

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole counsel of GOD

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'Loving His Appearing

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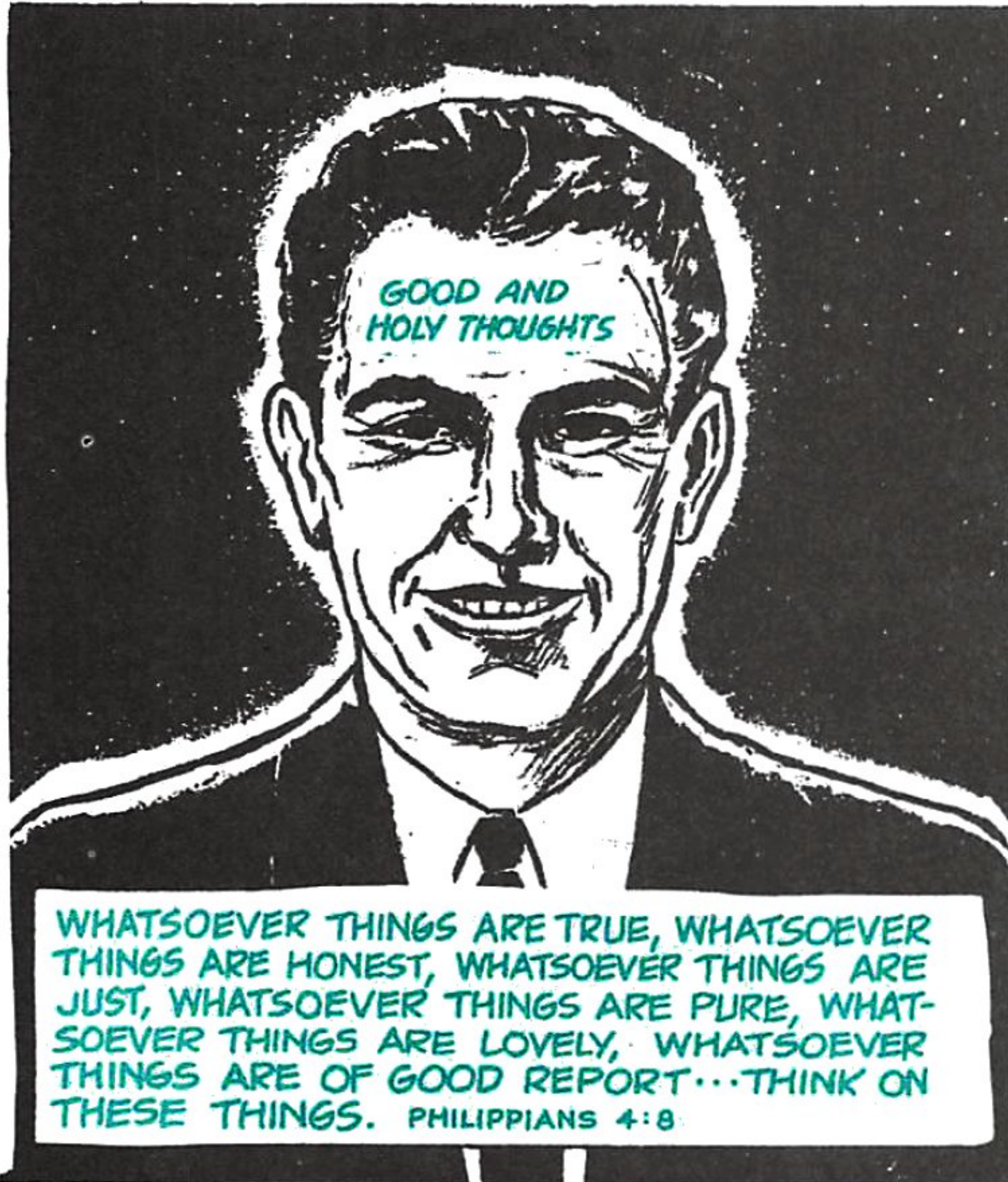


For wisdom is
better than
rubies; and all
the things that
may be desired
are not to be
compared to it.
Prov. 8:11

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HOW TO AVOID EVIL THOUGHTS



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Editor: Gene Hawkins



By Gene Hawkins

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. Dan. 8:23-25

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come....Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further:...” II Tim. 3:1,8-9

The above texts, written by two different writers thousands of years apart, proclaim the same message. Perilous, dangerous, ungodly, times of rebellion and unbelief will come to the fore in the last or latter days, but there will also come the day when such times will be totally consummated. It will be a time “...when the transgressors are come to the full,” when ungodly reprobate men “... shall proceed no further,...” meaning that such transgression will reach a pinnacle and then be destroyed.

We have many times heard the question uttered, “How long till Jesus comes and puts a stop to the horrendous and ungodly acts which seemingly come to pass daily in this present evil age?” Many down through the ages have asked, “How long...” in regard to a number of different issues. It is asked previously in Daniel 8 as the prophet “... heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, **How long** shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” V. 13 A very specific pin-point answer is then revealed to Daniel. “And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred

days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” The interpretation asserts that from the time the daily sacrifice is taken away by the false prophet, exactly 2300 days will transpire until the antichrist is dethroned and the temple restored.

Isaiah likewise asked the question “...**Lord how long?**” Isa. 6:11 This query came forth after he saw “... the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,... Isa. 6:1 Verse 9 of this same chapter informs us that God needed a “preacher,” and Isaiah “volunteered” to “... Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; ...lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,... Then said I, Lord, how long?...” V. 9-11 In other words, “how long am I to proclaim this message to a rebellious and gainsaying people? The answer comes immediately: “...Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.” V. 11-12 This prophecy had a local fulfillment which fully came to pass when Judah was taken captive by Babylon and the entire land lay desolate. However, Isaiah’s vision wherein he saw “...
4 the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,...” is a direct prophecy of the end time when Jesus will be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. Israel will still be the center of attention at that time, and Isaiah is representative of a very small remnant out of that nation who will most assuredly preach to a nation that has largely rejected the Messiah and must be completely forsaken and left alone in order to bring them to repentance.

There is a pattern set forth in all these examples, meaning that ungodliness absolutely must prevail and reach a great crescendo before Jesus comes to judge the antichrist and put a stop to all this wickedness. Paul tried to comfort, exhort, and warn the Thessalonian saints with these words. “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 Some of our day are perhaps unwitting deceivers as they try to publish a message of “revival” across this nation and around the world. Some have tried desperately to proclaim the message found in II Chron. 7:14. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face,

and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” According to all the texts above, there will be no revival or healing of any land until ungodliness, which is also termed the “mystery of iniquity” later in this chapter, has run its course. Some might think that since the “...falling away....” is here, then a revival could not be far behind, but the apostle is very clear that the falling away will culminate **only** when the man of sin, or the antichrist is fully revealed, and that will not occur until the middle of the tribulation week with “...the overspreading of abominations...” Dan. 9:27 Both Daniel and Paul describe the same scenario, for Daniel also portrays this same man of sin as “...a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences,...” meaning that a “superman” shall arise who apparently has all the answers to the many unsolved mysteries surrounding the world’s problems today. It is he who “... shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power:....,” the reason being that he shall rule by the very power of Satan who has raised him out of the bottomless pit. Rev. 9:1 & 17:8 He is a man of absolute destruction for “... he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, (bruise, fight, govern) and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.... he shall cause craft to prosper... and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” Dan. 8:24-25

5

The **spirit** of antichrist has been very manifest in this world since the beginning of this Church Age. Paul tells us in this same chapter of II Thess. that “... the mystery of iniquity doth already work:...” V. 7 John likewise declares: “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist,... and even now (at the time then present) already is it in the world.” I John 4:3 Such a spirit has grown increasingly stronger as this world speeds into the days of tribulation. The very first sign marking the era known as the “...beginning of sorrows...” is that, “... many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Matt. 24:5 That is the very spirit of antichrist which will culminate when the man of sin, “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above

all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." II Thess. 2:4

This man of sin and all his mystery of iniquity will ultimately be destroyed, but in the mean time, men decry the perilous times of our day, often offering their own solutions as to how it may be stopped. It is imperative that God's people understand, these events **will not cease** until the "...transgressors are come to the full,..." and the man of sin is permanently eliminated or, as set forth in the above text, he "... shall be broken without hand," (destroyed by Supernatural Power after he rises up in direct confrontation against Jesus,) "...the Prince of princes;..."

6 Thus the perilous times of which Paul warned will not only continue, they will rapidly increase, and they are legion. There are no less than 24 major characteristics which define the fierce and furious times listed in the aforementioned chapter of the apostle's second letter to Timothy. That list begins with the fact that "... men shall be lovers of their own selves..." It could well be said that the rest of this long list is the direct result of that factor. Men of our day are most assuredly self-centered and self-absorbed, insisting simply on their own agenda and uncontrolled appetites, having absolutely no interest or care for those around them. There can be no doubt that we have reached the same climate manifested in the days of Noah when, "... GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**" Gen. 6:5 That evil surely sprang forth in the recent school shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in S. Florida. An advocacy group known as "Everytown for Gun Safety" highlights 18 cases of gunfire at US schools so far this year. This report declares that "In eight of the 17 school shootings recorded by Everytown prior to Wednesday, (the Douglas Stoneman High shooting) a gun was fired but no one was injured." The sound of shots in S. Florida had barely died away when congressmen in Washington hit the floor demanding tougher gun control laws. But politicians and their gun control laws will never contain the wicked hearts of men any more than all their attempts to stop so-called man-made "global warming" will lower the earth's temperature prophesied

by God's Word for this end time tribulation period. God has said it so very well in the passage quoted above which describes the days of Noah in which we now live. The problem is with men, wherein "...every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." We heard a very sobering reality which was summarized so well on a recent newscast in regard to gun control which stated that, "Even if all gun sales were stopped immediately, the gun for next school shooting or any other mass murder is already in the hands of such a perpetrator." Once again, the problem is in the hearts of men and such imaginations will never be stopped or even controlled by legislation! According to Paul's warnings, loveless men are indeed "without affection... incontinent..."(out of control,) "...fierce, despisers of those that are good...." Solomon also had a few choice and wise words for leaders of our day in regard to the wicked hearts of men: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore **the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**" Eccl. 8:11 The fact of our day is that wicked men often see no punishment because a sentence is in no wise executed speedily, often taking years before one is held to account for his evil deeds. It is also no accident that we see schools as being the target of such violence today for men made it clear many years ago that they wanted neither God nor prayer in their domain, and thus both were unceremoniously cast out with disdain. Paul spoke of such actions and their consequences when he wrote to the Romans. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," Rom. 1:22 Furthermore he proclaimed in this same chapter the consequence of denying the very existence of God. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;" (becoming or fit) V. 28 That reprobate mind is clearly evident in the horrendous acts which are manifest in the violent outbursts of men throughout this entire world. Indeed the thoughts of man are only evil continually.

While so much of this world, even in the "religious sense" is contemplating how to stop or even reverse the effects of such an onslaught, Paul instructs those who would be wise in these closing days of the Church Age to know full well that the onslaught of evil

will most assuredly become even more dominant as time goes on. Yes indeed the antichrist will come, and we are persuaded that he is already in this world and he knows exactly what his mission is. The spirit of antichrist will not be stopped for Paul does tell us plainly that, "...the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hinders) will let, (hinder) until he be taken out of the way." II Thess. 2:7 The best we can do is to hinder that ungodly spirit, for "...he who now letteth..." is a reference to faithful men of God who will stand up and let their lights shine in this dreadful world of darkness. It is no accident that this world is becoming darker and darker, for many lights have already been "...taken out of the way" in death, and their lights have not been replaced by the younger generation. Thus the forces of evil are gaining ground, and greater darkness, even the darkness that can surely be felt, is descending rapidly upon this earth.

8 Paul painted a rather bleak picture when he warned his son Timothy of the perilous times which must descend upon mankind, but he also offered wise and powerful counsel for all who would step up to the plate and take their own places as those who would hinder until they too be taken out of the way, whether by way of the grave or by translation. "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" II Tim. 3:10-14 This is simply another example of Paul's instruction, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." I Cor. 11:1 It is a glorious part of the "... mystery of godliness..." which the apostle outlines in I Tim. 3:16, and is in direct contrast to the mystery of iniquity noted above. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Simply stated, this mystery means that Christ came into this world as God, where

He was "...made flesh and dwelt among us..." John 1:14 He was "...justified in spirit..." when God raised Him from the dead and He was "...seen of angels..." He has since been "...preached into the Gentiles..." meaning that some of us are most assuredly among those who have believed on Him "...in the world..." The fact that He was "...received up into glory," is proof, not only that He was Who He claimed to be, The Son of God, but He has also entered heaven for us. Paul exhorted Timothy to adopt the same manner of life which he had practiced, and to fully embrace the doctrine he had so faithfully preached, even in the midst of the horrendous times of unbelief, persecution, and ungodliness of which he had vehemently warned his son in the faith. We too must heed that same glorious message even as we may cry "how long" will it be until we are delivered? Most of us probably do not understand why we are still here, but Peter may give us a bit of insight into that question as he refers to those "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." I Pet. 3:20 Those who 9
"...sometime were disobedient..." is a reference to ungodly men in the days before the flood who did not believe the preaching of Noah that judgment was coming upon the earth. However it is quite apparent from V. 19 of this same chapter that they are among "...the spirits in prison..." to whom Jesus went after His Spirit left His earthly body as it hung on the cross of Calvary. His destination was upper sheol, the abode of the righteous dead, and His message had to have been deliverance, for Paul, quoting from Psa. 68 declares, "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8 Jesus went to upper sheol, which was also called "paradise" and was located in the heart of the earth. He then opened that prison and took those captives back to heaven with Him. Those who had not heeded the message of Noah finally did realize he was preaching truth when the judgments of the flood began to fall, and thus even though it was too late for their physical lives to be preserved in the ark, they did escape eternal damnation, and their spirits went to upper sheol rather than being cast into lowest hell, the abode of the wicked dead. We may be greatly disappointed

by the lack of response we see today as we live our lives walking in the light trying desperately to inform men of the way of Light during these days of horrendous darkness, but let us understand that some of those may indeed believe that message when the judgments of the tribulation are poured out.

So let us heed Paul's admonition to the Thessalonians. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 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. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation (from the tribulation) by our Lord Jesus Christ," I Thess. 5:4-9

The Superior Way

10

Thru toiling and watching,
Your days not all bright;
The Savior is guarding
Your heaven-ward flight.

Tho' pathway be difficult
And stony the road,
Keep patient and yielded,
He'll carry your load.

Tho' eyes may be straining
The clear light to see,
Keep looking to Jesus,
Clear vision for thee.

He'll guide you till upward
Translation is given;
Then thru-out the ages
You'll praise Him in Heaven

Rilda Delano

"EL SHADAI"
God, He Is Sufficient
George Meyer

"And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord:

And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of—EL SHADAI—God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." Ex. 6:2-3.

GOD AND HIS DIVINE NAME. The Divine name by which God discovered Himself to the holy patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is, according to the Hebrew version in the Hebrew Bible, "El Shadai." God, He is Sufficient. He discovered Himself to Moses as the "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh"—"I Am that I Am," Ex. 3:14. He is Self Existent, the Creator and not a creation. "His Glory is above heaven and earth." "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee." "He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." Every object that consists of matter and has a form has also a name. God, He is a Spirit, an Essence, and consists not of matter, and has no form, or Name that sufficiently describes Him. His Essence is incomprehensible to the human mind. He discovered Himself in the Holy Scriptures to men by His different Divine attributes of His Character, called in the human language, Names.

"El Shadai." -- He is Manifest in the Infinite Splendor of His Creation. When we behold the wonderful works of God in the Structure and government of the world, we must exclaim in the words of the Psalmist, "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works, which Thou has done they cannot be reckoned up in order if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered"—Psa. 40:5. Everything that He has created, has been Made by Him sufficiently Wonderful, to such magnitudes, and extents, and positions, and strength, and volumes, and effects, and speeds, and times, and colors, and beauty, and relation to each other, that the innumerable hosts, systems, species that functions in the universe, have need of each other, respond, cooperate and produce concord and harmony. "Thou hast set all the borders of the earth. Thou hast made summer and winter."-Psa. 74:17. "The morning stars sang together"-Job 38:7. "O, Lord, how manifold are Thy

Works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all." Psa. 104:24.

"El Shadai" discovered Himself through His Word. His true wisdom, solid strength, and Divine Justice-exercising a merciful forbearance ; His perfect goodness, infinite grace and truth, and unspotted righteousness; and the miserable condition of our ignorance, vanity, infirmity, poverty, depravity and corruption, are by Him, sufficiently declared in His Word, sufficiently made clear to the understanding capacity of the human mind, sufficiently expressed in plain human language, in the Holy Scriptures. For how else can the dullness of the human mind have attained or attain the knowledge of the will of God and His perfections, and the knowledge of ourselves, of our imperfections; and that man's salvation from sins and death eternal to "Newness of life" and life everlasting, is attained not by good works, because in the sight of God "All our righteousness are as filthy rags"- Isa. 64:6, but by the grace and mercy of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, through faith "For there is One God and One Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus: Who gave Himself a ransom for all." I Tim. 2:5,6. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"-Eph. 2:8.

12

"EL SHADAI" manifested His will to men often through angels in the form of men. He manifested His heavenly will through such messengers and messages that were sufficiently understood by the dullness of the human mind. "When God, "El Shadai", discovered Himself to Abraham, at "Mamre," He came down to him in the form of three men, the Trinity, Jehovah Himself. Gen. 18:1,2. When God, "El Shadai" discovered Himself at "Moriah" and saved Isaac from being sacrificed on the altar of fire under the knife of his father Abraham, it was the voice of the Angel of the Lord that spoke-Gen. 22:1-18. When God, "El Shadai", discovered Himself to Jacob at "Jabbok," He came down in the form of a man, who wrestled with Jacob till morning, and told him, "Thy name shall not be called Jacob, but Israel, for if thou hast been strong against God, how much more shalt thou prevail against men, and He blessed him at the same place. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying: I have seen God face to face, and my soul hath been saved"- Gen. 32:24-30. That Angel of God in the form of a man was the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, the Second Person in the Trinity of God.

He discovered Himself also in the Old Testament.

"EL SHADAI." He "was Manifest in the Flesh" in the Person of Christ. Before the Messiah, the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, was born at Bethlehem in Judea at the time of the second Temple, He was the Word of God through whom God discovered Himself in the Holy Scriptures. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we behold His glory, the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth"-John 1:1-14. At the creation of man, it was to the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"-Gen. 1:26. And it was of Him that the prophet in Israel prophesied, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel ; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"—Micah 5:2. "Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God"—Psa. 90:2. "Great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the flesh"—I Tim. 3:6. The "El Shadai" has manifest His eternal essence in the Divine Soul of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, His Soul was not a creation created by the power of God, as the ordinary men's soul, but consisted of the perfect Divine essence, the same incomprehensible essence as that of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. 13

"EL SHADAI." He was Manifest in the Messiah in the Form of Man Because the Sinful Eye of Man May not see the Glory of God. The reason that God discovered Himself in the Holy Scriptures through the Word, and through angels who appeared also in the form of men, and "Was manifest in the flesh" in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah, is because of man's disobedience or transgression to God's Word, which is sin—I John 3 :4. And since the fall of the first man, Adam, the vail of separation was between man and God. Adam by his disobedience to God's Word had sinned against God, and the Divine image in him was obliterated, and he was punished with the loss of every Divine virtue and dignity with which he had been adorned at his creation by the Creator. His alienation from God

by His sin was the ruin and death of his soul ; and he was plunged into ignorance, darkness, fear, depravity, misery, helplessness, and corruption. "And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, where art thou?"—Gen. 3:8,9. And so, by the sin of Adam, sin and death have passed upon all his posterity. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"—Rom. 5 :12. All men that come into the world are born in sin. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me"—Psa. 51 :5. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that He cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that He cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isa. 59:1,2 Of Moses, the great leader of Israel, it is written, "And there arose no more a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face." Deut. 34 :10 Jehovah knew the face of Moses, but Moses, a man that sinned, could not see the glorious face of Jehovah. Moses asked of
14 God, "Shew me Thy glory. And He said, thou canst not see My face ; for man shall not see My face and live." Ex. 33:18,20

But "EL SHADAI" in His infinite goodness and mercy, in order to save men from sins and death eternal to life everlasting, has sent "The Angel of His presence" -- Isa. 63:9, the Saviour, Jesus of Nazareth. He, the Messiah, is the Divine Fountain of all Sufficiency, of every grace and mercy, sufficient to enlighten man's darkness, to regenerate the soul, and reconcile men to God from sin and death eternal to life everlasting, by the merit of His obedience and life which He sacrificed on Calvary. "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My Strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5:19

* You cannot sit comfortably in an easy chair with the whole armor of God on.

* "Many folk are on Salvation's train, but some are in the sleeper."

* "If we could have no ambition past the will of God our lives would be successful."

Reach Out and Touch Someone

Dr. Vicky Moots

The sense of touch in our body is very important and I am going to use it to illustrate a spiritual lesson. Touch gives us direct contact with our environment. Babies, animals and all humans will die without touch. Animals have an instinct to lick their young. Babies must be held to thrive. Sensory nerve fibers are contained in skin. Your skin is the largest organ in your body. It weighs approximately 6# and measures about 2 square yards – larger in some people.

There are 1,000 to 9,000 sensory nerves per square inch of skin depending on the location in the body for obvious reasons; less on your back, more concentrated on your fingertips, lips and the genital region and the bottom of feet.

These nerve endings enable us to feel things such as pleasurable touch, tickle, massage, holding hands, kissing. However, they also allow us to feel pain which warns us if something is too hot or sharp so we quickly pull away to protect ourselves. The nerve endings rapidly carry the impulses to the brain so that we may react appropriately.

Humans have a strong desire to touch. Children always want to touch things and parents spend a lot of time trying to teach them, “Don’t touch.” Adults have the same desire. What happens if you see a sign that says, “Wet paint – don’t touch”? Eve, in the Garden of Eden, apparently had a desire to touch the forbidden fruit and yielded to the temptation of Satan.

You must have skin in order to have the sense of touch. God was untouchable before Christ came into the world. Jesus took upon himself a body of flesh in order to have skin so that we could touch Him and so He could feel our touch and feel our pain.

Hebrews 4:15 tells us He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. This is possible because His earthly body had pain receptors in the skin, just as we do, which enabled Him to feel our pain.

He physically experienced the greatest intensity of pain known to man when He was crucified. In fact, we measure all other pain in comparison to the pain of crucifixion. We call severe pain “excruciating”, which literally means “out of the cross or crucifixion.”

If you are experiencing pain at this moment, physically,

spiritually, or emotionally, you can be assured, according to the scripture, that Jesus has experienced as much or more and that, He understands and cares.

Under the Law, when Moses went up to Mount Sinai, no man or beast was allowed to touch the mountain or it would die (Heb 12:20). The Law says “touch not, taste not, handle not”. Grace says, “Reach out and touch the Lord.”

The Tabernacle in the wilderness was covered by skins of animals and it was God’s dwelling place on the earth. It represented Christ who became a man (flesh), covered with skin. John 1:14 the word became flesh and dwelt or “tabernacled” among us. That Word was Jesus Himself, born to a virgin. He was God veiled in a body of flesh so he could walk among men and bring God’s presence to us (Emmanuel – God with us).

John 20:25-28 relates the story of how Doubting Thomas insisted that he must touch Jesus’ scars before he would believe that He was risen from the dead. When Jesus appeared to him He invited him to do just that. Jesus is still inviting us to reach out and touch Him today. He says, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

16

Dr Luke, the physician who wrote the Gospel of Luke relates the stories of 2 women in particular who reached out and touched Jesus, indicating that He understood the importance of touch. Both women were unclean according to the Law, but were unclean only until they touched Jesus.

Luke 7:36-39 tells the story of a woman which was a sinner who went into the Pharisee’s house where Jesus was. She began weeping and washing Jesus’ feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment. The Pharisee was repulsed by the fact that Jesus was allowing her to touch Him. But Jesus received pleasure from this act of love and kindness because He knew her heart. He told her, “Thy sins are forgiven,” “Thy faith hath saved thee.” No specific sin was mentioned in order that this woman could represent all repentant sinners who come to the feet of Jesus, “For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God;” Rom 3:23

In the 2nd story, Luke 8:43-46, Luke relates the incident of a woman which had an issue of blood for 12 years and had spent all of her money on physicians and could not be healed. This woman, according to the Mosaic Law, was also unclean due to her bloody discharge. Desperately she crawled through the

crowd struggling to get close enough to Jesus to touch Him. As soon as she touched the border of His garment she was healed, and Jesus said, "Who touched me?" "Many people were thronging Jesus, pushing and shoving Him, but only one person touched Him in faith and received from Him. Not a word was spoken, just a gentle contact and a life was changed.

What about our lives? Do we really touch Jesus or do we just go to Church and "bump" into Him? If we touch Him in faith, our lives will be changed and we are cleansed. Then we can reach out and touch others through the life of Christ in us.

Lastly, Jesus is not only touched by our infirmities and our needs, but He is also touched by our love and wants us to embrace Him.

The Song of Solomon presents a beautiful picture of Christ wooing us to be His Bride. His desire is that we would love Him above all else.

Some examples of this kind of love are Song of Solomon 2:6 "His left Hand is under my head and His right hand doth embrace me." He wants us to return that embrace as in Song of Solomon 3:4 "I found Him Who my soul loveth. I held him and would not let him go."

17

Song of Solomon 5:16. "His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely." She knew him intimately.

Song of Solomon 1:2. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." Kissing is a pleasurable touching expression of love. He kisses us with the Word as we read it and let the Holy Spirit touch our hearts. We kiss Him back with our praise and our love and submission to His will in our lives.

Paul's desire, found in Philippians 3, was to lay hold of (apprehend or embrace) Christ and be apprehended of Him just like the Shulamite woman in Song of Solomon. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." V. 12-14

Let us also reach out and touch Him in faith and love and embrace Him and the Word of God, and our lives will be changed.

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

...From the Editor

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.” Psa. 4:8

18 These are surely words of encouragement and comfort for our day, but they must also be put into context with our experience as we guard against the passive Laodicean condition which prevails around the globe in the end of this Church Age. It is imperative that we find our true rest in Christ, as the enemy battles to destroy us, but we cannot allow our senses to be dulled into a false sleep and security like unto that which is expressed in the Church at Laodicea, as they asserted, “...I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;...” Rev. 3:17 Jesus’ disciples also found a place of rest and sleep while He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to His arrest, and after the third time of returning and finding them asleep, He “... cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, **Sleep on now, and take your rest:...**” Matt. 26:45 That was a time of crisis even as that with which we are confronted today, and Jesus most assuredly spoke in irony for He quickly exhorted “Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.” V. 46

Paul likewise conveyed the same strong admonition to us in these end time days, as we too need to be in crisis mode. “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” I Thess. 5:6 The little word “therefore” is a reference to the previous six verses of this chapter where Paul points out that these Thessalonian saints were filled with the light and knowledge of Jesus’ soon return. They knew perfectly “...the times and the seasons, . . . that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” They knew that a day of “...Peace and safety...” was a myth and destruction would soon ensue. They knew they were “...not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a

thief,” and that they had taken their place as “...children of light, and the children of the day:...” “Therefore...” Paul exhorts this special elite group: “...let us not sleep as do others...” Some may think “others” are a reference to sinners, but that cannot be, for sinners do not sleep. They are rather “...dead in trespasses and sins;” Eph. 2:1 Only Christians sleep, and we must not allow the indifferent attitudes of well-meaning believers or the conditions of our day to influence us into a state of heaviness and sleep and passivity.

Luke also records the scene in Gethsemane, but he adds that the disciples had succumbed to the very human weakness of “...sleeping for sorrow.” Lk. 22:45 Let us be warned! We are living in the era which Jesus defined as “...the beginning of sorrows.” Matt. 24:8 During such a time of crisis, and there are many such crises and sorrows facing God’s people today, we absolutely must not allow our eyes to be so heavy like unto those of the disciples, that we should give in, to devastating albeit troubled sleep. We too must “Rise up, and let us be going:...” We too must actively pursue the goal set before even though the path may be rather fearful and arduous at times. Paul also declared that we cannot just try to ward off sleep, but rather we must be actively engaged, fully aware of the environment around us for we are strongly urged to “...watch and be sober.” This is the same word which Jesus used when He asked Peter, “...What, could ye not watch with me one hour?” Matt. 26:40 Beloved our own “hour” has come and we must also watch or be extremely “vigilant, awake, and active” in resting in the promises of His Word, but also keenly aware and anticipating daily that “... yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Heb. 10:37

19

* The Bible is never criticized by those who daily read it.

* “It was not enough for the Omnipotent God of Wisdom to create the universe. He had to make man to show it to them.” Eph. 1:15-19; Eph. 2:4-7.

Looking Unto Jesus Race Course Runner!

Ray Quintana

“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isa. 40:31

We can have no confidence in the flesh, but must rather count all things but dung that we might win Christ. Then run with patience. Hindrances will arise, Satan will stop you if possible, and men will try to detain you. There will be many discouragements on the journey, endeavoring to weaken us. If Satan cannot win by flatteries, he will try discouragement.

20 David informs us in Psa. 27 that, “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.” V. 13-14 He says it twice. “Wait on the Lord.” The meaning of the word wait is that of twisting, a cord, or a measuring line. A three-fold cord is not quickly broken. There are many three’s throughout scripture. As faith cannot live alone, it must have its two children love and hope with it continually. The gold of divinity, the silver of redemption and precious stones are turned into living stones along the journey.

Thus, we must encourage ourselves with the freeness of the promises, the tender-heartedness of our loving Savior, the merits of His blood, the freeness of His invitation to come, the greatness of the pardoned sin, and the wonders of His grace. Meditate on these and the heaviness will lift, and take heart in your journey and say to them that seek your destruction, “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.” Mic. 7:8

Then the questions may be asked, “How should we run? What direction are we running?” Paul said, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” I Cor. 11:1 Paul’s message is what will keep us on the path for the crown. This chief apostle to the Church said, “...I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, (Gospel of Grace) to the end ye may be established.” (to set fast, i.e. (literally) to turn resolutely in a certain direction). Rom. 1:11

By the grace of God, we are to Progress; forgetting those

things which are behind, and stretching forward to those things, which are before. I press on with earnestness; The Christian life is one of strenuous effort. It is a course of faith, obedience, love and patience. It is also a path of concentration; One thing I do. The runner must have his eye on the goal and all else out of view; wholeheartedly he bends his whole strength to this single effort for the prize. Endurance must also come to the fore. Let us run with patience, for the Christian life is not soon over. The cross must be borne to the end. By the Grace of God we must persevere. The racer cannot just run anywhere, but he must pursue the course marked out for him. So in the Christian life the race is set before us. It is marked out by the Word of God. It begins at conversion, and then we take our place on the racecourse having our names proclaimed by the Herald. As the Herald, Jesus said in John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:" Are we hearing God's Word today? We have been given the charge to follow Paul as he followed Christ. I Cor. 11:1 We are further instructed: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ **according to my gospel.**" Rom. 2:16 Paul, as the herald for this age through the Gospel given to him by Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Ghost, is proclaiming that we run this race to win Christ. This chief apostle is actually cheering us on, exclaiming in I Cor. 9:24, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?..." He then emphasizes, "... So run, that ye may obtain." It means that we must put some effort into it. We are not to run a little now and then, by fits and starts, but to run through the difficulties, and continue to the end of the race, which must be to the end of this life. In another place this running is defined as a continuing process in the way of life. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." Col 1:23

Paul tells us in Phil. 3:14 that, "I press toward the mark,..." which signifies that those who will have God's best must, by the Grace of God, press through the difficulties and thrust through all that may stand in the way of overcoming.

Hebrews 12:1 informs us that "...we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses..." All these witnesses have the same story to tell, not like the spectators who cheer for one side or the other. Witnesses to faith, not just a cloud, but a great

cloud focused on one purpose. Faith is their substance. They finished their course and went through trials. Hebrews 11:36-37 proclaims the fact that there were those who endured "...cruel mocking...scourgings,...bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned,...sawn asunder,...tempted,...slain with the sword: ...wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;" All of them came out of weakness and were made strong; for God is pleased to employ weak things to confound the mighty. Faith in God's abounding grace, exercised by the helpless and dependent, accomplishes much. Our Lord Jesus is at the Head, in the long procession of the heroes of faith. He is the leader and in Him faith appears in full and perfected Glory, with tier upon tier of experience bringing forth both the glory and adverse sides of the racecourse. The cloud was large at the time of this writing. It is immensely larger now, shining bright then, but what a heart of light now radiating its truth and encouragement for all who have eyes to see.

22 Then there is the value of the crown. It is not a material crown like the wreath of fading leaves. It is a crown of Righteousness. It blooms perennially in the atmosphere of heaven. It is the Crown of Life. If you watch men and women today; how vain are the rewards of earthly ambition and the very costly price they often pay for their success. They surrender that which is far more precious than the thing they gain. But the heavenly racer is the opposite. "Though a man strive for the mastery," says Paul, "yet he is not crowned, unless he strive lawfully." II Tim. 2:5 If we do not overcome, or win the prize, what will be the better for our running?

The athletes themselves had to undergo severe discipline, under the guidance of a skillful trainer. They had to endure many hardships. We know this life is a contest with enemies. We have a Trinity for us, but there is also one against us: the world, the flesh, and the devil. We not only run but we fight, we stand and withstand, and stand again. We must be wholehearted. The halfhearted do not go far from the starting point. But, we must always remember, without the Grace of God we cannot run.

Then our answer lies in looking unto Jesus; we look to the giver of the crown, Christ Himself, who suffered, and overcame. On His head are many crowns. He counts the crowns of His people as His Own. To be a wearer of the crown, we

must share the strife and bear the cross of the Lord Jesus. The crown of thorns comes before the crown of victory.

Looking unto Jesus, for it is His pleasure that we win. Feed from The Shepherd's Hand, climb into his arms, and He will carry you in His bosom, and shall gently lead you on. He ran before us enduring the cross. So run that you may obtain. His faith starts us and takes us through. Looking unto Jesus; we can meditate on the things of yesterday, the love and the mercies of our sweet Savior. When we are low, it is well to sing of the fountainhead of mercy, and of our glorious Lord, Christ Jesus, who undertook our redemption. If we could go back to the years of eternity, where the hills were fashioned, or the fountains of the great deep were scooped out, and if we could see our Lord inscribing our name in His eternal book; if we could see in His loving heart, those eternal thoughts of love for us. Yes we can think of yesterday, But if you may not be tuned so high as to yesterday, sing of the mercies that you have experienced.

It was a little while ago, of the hour when Jesus met thee; when a blind slave sporting with death He saw thee, and said, "Come poor slave, come with me." Can you not sing of the rapturous moment when He snapped you from the fetters? He dashed the chains to the earth and set you free. Can we never forget that happy morning, when in the house of God our voice was loud with praise, "I am forgiven, I am forgiven."

Beloved, "It is the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed and because His compassions fail not." Lam. 3:22 If we cannot sing very loud, yet sing something like this, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Psa. 103:10 The child of God acknowledges that he has no right to the least of God's mercies, but that they come through the channel of grace alone. As long as I am out of hell, I have no right to grumble. I should have no right to complain, for I feel, when convinced of sin, that there is no one more deserving to go there than I. However dark the night is, there is always a star or the moon. There is never a night when there is at least one lamp burning up there. But beloved, there is another thing of which to sing yet more sweetly; and that is, we can sing of the day that is to come.

As we gaze upon Jesus Christ in fellowship deep, we know that He is near our side running with us and stirring us on.

We can cheer ourselves with the thought of the coming of the Lord. Thy head may be crowned with thorny troubles now, but it shall wear a starry crown directly; thy hand may be filled with cares, but soon it will grasp a harp full of music. Let us go on, if the night be ever so dark, remember there is not a night that shall not have a morning, and that morning is soon to come.

Then, the chastening of the Lord strengthens our run. It makes us overcomers by the very trial in the way. When the journey seems so long and the possibility of fainting arises, it is simply the New Life within you growing and increasing in strength.

Looking unto Jesus; lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees. Discouragement can be the cruelest of tests. Let us cry out upon our knees in prayer for the weary racers.

O Beloved, Have you ever stood at the window in the night and listened? Listened to what? The silence, or maybe imagined the harp of God playing in the heavens. Have you thought of the stars and the eyes of God looking down on you? Can you hear the chant of praises which are loud to the heart? Can you hear that great cloud of witnesses cheering us on. “Run that you may obtain!”

Let us say with the Apostle Paul, “Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Can you hear the Apostle Paul say, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.”

The Book of the ages,
With spiritual power,
Is the Book called the Bible,
The Book of the hour!
Exhaustless its treasure,
Eternal its store.
All the best of the others,
You'll find there - and more!

Anon

Provision And Practice

James H. Andrews

“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
II Tim. 2:22

Doubtless the ultimate goal of Christianity is GOD HIMSELF, and hastens to that end, like some turbulent stream, eager to be lost in the great oceans, that the grand consummation of the Redemptive work of Christ shall be, “God, ALL IN ALL, IN us all, THROUGH all, and OVER ALL.” I Cor. 8:6-15; 27-28.

Having now fled to Christ as our city of refuge from the avengers of blood, the Law and Commandments — Heb. 6:18; Isa. 25:4, we have a sure hope, as the anchor of the soul. Let us then, as true children of God, walk worthy of our vocation — Eph. 4:1. Seeing we have such a high and holy calling of God in Christ Jesus, let us press on towards this mark and prize in God. Phil. 3:14.

Since the Blood of Jesus Christ has BLOTTED OUT ALL our sins, never to be remembered against us, we now stand in God’s presence clean and holy, for “Ye are clean through the WORD I have spoken unto you, Ye are clean EVERY WHIT. Ye are washed; Ye are Sanctified; Ye are Justified.” Nothing between us and the Lord, for our reconciliation is perfect, and not as under Law, where a remembrance of sins was made every year—Heb. 10:3. The blood of Jesus Christ has BLOTTED OUT the whole category of sin in the believer (1 John.1:7) and not merely covered them. Therefore, we stand in God’s presence as if we had NEVER SINNED, so completely has God forgiven us our sins, that He has forgotten them. You may not have done so, but He has—Heb. 8:12. “Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more.” With BOLDNESS we may come to the Throne of Grace to ask for help in the time of need. Righteousness gives Boldness-1 John 2:28.

Having thus our feet plucked out of the mud and the mire, let us walk in the King’s highway, for the Christian life is a WAY OF HOLINESS. “Holiness becometh thy House, (Psa. 93:5). Whose house are we, if we hold fast the BOLDNESS and the rejoicing firm unto the end.” Heb. 3:6 We are begotten of God, being made partakers of the Divine nature of God, “having escaped the corruption

that is in the world through lust.” II Pet. 1:4 We must not only take God’s imputed righteousness, but His imparted righteousness, that is appropriate in our lives, here and now, the attributes of God-likeness, righteousness and true holiness as Children of God. For as sons of God, we are prepared, or ordained unto good works We were created in Christ Jesus for this very purpose, and to be a people zealous of this holy life — Eph. 2:10; Tit. 2:14 Yes, we are to “PUT ON this new man, which after God is CREATED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS and true holiness”—Eph. 4:24, “I do not frustrate the grace of God.” Salvation is a free act of God, all our works, prayers and good living could never have brought it to us. “His arm alone brought salvation unto HIM (Isa. 52:10) and His righteousness, it sustained Him,” and only by holiness can we sustain a life well pleasing to God, having on the breastplate of righteousness, being a living, holy and reasonable sacrifice unto God Rom. 12:1 “for He that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable with Him.”

26

Was not Jesus Christ DECLARED to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of HOLINESS? —Rom. 1:4 “In this the children of God are made manifest...” I John 3:10 These are weighty words, but it is by our fruits we are known (Matt. 12:33.) not by our leaves and blossoms. If the Word of God is not producing in my life His likeness, and Godliness, as I behold Him in the Word — II Cor. 3:18 then, something is wrong in my life, and some root-pruning is URGENTLY NEEDED in deep repentance and contrition, and putting away the sin. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another (John 13:35) and hereby we know that we are of the truth”—I John 3:14-19, 24. It is not God’s primary plan to get us to heaven, but that we should serve here in holiness in this life, as an instrument in His hands, to show forth His love, and what is His exceeding riches towards us, that He might gather together in one all things in Christ and in the grand review prove to the whole hierarchy of Hell, that the cross of Christ on Calvary has not been a failure, but that by the man (the Devil robbed from God in Eden) is by the power of God in Christ, able to destroy the power of the Devil here on his own grounds.

Yes, I know that God’s word says “by faith ye are saved,” but faith is substance, evidence, something tangible. Fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life. If we say, we are a heavenly people, we should produce the goods, for it is not I, but Christ henceforth — Gal. 2:20. God’s Word is a savour of

life unto life, to those that are saved, because they are a sweet savour of Christ to Him, but to those that are lost, a savour of death unto death"—2 Cor. 2:14-17. After all, it is the things that ACCOMPANY SALVATION that count with God, and man. Whose faith FOLLOW, considering the end of their conversation and conduct—Heb. 13:7. I am a firm believer in the GRACE OF GOD for Redemption but I do want to see WORKED OUT, what God has WROUGHT IN US, with fear and trembling. Phil. 12:13 Otherwise, what are we different from the world?

It does not always hold that, because a man is a successful evangelist, preacher and teacher, that he is a child of God (Phil. 1:15) and gifts are no criterion that our hearts are right with God. Matt. 7:21-23 is sure proof of this. "Lord have we not prophesied in thy name . . . cast out devils . . . and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." There is no substitute for the fruit of the Spirit. A tree may be well pruned, bear flowers and goodly leaves, but useless to the hungry if no fruit be found. If we have the life of Christ in us, then fruitfulness must be the end of our fellowship with Him—John 15:5. Leaves suggest fruitfulness, but the Master was hungry for fruit, and found none. Our robes and phylacteries are useless to the hungry—fruit they need—Matt. 21:19. 27

A soldier may carry the scars of battle, and all the distinguished medals of bravery on his breast, but what advantage are these things to him, if high treason is found in his heart? SIN IS HIGH TREASON against God, and His Throne. When we sin, we level our action against Him. "How can I do this GREAT WICKEDNESS," saith Joseph, "and sin AGAINST GOD?" Gen. 39:9 "Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight," saith David. Psa. 51:4 Such sin, as is prominent amongst us these days, said Job, "is a heinous crime, yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the Judges." Job. 31:11 Such sins do not go unpunished for "...the thing that David had done DISPLEASED THE LORD." II Sam. 11:27 That very sin came 'back on his own head,' and the sword never departed from his house. II Sam. 12:10-12 His sin was ever before him (Psa. 51:3) and so shall it be with everyone that indulges in such evil appetites- It will always be a snare to him, and if he happens to be a minister, it will always be the advantage ground of the Devil, a beachhead, whereby he can shoot his fiery

throws darts at him when he would reprove sin in others His sword has lost its keen edge, and sharpened that of the Devil's.

Thank God there is no need for any of us to be overtaken with sin. The Spirit lusteth (warreth) against the flesh, that is, He is always ready to carry on a successful war-fare against these unholy indulgences. Just as the altar was there to supply the needs of Isaiah as he stood before the Throne of God's Holiness (Isa. 6:7,) so here for sin cannot live in the presence of holiness, nor envy with love.

Faith removes doubt, and overcomes the world-1 John 5:5. Further, "they that ARE CHRIST'S have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts"—Gal. 5:24. God will never allow us to be tempted above measure, or give us more than we are able to bear. We need not be overcome by these temptations. In fact, God will make a way of escape 1 Cor. 10:3 and 'give a crown of life' to the overcomer. God always slaps His Goliaths with their own sword. He will garrison our hearts in the day of battle, so that we may lead off the enemy, from the field, captive at our will.

28 The sin question has been dealt with in Christ, and nailed to His cross, that provisionally this body of sin might be destroyed, and we MUST with Him, take this old Adamic nature, of which we are all heirs, to the cross, and share in His death—made conformable to His death, if we ever hope to share in the resurrection. Every provision for a holy life has been made possible in Christ, "for He has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30) therefore we can live above the reproaches of sin, and there is no excuse for any ungodly living, that which is so shocking these days, and destroying the work of God.

During those early days of Pentecostal blessing, sanctification was a grand theme among us, a mighty principle, and not a theory. If we say we love God and do not separate from the world, we are deceiving ourselves. It is giving the lie to our testimony. God is not deceived, neither is the Devil, and as far as that goes, nor the people around us. We may as well know it too, "for he which is a friend to this world, is an enemy to God" —James 4:4. 1 John 2:15. Why play the fool?

"Awake to righteousness and sin not, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"—Eph. 5:11. "Arm yourselves With light, for it is

HIGH TIME for You to awake out of sleep, for our salvation is nearer than when we believed. Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

“Eager for Thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle Divine,
Carries me out with sweet constraint
Till all my hallowed soul be Thine;
Lunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea,
And lost in Thine immensity.”

Why should we long for a servant’s place, when we are sons of God, or prone to wander from such a love, when we are born of God. That young lad, that let his passions lead him astray from father and home, lost his inheritance in the bargain. But for his father’s mercy, he would have gone naked and shoeless forever. Luke 15 Nor was it any credit to him that, the father gave him a ring. He had divided His living and this youth wasted it; he must forever suffer loss and all that his elder brother said about him, was true. Listen to Paul’s testimony. What a contrast to the prodigal homecoming.

“I am ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have **FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED** my course, **I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH**; henceforth, there is laid for me a crown of righteousness, Which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me... and all who love His appearing.” (II Tim. 4:7) “And he that hath this hope in him, **PURIFIETH HIMSELF**, even as He is pure.” I John 3:3

Brethren, we are God’s husbandry — let us bring forth fruits, of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. We are God’s building — let us build with the best for His praise and Glory. An Emperor in China was so pleased with a Palace, and the materials the Builder put into it, and the good workmanship, that he requested the Builder to build another like unto it. But this time the Builder put into places where the eye could not see old timbers, and poor materials. When it was completed the Emperor said unto him, “I am so delighted with the Palace you built for me that I purposed in my heart to reward you with one like unto it, and here it is, it is thine.” That Builder saw his mistake, and cried, “Oh, what a fool I have been. Had I known the Emperor was going to give it to me I would have used the best of materials in this one too.

Brethren, the day will declare it, and we shall enter into our inheritance, and it will be the same substance we have put into it. (Missionary to China, now on furlough.)

(Reprint 1947)

ISAIAH ~ CHAPTER 56 ~ TITUS

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.” Isa. 56:2

30 The glorious theme of this chapter is “rest,” as indicated by repeated references to “the Sabbath.” It forms a beautiful correlation with Titus, which also testifies of God’s Rest. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” Tit. 3:5 The prevailing theme of Paul’s gospel is rest, due to the glorious merits of Divine Grace. Works must recede into the background even as we read here, “Not by works... but according to his mercy he saved us,...” The apostle enlarges upon this same theme in the second chapter of this book emphatically asserting that “...the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” Tit. 2:11- 13 The “rest,” of God is produced by His Matchless Grace, and Paul lists 7 majestic lessons which we learn by entering in to that “Rest” which is found only in Christ Jesus. First, it is the grace, of this rest, which literally teaches us to deny ungodliness. Secondly, we also deny the very motivation behind such deeds as grace teaches how to refuse “worldly lusts.” The third lesson is that we “live soberly,” that is “safe, sound, moderate, self-controlled.” Next we live “righteously,” a reference to the righteous deeds, or acts, manifest in this mortal body. Number five indicates that we are to live “godly” lives before Him, once again, a lesson that only Divine Grace can teach. The sixth point is that we are taught to look “... for that blessed hope...” that hope of deliverance which has been afforded us because of Jesus’ Work of Redemption. Finally we are to look for the literal, “...glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Both Isaiah and Titus also inform us **how** such promised

rest must come. Isaiah exhorts "...Keep ye judgment, and do justice:..." while Paul instructs Titus, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity," Tit. 2:7 The apostle also instructs him to "... to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." Tit. 3:1-2 The word "judgment" found in Isaiah's exhortation means "right decisions, justice, or rightness, that is righteous works." Both Isaiah and Paul admonish their hearers to engage in right decisions, both in doctrine and practice, and the results will lead to enjoying that glorious rest which is promised by The Sabbath. So it is that Isaiah begins his dissertation, "Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed." V. 1 "... my salvation..." and "...my righteousness..." means that, for which "...the LORD,..." is responsible, both of which are found **in Christ!** His salvation is "...near to come..." even as Paul announced in Titus, "...the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,.." and is a beautiful reference to the rest that Israel will find, through divine grace, in the Millennium. However, they must "...Keep ye judgment,..." or make right decisions. They must also "...do justice..." meaning that such decisions must also be put into practice, even as Paul also instructed Titus. This will be comparatively easy in the Kingdom Age, for Satan will be bound a thousand years, and men will have little resistance in performing those righteous works. The reward for following this path is announced immediately. "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." V. 2 Keeping the Sabbath means the same as it has always meant. Israel tried to make it a very cold, rigid, and unbending law, in regard to a special day of the week, but the Sabbath is a reference to our Rest In Christ. Jesus declared plainly that "...The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:" Mk. 2:27 He meant that the Sabbath was provided as a glorious benefit of rest for mankind, not a rigid decree to bring him into bondage. The way to pollute the Sabbath is to deny the

rest which Christ has provided from sin and unrighteousness.

The order of this verse is also very instructive as one must keep "...the sabbath..." before he can keep "...his hand from doing any evil." The only way any man can live a godly life is to discover this mandatory rest in, "The Sabbath," which is Jesus, and the next portion of these promises applies especially to the millennium.

32 "Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree." V. 3 The LORD did not receive this "stranger," of the Gentiles to discriminate against him, just because he is not a Jew. Neither is he to be like unto a "eunuch," that is devoid of spiritual fruit, and therefore useless. God does have a plan, even for those who have been so unfruitful and useless heretofore, "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;" V. 4 This is another glorious demonstration of what Divine Grace can do when one accepts God's Sabbath, and the invitation will be held out, even to the Gentile, during that Age of Rest in the Millennium. When these strangers and unprofitable eunuchs of the Gentiles, join themselves "...to the Lord...keep my sabbaths...choose the things that please me,..." and "...take hold of my covenant,..." there are eternal riches which will be bestowed upon them, for God has always rewarded faith, regardless of where He has found it. These words seem to indicate that there will be those Gentiles, in the Millennium, who will surpass some Jews in believing God for these choicest of riches found in His Sabbath Of Rest. It is a pattern that is not unfamiliar in regard to the nation of Israel. Those blessings, for this kind of spirituality, continue, with the following promises, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of

my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” V. 5-7 The rewards to this company are many, and God continues to insist that there is no discrimination in distributing them. Those who “qualify” for such blessings are listed in these verses as being “sons of the stranger,...join themselves to the LORD,...serve him,...love the name of the LORD,...his servants,...keepeth the sabbath from polluting it,...taketh hold of my covenant;” All of these are vivid demonstrations of faith, which will never go unrewarded, and thus these “strangers,” will be afforded the privileges of being brought “...to my holy mountain,...” They will be “...joyful in my house of prayer:...” All their “...burnt offerings...sacrifices...accepted upon mine altar;...mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” Thus, this marvelous Sabbath Of Rest is surely available to all during this Utopia, and the pattern for these Gentiles seems to follow the exact manner in which God treated Israel.

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“The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.” V. 8 The truth of this verse lies in the fact that Israel, as a nation, will be instrumental in gathering the other nations unto The LORD at that time. The aforementioned blessings will prevail to those who have found their Rest In Christ, but the remainder of this chapter assumes a decidedly different tone, and seems to point to the very end of the Millennium.

“All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.” V. 9 We might wonder how these verses could be written in connection with the glorious splendor described above, but scripture is very plain that Satan will be loosed at the end of the one thousand year reign of Christ. Not all men will believe during that time, and thus the seeds of their “beastly” hearts will emerge when they are literally “stirred up,” by this arch enemy and, “...come to devour,...” that which belongs to God. Those beasts are further described in the remaining verses of this chapter. “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant,

they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

V. 10-11 This seems to be a description of religious leaders who were supposed to be “watchmen,” but they failed miserably in that regard, and follow much the same path as is manifest in the closing days of this present Church Age. They “...are all ignorant,...” of God’s Word and they are also termed “...dumb dogs...” for they have never had a born-again experience. They are pretty well benign, in that they “...cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber,” rather than sounding the warning of impending danger. Furthermore, “...they are greedy dogs which can never have enough,... shepherds that cannot understand:... every one for his gain, for his quarter.” All these traits apparently describe “religious shepherds,” who are so self absorbed that they cannot even be bothered to keep the charge committed to them. Their attitude, once again, seems to parallel the conditions

34 of our day for, “Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.” V. 12 The Millennium will close with the battle of Gog and Magog, (Rev. 20:28) just as the Church Age was finalized by the tribulation and the Battle of Armageddon. Apparently these “shepherds,” had no intention of warning the people about such a battle and continued with the same mental philosophy heard today, “...saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” II Pet. 3:4 Though the Kingdom Age will be predominantly identified as the age of peace and tranquility, it too will end in judgment, and these “shepherds” will also be held to account.

* When looking for faults, use a mirror not a telescope.

* One drop of water won’t make a spring; but one word can create a fall.

* There are no deductions from the wages of sin.



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