the word “sorrows” is a

term describing the birth pangs of a woman, which become more intense and frequent as the arrival of the new infant draws near. This is exactly the pattern which will bring forth the nation in one day. The intense tribulation known as "... the time of Jacob's trouble;..." will produce the new birth of this fledgling nation, and thus Israel shall be saved out of that most devastating time. Jer. 30:7

10 So what is the message for us who, like many of those those in 1948, are desperately looking for Jesus to return? The signs are still all around us. We know of a surety that God is turning His attention to Israel, but He must conclude His purposes for the Church. We noted at the outset that the man child is the 144,000, the third and final rank of the heavenly company. That will end God's plan for the Church and He will then turn His full attention to Israel. We know also that God has promised the Church at Philadelphia that they would be kept "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 The characteristics of the Church at Philadelphia DO NOT describe the Church as a whole. Everyone is not looking for Jesus to come as that Church was. The world today seems to be oblivious to that day even as Sis. Bodie described in 1948. However, let us take heart and know assuredly that "... yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:37 We must understand that we need not wait for the transformation of this tiny nation of Israel, for it will not happen until we are already in glory. Let us take heart that God is working in His time, "... confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" Phil. 1:6 Our hearts are extremely grieved by the political, religious, fleshly, unbelieving, immoral, and ungodly atmosphere surrounding us today but God's Word will prevail. We can, and must claim the glorious promise: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all." Psa. 34:19 One day, sooner than most men think, that deliverance will transport us right through the portals of glory!

"...Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

Mary Magdelene

Mary M. Bodie

“And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.” Luke 7:37-38

We believe the above mentioned woman was Mary Magdelene who occupies a very unique place in the Gospels, being mentioned twelve times. She figures the Bride of the Lamb: We note some of these citations as we continue on with our sermon. . . . The meaning of Mary Magdelene is most suggestive. Mary—“Bitter,” tells us of the bitterness that attends the way of this chosen woman in this world. Magdelene ---- “Magnificent,” “Greatness,” signifies the future destiny of the Bride. She will be all glorious, sharing the “sun glory” with her Lord.

In the above record we see her first a sinner, broken and contrite. The word here for sinner “Hammortolas” (Greek) was that which was used for a Gentile. It does not carry the meaning of a prostitute, as so many infer. She loved the Lord so dearly, so appreciated His grace to her that she braved the scorn of the Pharisee and came uninvited into the house. “She loved much,” that phrase points her out as the Bride. She stood behind the Lord and washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head; afterward pouring on the fragrant spikenard. It was a beautiful gesture of penitence and gratitude for the deliverance which Jesus gave her. He had already healed her, casting out the demon powers which held her in bondage. Her heart is stirred to the uttermost with love for this most wonderful Man who has done so much for her. Her sins are all forgiven. The following, which we quote, explains some things.

“The ancients took their meals partly lying down on their sides, supporting their heads with one arm, their other hand they used for their food. Thus their feet were accessible to one coming behind the couch, as in the case of Mary Magdelene.” Feet are mentioned, six times, from which we deduce that they spiritually speak of the whole body of Christ, which leads on to the first item of the necessary overcoming of the Bride company.

We will note five of these essentials.

ONE—LOVE For The Whole Body Of Christ. That is the manner by which we prove our love for Him. He declared what we do for the least of these, His people, is as done for Him—Matt. 25:40. O, how few there are who regard this necessary item. Brotherly love is so sadly missing, and yet that is the group (Philadelphia) that is singled out to enter that open door at the first trumpet blast — Rev. 3:8. Washing the feet of the saints is much more than just attending a meeting where one foot of those present is washed, it probably having been washed preparatory to the ceremony. Washing the feet refers to any good work done for any member of the body of Christ. To visit the sick and pray for them, or comfort the bereaved and sorrowful, to relieve the afflicted and distressed, lift up the fallen and strengthen the weak—all this and more is washing the saint's feet — I Tim. 5:10. Observe Mary Magdelene's tears and her alabaster box of ointment which figures the fact that it costs the overcomers to so serve the saints, as she served the Lord. We will notice another mark of identification of Mary Magdelene, with the Bride company.

TWO — SERVICE FOR HIM. "And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,... and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance." Luke 8:1-3.

Here we see the continual devotion of this woman who loved much. She is found following Jesus around in the various places where He ministered. She came with material substance that He might have wherewith to eat. She was thinking of Him. That is the way the Bride company goes. She is following Jesus going about doing good, blessing the saints in every place, with her material things as well as spiritual. It costs her something financially to follow the Lord; but this woman of great destiny does not count the cost. She is interested in all that concerns her Lover and Bridegroom. Nothing of this world matters any more. Her interests are all merged into His. She is lost in Him. She LOVES HIM. He is coming soon and she must be ready, having done what she could. Let us look at the next mark of identification of the

Bride.

THREE—LOYALTY TO JESUS, "And there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Cleophas and Mary Magdelene"—John 19:25.

Mary Magdelene is seen as one of the last at the cross. She is continually associated with His mother, and here they are together at the crucifixion. The Apostles had fled—but she is there, staying to the end with her Beloved. Oh, the anguish of that hour, no tongue can tell what she suffered. She felt His pain in part, in the fellowships of His rejection and sorrow. And so with the Bride, she suffers in fellowship with Jesus. His rejection is also her rejection and the cross is laid upon her too, as she comes out of the country.

Paul wanted to so know the Lord. He desired to fellowship His suffering, even unto being "made conformable unto His death," for that is the way to be in that company which will attain to the **OUT-RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD**" —**Phil. 3:10**. Mary Magdelene tasted the bitterness which her name expressed and so will the Bride. She enters into the sorrows, and ostracism and reproach of the cross, but she is thus made eligible to reign with Him. It is the way she must go. There is no other road to **GLORY** except the **GLORY** road. We may choose this way, or the way of the world with its glimmer and glamor, but oh, the loss which this entails. It is only in eternity that it will be seen what those saints that were altogether given up to Christ, devoted absolutely to Him and surrendered to the Father's will have gained. And even in this representative character, we are given to see something of the gain in this mark of the Bride company.

13

FOUR—WITNESSING FOR HIM. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdelene early, when it was yet dark unto the sepulchre and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre and we know not where they have laid Him." John 20:1,2.

Mary Magdelene came before dawn to the grave of Jesus. **O**, she loved Him. He was the lode-star of her life. He was dead, and she was going to anoint Him as was the manner in burial, but she was too late. He had risen. She does not understand, but she runs to tell the news that He is not in the sepulchre. She is in the place as

typical of the Bride as witness for Christ, all her time given up to tell others of Him. She is running to declare the news. So with the Bride. She is not sleepy or too indolent to run with the good news of Christ's resurrection. She is filled with joy at the fact. He is risen. How can she be impervious to that great triumph or sleep in unconcern. She must arise and tell others and if she cannot go, as some, and witness for Him, she will pray that others may hear the glad tidings. Then comes the last mark of identification.

FIVE—WAITING FOR HIM. "And Mary stood without at the sepulcher...and stooped down and looked into the sepulcher...and she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing.... Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, "Rabboni." Oh, what joy. What delight to see Him whom her soul loved, for Whom she had waited. She stuck around when all the others went to their homes. She could not leave the place where they had laid her Beloved. And she is rewarded. She sees Him before any of the others. They did not love Him as she did. And all of this is fragrant with typical truth. The Bride company is waiting for the Lord. They are not looking for a revival but
14 for Jesus to come. They have their eyes upon the skies not upon the earth, and cannot be dissuaded otherwise. He is coming! That is what occupies them. And as Mary Magdelene was rewarded with seeing Him before the others, so will this waiting company see Him **FIRST**. They will arrive at the goal—the **OUT-RESURRECTION** and win Him, the Prize—the Lord Jesus Christ as Bridegroom.

There is much today to cause us to turn our eyes away from this hope that has been set before us, which has gladdened our hearts through these many years and made us to run the race with patience, looking neither to the right hand or to the left "bearing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things" that we might be among those who should see Him first, but we cannot be tempted. There are some today like Paul who are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but are gaining momentum in the race, as they are nearing the end. They are not going to lose their crown. They are stirred to greater love for Jesus as the days go by and are watching and waiting for Him. To see Him **FIRST** is all their ambition. And they shall not be disappointed whether they wake or sleep.

(Reprint 1949)

Modifiers

Amy Copley

From a young child I was given to the extravagant use of adjectives; so much so that I either overestimated or underestimated things. My valuation of the smallest pleasure was expressed by the word wonderful. Small gifts to me were very beautiful, exquisite, elaborate, gorgeous. It seemed to take so little to make me overjoyed. Anyone who smiled at me I thought to be a dear friend; to my sorrow I learned differently. While on the other hand, anything that met my disapproval was spoken of in language accordingly. It became a trial to me as I grew older and realized that this was my characteristic.

However, no longer is there the thought of remorse that such is my tendency; for I have found the **One** whom I can eulogize in highest terms, and strongest, most powerful language, viz; Jesus Christ the Son of God: for it was this Man who wrought out for me at Calvary, eternal redemption; atoned for my sicknesses as well as my sins. **"His priesthood is unchangeable;"** hence, **"He ever liveth to make intercession for me."** I am also **"Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of redemption."** Any wonder then, that our Lord said on the cross, **"It is finished?"**

15

As the result of redemption, the Holy Spirit caused our Brother Paul to write to Ephesian saints saying, **"The riches of His grace;"** yet that is not sufficient, but he enlarges upon it by saying, **"The exceeding riches of His grace."** Now then, **"According to the riches of His glory I am strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner-man."** The riches in Christ are unsearchable; yes, unsearchable; but God has promised to reveal His Son in me and thus I may enter into my inheritance by faith. The Father wants me **"To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that I may be filled with all the fullness of God, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that I ask or think, according to the power that worketh in me."**

If this truth is worked out in me, it will result in my reigning with Christ; but I must be willing to "suffer with Him in order that I may reign with Him." So I am learning to say joyfully with Paul, "**My light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for me a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory, while I look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.**"

Unbelieving? No. I believe it and am laying hold of it. Praise God! This is why I am so unspeakably happy. I have reason to call forth all my descriptive powers with which to magnify the Son of God and "the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort" and "the Father of Glory."

Yes, I rejoice that I have been "Commended to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to **build me up, and to give me an inheritance among all** them which are sanctified." "Christ in me the hope of glory," is my overcoming life and it is for me to "grow unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

16 Oh, such truth! Powerful, endless, fathomless; yet all for me! It is by the power of the Word of God being worked out in me that I am becoming invincible, unconquerable, immovable. The praises never cease to roll forth from my heart to God that He has made me to know the truth rightly divided, and to believe and lay hold of it as I hear it. No longer do I adore the old man, but the New Man, Christ Jesus.

Of course you know of poor old Job ---
What depth of trouble he did probe:
A manly boy, by Satan's plan
He found himself a "*boily*" man:
But did he sit and rail at Fate?
No! Job was both good and great.
Moral: If you are much afflicted,
Remember your plague can be evicted!

James Brady Jr.

Grace and Mercy

Abraham: Mercy holds the knife from the heart of Isaac,
Grace provides the lamb in the thicket.

Mercy runs to forgive the prodigal son,
Grace throws a party with a robe, a ring, and a fatted
calf.

Mercy bandages up the wounds of the man beaten by the
robbers,

Grace covers the cost of his full recovery.

Mercy hears the cry of the thief on the cross,

Grace promises paradise that very day.

Mercy pays the penalty for our sin at the cross,

Grace provides the righteousness of Christ in its place.

Mercy converts Saul on the road to Damascus,

Grace calls him to the great apostle Paul.

Mercy saves John Newton from a life of debauchery,

Grace allows him to write the greatest hymn that has
ever been written.

Mercy keeps us out of hell,

Grace takes us to Heaven.

Mercy withholds from us what we deserve,

Grace gives us what we do not deserve.

Sandy Baker

17

* By lifting the burdens of others, we lose our own.

* Force is all conquering, but its victories are short-lived.

* “Do you love life? Then do not squander time, for that
is what life is made of.”

* “The Bible is an anvil which has worn out many
hammers.”

* “The Bible is the window in, this prison world, through
which we may look into eternity.”

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.” Matt. 21:9

18 **H**osanna! What a beautiful word. It means “Oh Save,” and is often used as an exclamation of adoration. It is also a term expressing entreaty, to pray, or beseech. The scene here is actually one expressing rather shallow worship. The people cut down palm branches to pay homage to Jesus, but those branches cost them nothing. Those strewing palms may be likened unto the innumerable company of Rev. 7 who “... stood before the throne, ... clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God...” V. 9-10 These would be in direct contrast to the depth of worship demonstrated by the four living ones and 24 elders who “... fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship... and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power:...” Rev. 4:10 The next chapter adds that this same group “... fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.” Rev. 5:8 These latter focus more attention on Him rather than themselves.

Hosanna is a term which can indeed be used to concentrate only on personal desire, but the truth of “Oh Save!” surely does carry a much deeper meaning for our own personal growth and experience with the Lord. David “... cried unto the LORD with my voice...” but the latter part of this verse indicates that he must have sought the Lord on His terms for “... he heard me out of his holy hill.” Furthermore, Hosanna is manifest in this portion as he cried out “Arise, O LORD, save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone...” David then adds “Salvation belongeth unto the LORD:...” a lesson that can only be learned by deep experience with Him. Psa. 3:4-8

Another experience calling forth the lessons of Hosanna is “In my **distress** I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.”

Psa. 120:1 Psalm 142 likewise shows forth this beautiful truth as we too cry out in the midst of overwhelming difficulty. "I cried unto the LORD with my voice;... I shewed before him my trouble. When my spirit was **overwhelmed within me**, then thou knewest my path.... I cried unto thee, O LORD: Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low:..." V. 1-6 Such lessons are learned only through deep trial and affliction, but these are the experiences whereby we are able to fill up those "...golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints."

Psalm 118 outlines a beautiful path whereby we come to the depths expressed by Hosanna. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." The Headship of Jesus, as He becomes the very anchor of our lives, must be a personal and individual experience. We must conclude by experience that, "This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made;... meaning this is the day when we fully surrender that headship to Him. Then comes the sequel, an open door of total liberty whereby we can cry, "Save **now**, (after He is truly my Head) I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send **now** prosperity." Psa. 118:22-25

GH

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ladies Retreat May 13-15 Carbondale, Kansas

Please contact: Linda Siecgrist at 785-862-6330 e-mail lsiecgrist@g-mail.com or June Hawkins at 816-618-3306 e-mail jghawk2@msn.com You may also register online at gracegod.com and click on "What's New."

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THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Royal V. Starr

"I am not ashamed of the gospel - of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16.

20 These are the words of the apostle Paul. The fact that he meant them is witnessed by his life and the things that he suffered for that gospel. How often we quote these words as a testimony of our own zeal for the same things that Paul stood for so firmly before all men. Does our walk and testimony prove that we are not at all ashamed of the Gospel of Christ that Paul preached? In considering this we need to think of what Paul meant by the gospel of Christ. In his last talk to the Ephesian elders he declared to them, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts 2 :27 The whole counsel of God includes far more than the forgiveness of sin. It takes in salvation in an all inclusive sense. It is the power of God unto salvation for body, soul, and spirit; for past, present, and future, yea for eternity. The salvation that Paul preached was all of grace and not of works. He recognized no merit in any man to deserve salvation, but showed all to be judged guilty before God and deserving of wrath to come. "There is none righteous, no not one." Rom. 1:10. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. Because he taught that our sinfulness and utter helplessness to become righteous gave God the opportunity to show His marvelous grace toward man, he was slanderously reported to teach that for us to do evil would magnify the grace of God. Some saints are afraid to proclaim the grace of God in its fullness lest some think that they believe in loose living since we are under grace and not under law. Paul's walk refuted all these accusations, so he was not moved by them. To the saints that might have been ill effected by such accusations, he pointed to the manner in which he had conducted himself toward all men.

Paul filled up or completed the Word of God. It was the gospel to the church which was revealed to him by the Lord Himself that completed the scripture. It is this fullness of the Good News that constituted the Gospel of Christ which Paul called "my gospel." Rom. 2:16 Here he declares that the secrets of men will be judged by Jesus Christ, according to "MY

GOSPEL." If men are to be judged by this gospel of Paul's preaching, which is the whole counsel of God, should we proclaim anything short of it?

The gospel that Paul proclaimed as the power of God unto salvation, is the power of God to save those that believe in Jesus Christ: the power of God to fill the believer with the Holy Spirit; the power of God to heal the body by the prayer of faith; the power of God to build up the believer that he might be filled with all the fullness of God, to have a full inheritance of eternal life, and be fruitful unto every good work. It is the power of God to deliver from the condemnation of sin once for all; the power to enable the believer to live above sin in this life and to walk, as Enoch of old, so that he had this testimony that he pleased God. Yes, the gospel that Paul preached was really a full gospel.

Many today advertise that they preach the full gospel, but many of them leave out half of Paul's gospel, or just relegate to the apostolic days that part of it they do not want to accept. In other words they are ashamed of part of the gospel of Christ. In order to be free of all men's blood, Paul felt indebted to preach the gospel to all men and said that he was debtor to the barbarian and to the Greek, to the wise and the unwise. In order to be blameless before God and man he was also indebted to declare all the counsel of God to the believers. He did not shun to declare it all, lest some be offended by it. Because he told them whole truth some were offended, and he wrote in II Tim 1:15, "All they that be in Asia be turned away from me." To the Church at Corinth he wrote, "Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" No, he told them the truth because he loved them. He did not withhold the word of reproof to keep on the good side of men. He gave them the Word that was able to build them up and give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

When Paul first came to the disciples at Ephesus and found that they had not heard the whole truth he said, "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" When they told him that they had not heard that the Holy Spirit had come, he asked them unto what they were baptized. When they said, "Unto John's baptism, he told them that John baptized unto repentance that they should believe on One that was to come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. They had not known that Jesus was the One they were to look for. The Holy Spirit could not come until Christ had come, had

risen, and ascended to the Father. So they did not know that the Spirit had been poured out upon the Church. When they heard that, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and when Paul had laid hands on them, they received the anointing of the Holy Spirit; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. It was the usual thing in that day when men believed and were baptized in the name of the Lord, they would receive the anointing, of (be filled with) the Holy Spirit, just as He was received on the day of Pentecost. This is in accord with Peter's statement on that day, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38 When one was saved, the next thing in order was to receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It should be the same today, but, sad to say, it is not. Some will say that it is not needful to receive The Holy Spirit in these days. It is not that they do not need Him, but that they are ashamed of that part of the full gospel. Some claim to have received the Spirit when they were saved, others say that they received Him, by faith, when they were baptized, and still others say they receive the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace. All of those claims are unscriptural and will not stand up under the study of Paul's teaching. The ones who claim to have received the Spirit when they were saved do not seem to realize that they were not eligible to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit until they were born again. "Whom the world cannot receive because it knoweth Him not." The believer does know Him. "But ye know Him for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." John 14:17 It was the Holy Spirit, Who convicted the sinner of his need and led him to repentance. It was the Spirit that wrought the work of regeneration in his heart when he was born again; therefore he knows HIM. He is then eligible to receive the gift of, or anointing, of the Holy Spirit. Those who say they received the Holy Spirit when they were baptized, without any evidence, are only fooling themselves. If they were really saved before they were baptized, they might have received the gift of the Spirit had they believed and had let Him come in, but they would have had the evidence as did the disciples at Ephesus. "When they heard, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Acts 19:6. Are you ashamed of speaking in other tongues and prophesying? If so, you are ashamed of part of the gospel and the most precious gift that

God has given to the Church, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Those who claim the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace forget that the Holy Spirit comes as a gift and not as a work. He is received not as a work done in the heart of the life of the believer, but to do a work after He is received. The disciples at Ephesus had no time to prepare themselves to receive Him in the manner that some teach. All that they did was to believe and let Him come in. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit came he would lead into all truth and show things to come. He comes into the believer to lead and to guide, to instruct and to prepare the saint for service as a true witness. He does not come as a result of perfection in the life but to give power to go on to perfection, that he might grow up in all things and become mature in Christ. He comes into the believer to bring gifts of the Spirit to be used in the ministry to which he is called that he may be enabled to minister in the power and the wisdom of God, under the unction and anointing of the Spirit. Before that is possible, He has a work to do in the saint in order to bring him to the place of dependence upon the Spirit and not upon self.

The culminating objective of Paul's gospel was that the saints should be fully prepared for the coming of the Lord. He realized that only by being fully yielded to the Spirit could they expect to be found worthy of the bridehood of Christ. His teachings explode the idea that the whole Church will be that bride. He was jealous over them with a godly jealousy. They were espoused to one Husband, that is to Christ. Upon their faithfulness to Him depended, not their salvation for that was already accomplished and assured, but their meeting the requirement of being a chaste virgin, to be presented blameless and unrepugnant to the Lord at His coming. Let us follow carefully the instructions of our pattern racer in this race and so run that we may apprehend that for which we are apprehended, of Christ Jesus.

(Reprint 1948)

* The difficulty with the sinner is not to find God, but to escape Him.

* Refrigeration is good for preserving foods and meats, but not for the saints, individually or collectively. Keep the fire on the altar burning.

* Nothing gives a Christian so much advantage over another as to remain cool and unruffled under all circumstances.

THE PROSPEROUS PATH

Lynn Bishop

“The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.” - III John 1-3

John addressed this third letter to Gaius, whose name means *“to rejoice.”* Even at the outset, the beloved apostle notes a particular detail in his description of Gaius as he calls him ‘wellbeloved.’ He does not here address a babe in Christ, but rather a mature and cherished brother. This sets the tone for this entire letter as it pertains to saints of the “high” (upward) calling. Phil. 3:14

24 John begins this small one chapter epistle, noting a foremost desire for Gaius, as well as for other brethren: that they prosper in all things and that they walk in the truth. He further declares that the good report of Gaius by the brethren was due to “... the truth that is in thee,...” and that Truth is Jesus, The Truth by which God’s people are made free. John 8:36 Truth also provides the ability to worship God as He must be worshipped: “... in spirit and in truth...” John 4:23

The second verse is often misinterpreted, and twisted, in an effort to justify the obsession of some to gain material wealth – the “prosperity gospel” – which reflects man’s tendency to pursue temporal things. God’s Word is clear in Colossians 3:2: “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” God is building in His people those things that will endure forever. He would build “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” rather than some temporal material that will burn as wood, hay and stubble!

The third verse of this chapter enlarges on the theme of walking, which means “*to make progress and to make due use of opportunity.*” There are several accounts in God’s Word which magnify this eternal prosperous walk indicating progress, and making wise use of the opportunities set before us, that we might “... press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 3:14

The word 'prosper' (or prospered, prospereth) is used only three times in the New Testament: in III John, in Romans, and in I Corinthians. The term means "*to grant a prosperous and expeditious journey, to lead by a direct and easy way; to grant a success.*" The Greek term is comprised of two words, one which means *to be well off* and another which means "*a traveled road; a course of conduct; manner of thinking, deciding.*"

Paul employs the word "prosperous" as he requested a journey that would be expedient, direct and successful, in order that he might be delivered to those that love Jesus as their first love: "Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." Rom. 1:10-12

His desire was that these saints at Rome would receive all the spiritual gifts so that they would be rooted and grounded in love and faith. He wanted to experience the mutual comfort that comes only from that beautiful togetherness which only faith can bring through the Holy Spirit. Paul would have those Roman brethren embrace these treasures, but he also wanted it for us. He was looking forward into time, knowing that many more Sons would be brought to glory – and not just any glory, but full sun glory!

Paul also wrote to the Corinthians in an endeavor to receive "... the collection for the saints,..." requesting that "... every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath **prospered** him, that there be no gatherings when I come." II Cor. 16:1-2 The apostle here insists that God has prospered them, and that these Corinthians should respond in kind being recipients of God's goodness towards them. Our God is rich in mercy, love and kindness toward us. He is a most generous Giver, considering that He gave His only begotten Son for us, who then gave His life so that the Holy Spirit would come and comfort us until we are with Him in heaven. There must a reality of sharing what God has given us in the natural as well as in the spiritual. We should not be

stingy with the resources He has provided for us, but rather show ourselves hospitable and as generous givers, all to the glory of God.

There are also marvelous examples of this “prosperous path” in the Old Testament. It is intriguing, even beyond beautiful and intimate, that the first time the actual word “prosper” occurs in scripture, is in Gen. 24 where Eliezer has been commissioned to seek a bride for Isaac. He is typical of the Holy Ghost seeking a Bride for Christ at the behest of his master Abraham, a fitting representative of The Father. Eliezer believes he has found God’s choice woman and recounts his journey. “And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father’s house...” Gen. 24:40

26 How precious that the prospering of “thy way” is the path to getting a bride for the Master’s son. The word “prosper” in this passage means *to rush, advance, succeed*. It bears the connotation of haste, and the sense of urgency in redeeming the time. We are living in the age wherein the Bride of Christ is being prepared. We must claim our life in Christ, for that is the path of the marriage proposal.

This narrative began with Eliezer standing by the well and asking for a sign indicating God’s choice in this matter. “If now thou do prosper my way...” Genesis 24:42 The answer was almost immediate as God brought Rebekah right away and she did everything exactly as the servant had petitioned God, to show him she was the one for Isaac. The servant was looking for and expecting a double portion from this maiden. He desired to see a tender heart for the needs of people, and that she would also draw water for the camels. Isn’t it beautiful, the reality of what God will do for an honest heart that is seeking Jesus as Bridegroom? He will fulfill all His Word exactly, down to the finest detail.

The word “prosper” is also used in Gen. 1:4 and is translated as “good.” “And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.” The first thing that was prosperous was The Light, and it was good and pleasing to the Father. We know that the Word is a lamp unto our feet and a

Light unto our path. Psa. 119:105 This first chapter of Genesis, records almost everything God made as being “good” or indeed “prosperous.” This present world is temporal, but the one to come will be eternal. The whole earth is full of His glory – but there is so much more to come with the new heavens and new earth. Hallelujah!

The “good land” is the prosperous land, which God promised the children of Israel in Exodus 3:8. It not only flowed with milk and honey, but also abounded with enemies, which represent the tendencies of the flesh. Israel did win many battles over their enemies, showing forth the spiritual prosperity which we may have, even in the midst of trials.

“Prosper” is also translated “goodness” in that precious Shepherd’s Psalm: “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” Psa. 23:6 How precious that the word ‘follow’ means *to pursue*. Aren’t we grateful that goodness (prosperity) and mercy actually pursue us?

God also prospered the building of His house as noted in Ezra 5:8 “Be it known unto the king, that...this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.”

God likewise prospered His prophet Haggai in this same endeavor. “And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished *it*, according to the commandment of the God of Israel...” Ezra 6:14 The Word of God is that same prophecy for us today, and it will always build people up, even to completion if we pay heed to it.

Prosperity is not a one-time event – it is a life-long journey that has a specific path in Christ Jesus. Sometimes journeys take longer than we would like. Sometimes they take us to places we don’t want to go, especially when it comes to trials. But there is always an effectual working when it comes to God’s plans and His prosperous path for us.

Prov. 4:18 speaks of the path of the just, the righteous – which we are in Christ Jesus: “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

This perfect day is the Day of the Lord, the Day of Jesus ruling and reigning with His Bride that will never end. The shining light is a splendid brightness that is always prosperous as indicated by “more and more.” It is *Christ in you, the hope of glory* that shines brighter and brighter until the fulfillment of the fullness of God. Jesus declares in John 18:12: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Jesus is the Light, which shows us the way, the path we are to take.

28 Solomon wrote of the right and prosperous path in Proverbs 4:11-12: “I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.” We must be as those Philippian racers, set on the race course to win God’s Son as Bridegroom. God promises that our steps shall not be bound or cramped and that we will run without faltering. This happens because God leads us in the right paths and prospers our journey through this life in His Son, who is made unto us “... wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” I Cor. 1:30 God has placed everything we need to win our race in our wonderful Savior and Bridegroom. We have but to apprehend Him.

Our prosperous path began at the point of conversion when we accepted Christ as our Lord and asked him to come into our heart. When He came, Truth came. The path continues throughout our life as we “... grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....” II Pet. 3:18 For those who love Christ’s appearing, the path finds its culmination in the coronation with Him in the midst of the throne in glory.

As a faithful creator, God provides the prosperous path, the right path, the path of Truth in Jesus. And as we are obedient to his Word and walk in this truthful and perfect path, we will be in health and prosper fully, in the things of eternity.

* “Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee.” Prov. 30:8-9

* “He is no fool who parts with that which he cannot keep to get what he shall not lose.”

"Out of the Mouth of Babes"

One day, I was questioned extensively by Peter, aged 6, and Michael, aged 4, on the geographical and materialistic aspects of HEAVEN, and they were thrilled to think they would one day have their "place" in a Mansion.

Now I've always made a point of splitting up my tithe and allowing them to put it in the offering on Sunday mornings, to teach them it is our privilege to give to God's work.

One Sunday morning, having only a £1 note which I intended to get changed during the day, I gave them both a penny for the offering.

Michael looked at his penny in disgust and said, "This isn't enough." I replied, "It's all the change I've got, son." The answer came quickly. "Well, a penny isn't enough for Jesus to pay the rent of that Great Big Mansion --- someone else might get it."

Author Unknown

SPEAK NO WOUNDING WORD

29

Speak no wounding word,
Life holds so many grievous things;
So many dearest joys take wings;
They leave earth's shore who loved us best.
Ah, speak no wounding word.

Speak no wounding word,
Life holds many petty ills
And there are pebbles in the rills,
Oft, fain to sigh, when we should smile;
Weary, go yet another mile:
And, speak no wounding word.

Speak no wounding word,
Haunting, hurt eyes in death may close
Before thine own. O woe of woes,
The speech unkind to call to mind,
With unavailing weeping, blind!
Ah, speak no wounding word.

ISAIAH

(Ch. 41 Concluded)

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” V. 10

30 The promise here is sevenfold as God exhorts Israel “Fear thou not...” There will be great cause for such fear during the time of their tremendous abasement, but God’s next decree is that “...I am with thee,” which will be proven beyond doubt that He is able to protect them. “Be not dismayed,” is the third assertion, and it means that they should not be “amazed or bewildered,” because “I am thy God.” He is all the provision they need. The fifth benefit is indeed a glorious reference to divine grace, for God declares that “I will strengthen thee,” and then “I will help thee.” This list of seven is completed with the promise that “I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,” meaning, once again, that Christ will be The Right Hand of their existence at that time as He truly manifests His Righteousness in them as a collective nation.

Israel’s complete dominance of the nations is next considered, for “Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.” V. 11 This is verily the decree against those nations who have vowed to destroy Israel today, and God will make the sevenfold promise, recorded above, extremely practical to them, even before their superiority over such enemies is fully realized. Israel here learns that “Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.” V. 12 The reason these enemies will not be found is because The LORD will destroy them. Matthew describes Jesus as a Shepherd when, “...before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:” Matt. 25:32 The exact language here is so very interesting for the sheep are said to be “his sheep,” while the goats are simply declared “the goats,” which, according to verse 41,

hear this scathing condemnation: "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" The reason for Israel's glorious victory over those who have vowed their destruction is because "...I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." V. 14,15 Yes indeed! This nation must experience the "humiliation" of becoming a "worm," but that experience will give way to glorious restoration as they experience the fact that "My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth." Psa.121:2 They will further know Him intimately and experimentally as "...thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

Israel will discover, as though they are searching for them, according V. 12, "thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them," that these wicked nations who sought their hurt no longer exist. Now they learn that God has used them, in great measure, to accomplish that end. "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." God will, in fact, use this tiny nation to exact His judgment on these ungodly nations. Zechariah very poetically portrays this reprisal as Judah being the bow, while Ephraim is the arrow. "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man." Zech. 9:13 The "completeness" of this devastation is further described in this analogy. "Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." V. 16 Israel will finally realize the Majesty of God, "the Holy One of Israel," when they look first-hand upon this mighty victory that God will accomplish over their enemies and know that He has actually used them to this end in the process. The following verses, however, indicate clearly that they must go through the privations of "the valley" in order to achieve these glorious heights. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for

thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.” V. 17,18 These things are a reflection of the “poor and needy” spirit of Israel, when they are shut up to God in the wilderness of the tribulation. He will come to their rescue, even “in the midst of the valleys,” and completely slake their thirst. This will be a marvelous display of their preservation, but much more is in store for them as they will now experience the unlimited blessings of the millennium.

32 “I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together:” V. 19 The planting indicates “permanency.” This is the same story told by Isaiah in Ch.35:1-2 “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.” The over-all purpose is the same as declared in our present text. “That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” V. 20 One day all nations, including Israel, will finally realize that the strong Hand of The LORD hath alone “...created it.”

“Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.” V. 21 This segment is a challenge, issued by God, for Israel to defend their idolatry. It is much like the challenge advanced by Elijah in I Kings 18 when he called on the prophets of Baal to prove “...if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him...” I Kings 18:21 Isaiah likewise says, “Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.” V. 22 In other words, “let these false gods do the same things that God, Only, is able to do in prophesying, in detail, that which is yet future. Let these gods “Shew the things

that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.” V. 22 God tells them to produce some kind of works, even evil ones, in order to prove that they are like unto Him. He then unilaterally concludes that “Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you.” V. 24 The false god is nothing, in God’s Eyes, and the one who chooses it is deemed “an abomination.” This would include all gods, be they Buddha, Baal, Allah, or any god of the Egyptians, or Amorites. None can show forth the mighty acts of the only True God.

He next proves His point by prophesying, very specifically, that which will not be fulfilled for hundreds of years. “I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.” V. 25 These next few verses are a clear prophecy of Cyrus who would one day liberate the Jews. He will be “raised up...” to “...come upon princes as upon mortar.” Thus God predicted the demise of Babylon, the first world empire, even before it came into being. “That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” Isa. 44:28 History shows clearly that Cyrus did give the Jews liberty to go back to Jerusalem after the 70 year captivity was over, and rebuild the temple. That prophecy was given about 200 years before it came to pass. Cyrus was one who indeed did “call upon my name,” and came forth as the leader of Medo-Persia, the second world empire. “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.” Ezra 1:1-2

Isaiah himself apparently speaks these next few words

as he seems to challenge the false prophets to duplicate what God has done. “Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? yea, there is none that sheweth, yea, there is none that declareth, yea, there is none that heareth your words.” V. 26 The prophet concludes that none of these “prognosticators” has the ability to predict such things. These can declare nothing “from the beginning,” and therefore we could in no wise say that “He is righteous.” Therefore, “there is none that heareth your words.” However, God is on record as “The first...,” a direct reference to V. 4 as the One “Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations **from the beginning**? I the LORD, **the first**, and with the last; I am he.” He is indeed The First that “...shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.” V. 27 The word “them” is undoubtedly a reference to Cyrus and his armies whom Zion would “behold,” and who would be directly responsible for the freedom of the Jews. This man did most assuredly bring “good tidings,” to
34 Jerusalem, and according to these prophecies, he was specifically chosen by God to do so.

The closing verses of this chapter could have been spoken either by God or Isaiah. “For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.” V. 28-29 God put these counselors on the defensive in v. 21-24, but as noted in verse 26-27, Isaiah followed the same path as Elijah, when the latter demanded answers of the prophets of Baal. I Kings 18:27 Thus, regardless of who uttered these closing and rather scathing words, none can even come near to accomplishing what only God can do. “...their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.”



* When an offering was asked for a missionary, one man said, “I can give \$10 and not feel it.” A friend standing by said, “Give another \$10 and feel it.”



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The Lord
Jehovah is my
strength and my
song; he also is be-
come my salvation.

ISAIAH 12:2

