

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

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Sing unto the Lord
with thanksgiving;
sing praise upon
the harp unto our
God
PSALM 147:7.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S CORNUCOPIA



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Editor: Gene Hawkins



By Gene Hawkins

“**W**hy do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Psa. 2:1-5

“God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” Psa. 7:11

The above message from Psalm 2 should be very familiar to long-time readers of Grace and Glory, for this text has been used multiple times down through the years to explain the rebellion of men marking the end of this Church Age. These words are also becoming much more meaningful as the time of Jesus’ soon coming draws nigh, for the “...heathen,...” or Gentile Nations, “...rage...and the rulers take counsel together **AGAINST** The LORD and against his anointed....” The word rage literally means to “rage: or, tumultuously assemble.” It also means to “... imagine: Heb. Meditate” The latter definition reminds us of Gen. 6:5 wherein “...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.**” The psalmist declares that such thoughts and imaginations are directly “...against the LORD....” It is no wonder that the above text from Psa. 7 declares that He “...is angry with the wicked every day.” 3

There are undoubtedly many ways in which men anger The LORD in our day, but a couple of them which are so manifest at this very hour lie in the fact that men seem to think they can take His Place. Isaiah directly addressed the nations when He spoke of Cyrus in Isaiah 45. “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:” Isa 45:5 Verse 6 likewise conveys the fact that all nations are included in this declaration. “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.” This same glorious truth

is also reinforced by the command to “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.” Isa. 45:20-21 The exact context of these words signifies that a converted nation of Israel will impart this message of deliverance and hope to the nations after they are saved out of the tribulation, and have assumed the place of headship and become the instructor of righteousness to nations who formerly oppressed them. Israel will most assuredly learn these lessons by the bitter experience of “Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7) that, “...there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me,” and they will be well able to proclaim it to the nations.

4 However, the attitudes of those in power around this world which are presently displayed in our midst, are ample proof that men simply refuse to acknowledge that, “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me:...” Most people are undoubtedly weary of the constant barrage streaming from news sources in regard to global warming or climate change. The predominant reason for the massive restrictions which some are trying to impose on multiple nations is that man must save planet earth from destruction. It has been noted previously in these pages that some predicted earth’s destruction during years that have already passed by. Others publish timelines calling for earth’s demise in as little as 12 years if something is not done immediately. On the other hand, according to a report from Forbes.com on Nov. 12, 2019 there is “...a lot of evidence showing the Chinese government has a detailed strategy to overtake the US as the world’s dominant power. They want to do this by 2049, the centennial of China’s Communist revolution.” How can they accomplish such a thing if there will be no planet to dominate? These two polarizing views regarding the same planet are almost laughable and perhaps one of the reasons why “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh:...” So whose view is correct? The answer is neither. Scripture plainly declares that if the devastation predicted by environmentalist alarmists, which God’s Word

describes as the great tribulation, were to begin tomorrow, planet earth is guaranteed another 1000 years known as the Millennium. However, neither China nor any other nation will be in charge, for Jesus will rule universally in God's stead as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Let all men understand here that the reason for God's laughter at the puny efforts of men, regardless of the results they hope to achieve, is that only God is in control of this planet along with all the kingdoms to whom He has delegated authority. He has been very clear in declaring, "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me:..." Isaiah continues this same assault against those who refuse to acknowledge Him with this admonition. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" Isa. 46:9-10 Men seem to think they can predict the future and even bring their desires to fruition, but only God has that ability, and it seems that all these nations with their own agendas have completely ignored the fact of His Existence. 5
The major issue when viewing the foolishness of man-made global warming through the lens of God's Word is the rebellion of national leaders that "...take counsel together, **against the LORD**, and against his anointed,..." as they try desperately to infringe on what **only God is capable of doing**. The psalmist cried out, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God..." Psa. 14:1 Scripture is very clear that during the tribulation "...men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, **which hath power over these plagues**: and they repented not to give him glory." Rev. 16:9 Peter likewise informs us that "... the day of the Lord will come ...and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,..." II Pet. 3:10 Make no mistake, this "rise in global temperature is coming," and man will have absolutely no control over it! There will also come the day when men will be forced to acknowledge God's superiority in this matter, for as noted above "...they blasphemed the name of God,..." for it. However, they would be greatly profited if they would, at this present time, try to answer the questions with which God peppered Job in regard to the current "weather-related" problems they face today. "Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is

the place thereof,... Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,... By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?... Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; ...To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; ...Hath the rain a father?... Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? ...Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? **canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?** Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" Job 38:19-35 The conclusion of this "questionnaire" is found in Job's complete acknowledgement of God's Sovereignty. "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." Job 42:3 What a joy it would be if men today would arrive at that same conclusion. The fact is that only God has power over all these things which men are desperately trying to control, and in the process they are usurping an authority that belongs only to Him.

Another fact which those seeking world peace have ignored is that only Jesus, The Prince of Peace, will be able to bring peace to this world. The recent peace agreement between Israel and the UAE is historic, though largely ignored by mainstream news media, but scripture is emphatic that there must come a time of peace and safety which will prevail before the sudden destruction brought forth by the tribulation. Prophecy scholars have warned repeatedly that this peace will only be a temporary and counterfeit peace, but it is also certain that such agreements must surely come in order to fulfill prophecy. The real "peace and safety" era will only be ushered in by the antichrist, who is yet to be revealed. However, this sign of peace will follow the same pattern as all the others which Jesus and other "prophets" have declared. This means that all these signs are rather sporadic in the beginning, but they will increase both in frequency and intensity as the time of Jesus' coming draws nigh. Therefore, it should be no surprise

to see a number of other nations seeking peace with Israel as they follow the lead of the UAE and Bahrain. It is interesting that a number of Middle East Arab nations see Iran as a common enemy because this rogue nation is universally recognized as the world's leading sponsor of terror. Thus, they would be willing to put aside their hatred of Israel and unite with them and the UAE against a more eminent threat. President Trump has indicated that some Arab states are standing in line to make an agreement with Israel, and a headline from The Times Of Israel seems to confirm that view. **“Bahrain king calls for intensified effort to resolve Israel-Palestinian conflict”** These remarks are then quoted from King Hamad's foreign minister. “In an interview, Abdullatif bin rashid Al Zayani says the normalization agreement with Jerusalem ‘is in line with King Hamad's vision to spread the culture of peace in the world. It is also in line with his directives to intensify efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict according to the [Arab] peace initiative.’ First adopted by the Arab League in 2002, the Arab Peace Initiative promises Israel full diplomatic relations with the entire Muslim world in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 lines. ‘Bahrain always stresses its firm and constant position toward the right of the fraternal Palestinian people, which are at the top of its priorities. The Palestinian people must obtain their complete legitimate rights,’ Al Zayani adds.” The newsflash at this writing is that Sudan has now joined the parade of those making peace with Israel, and it remains to be seen how many and how quickly other Mid- East Nations will embrace the Abraham Accords.

“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh,...” but such amusement will be short lived, because “Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.” Nahum also asserts that, “God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.” Nah. 1:2 Nahum sets forth two major issues in these words. One, “God is Jealous...” meaning that He will share the stage with no one, even as Isaiah proclaimed, “...I am God, and there is none like me,...” Secondly “...the LORD revengeth, and is furious,...and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.”

Some current religious leaders continue to try and claim the text in II Chronicles as the remedy for the tremendous difficulties of our day. “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.” II Chron. 7:14 Sadly, the day of such universal repentance has long since passed and revival will in no wise come to pass before Jesus comes. Not only are we warned in II Thess. 2:3, “Let no man deceive you... for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, (not one hint of revival) and that man of sin be revealed,...” but regime change is also coming for this world. The opening text loudly declares that “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,” but that rebellion will soon be replaced when “...his anointed...” sits on God’s Throne as King of kings and Lord of lords, even as is confirmed here, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.” Psa. 2:6 This change of worldwide government begins with God’s Mighty display of wrath and judgment, rather than revival.

8 The Babylonish Empire marked the beginning of Gentile Times in 606 B.C. under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar. It also ended after 70 years when Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson, Belshazzar was in power. The pattern of change at the end of Babylon’s tenure also typifies the end of Gentile rule over this world. The ways in which God dealt with the above leaders of that regime are in stark contrast. God accused Nebuchadnezzar of being “...hardened in pride,...” Dan. 5:19 He had been given 12 months to repent, according to Dan. 4:29 but was then expelled from his kingdom for 7 years, because he refused to acknowledge his sin. The end of those days brought true repentance and restoration to his former place. Dan. 4:36-37

The story for his grandson is quite different. He, too, is accused of the same offenses as Nebuchadnezzar when he saw the handwriting on the wall and heard the words “And thou his son, (grandson) O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart,... Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” Dan. 5:22 & 27 This time, however, absolutely no space is given for repentance as there was for Nebuchadnezzar, and the reason is clear: times have changed! The rest of this chapter explains that Belshazzar was slain that very night and Darius the Mede “...took the kingdom...” Dan. 5:31 The demise of Gentile Times will be

just as swift when Jesus takes His throne and no amount of prayer and crying out to the LORD to restore the land will change God's Mind. Judgment, rather than revival, is in store for the entire planet and none but God can stop it.

This world will not escape the wrath of God, but hope abounds eternal for those who would dare to believe God. Peter explains it as follows. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:" II Pet. 2:9 Paul chimes in with these words separating believer from believer. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; ...But let us, who are of the day, be sober,... For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," I Thess. 5:6-9 Those who sleep refer to Christians rather than sinners because a sinner is said to be "dead in trespasses and sins." Only Christians sleep. Furthermore, "...God has not appointed us to wrath..." This means the wrath of the great tribulation. God said through Jeremiah, "A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy **with the nations**, he will plead **9** with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD." Jer. 25:31 There is no reason for any believer to be a part of this "...controversy with the nations..." "For God hath not appointed us to wrath..." However, His stipulation is that we "...watch and be sober." The first step to that is to realize and fully embrace the fact that Jesus is coming as a thief in the night, meaning that the whole world will be oblivious to that event until it actually happens and severe judgment immediately ensues. So despite all the rhetoric and political noise as men clamor for power and dominion over the various nations of this world, let us understand in the depths of our hearts that, "...Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb 9:28 This salvation is not simply from sin, death, and hell. It is a promise to "...those that look for him..." as means of escape from the coming wrath of tribulation. True overcoming believers must claim the promise, "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb 10:37 The Glorious News is that,.....

IT COULD HAPPEN AT ANY MOMENT!

CHRIST, THE HEAD OF THE BODY

Carson Richards

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;... that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe,... Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand... in the heavenly places,... And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Eph 1:15-23

10 There is not a word in the above Scriptures that means a thing apart from faith, nothing tangible there that you can reach out and take hold of with your hand. There is the Lord Jesus, revelation, power, understanding, principalities, powers, and there is a body, a Head, a world today and one to come, but there is nothing there you can take and put in the bank. As far as natural things are concerned, there is nothing. The Word of God is really spoken from faith to faith since there is the age to come. Those who really take hold of these eternal things by faith are the wise ones, because there are certain indications that this earth is passing out. It is quite a failure.

There are religious and national heads and we must try to make the best of things, but the indications are that the present age will end as all the other ages: in failure. There is perplexity among nations, as Jesus said, "the sea and waves roaring," nations unsettled and tossed about by a wicked power, the devil himself; therefore, a man needs something to rest on, something outside of himself. It is evident to men today that they need something, and some seek to find that something. The only way to get it is through the Word of God. It is not just for us, but for all men, yet all men will not believe it. I thank God that this Head, this Man, Jesus Christ, Who has been raised above all men, all things and all power, seated in the heavenly places, is the One we sang about,

Who died, rejected by those for whom He died but He was raised from the dead, and is now seated in the heavenlies, and He lives for you and for me. Furthermore, "all things are under His feet. And He is the Head of all things to the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

Nevertheless, this is not tangible. It is by faith. It has not yet come; but the Lord Jesus Christ is actually going to fill all in all. He is not here in person today except in the Person of the Holy Spirit and in those who have received Him in their hearts. And since He is in their hearts, He is the Head. He has that office. God has given it to Him. Jesus Christ is the Head of every one who is born again, whether he realizes it or not. What is known as religious activity is not always God activity. Jesus has been given that place of headship and is to be allowed to direct the spiritual activity. If He is not able to build something that stands, if He is not able to make us to weather the storms by His power, what is the use of having Him as Head? If we need machinery and organization and man-made heads and directors to further the work of God, then it looks like Christ is not enough. Anyway, we see more now than ever that this is a way of faith, the way God is dealing with hearts, with men and not with things. Christ is in rejection and we need not think it strange if we also are rejected, we who yield to Him. It is the few who yield to Him and acknowledge Him as the Head of their lives, or the Head of the church, or assembly. That is ONE great fact in which many Christians fall short. 11

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ." Eph. 1:11,12 We agree with Paul that it is the Word of Grace that builds up the saints and gives them this inheritance. Sometimes people look at things present, but we are not living for the present, but for eternity. Jesus Christ is not one of the most popular men in the earth — but rather otherwise — one of the most unpopular. Actually, people hate that Name. They even take His Name in vain. Of course they are moved by Satan: nevertheless it does not excuse them

because there is a way out. And it is through Him, Jesus Christ, Who is given to be the Head of all things. So, today governments, principalities and powers are against Him. We cannot do anything ourselves, we cannot overthrow governments opposed to us, but we can believe God, that His will be done in this earth, because Jesus Christ is the Head. It is faith that brings things to pass in this earth. It is those of faith that hinder the bringing of Satan's kingdom on earth.

When we think of Germany with her wonderful equipment and army, we are awed. Why are they losing out? we might well ask. Not because there are some giants over here, but because there is a God in heaven, Who is on His throne. There are few people who believe that fact. We will see the most blatant boasting after this war is over. Men will claim that they stopped the enemy, "that they killed the bear." But no, it will be God. It is true — God still rules and He moves in behalf of Jesus Christ and for His people, because they are joined to Jesus Christ. He does not intervene because they are Americans, but because they are Christians, **12** born-again ones, a new creation, and the Head of this new creation is Jesus Christ. We realize that those who acknowledge this today are on the outside in rejection with Christ. The Scripture says, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." Jesus Himself is still on the outside. In His birthplace He was outside — born in a stable, not a palace. He lived on the outside. He was never in the midst of things, never in the center at any time in His ministry except in the midst of the two thieves. Men were drawn to Him by the power of God and followed for awhile, but they left Him when He was rejected by the leaders — even His Own sheep were scattered. He will be in rejection until He comes.

So Jesus is the unseen Head, the Power, the Leader. I thank God that Jesus Christ is my Head, my Leader. If He does not give me a chance to preach, I have to be quiet. If they won't listen to Him, there isn't much I can do about it. Thank God, He can give us what He wants us to have without any worldly conniving. Even the Lord Jesus will have to make a forced entrance soon to crash through the ways of men. He must come down from the outside

instead of from the inside. The Kingdom of God will not come from anything that is here. The Church itself will have to be taken away and God will work through Israel, the people that are here, but even their power has to come from not from the kings that are here. God's purpose on the earth has to come from the Lord Jesus Christ. So to the Ephesian Church, God most remarkably declared Jesus to be the Head of His people, His Church.

This Ephesian Epistle represents a heavenly people, those who live by faith in the heavenlies, though they walk among men and do not look much different, yet they have the promise that God is holding their lives sacred and safe. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit and that spirit cannot be joined to anyone else. It is a new creation. It seems a strange way, even strange to Christians. The more I go on with God, the more of a stranger I seem to be. If the Lord desires to veil his new creation, the Lord help us to stay veiled. We can come out in the open when He wants us in the open. It looks to me today in this closing age, and near the day of judgment, that the most pertinent thing about God is His absence. The most sure thing we can find out about God is the lack of Him making Himself known.

It seems that way because this earth is the domicile of Satan, into which He entered. That is the idea I get, that He keeps away from this wicked world as much as possible until He brings in His Kingdom. The way to move God is to pray to Him for His Church in Jesus Name and for His glory. The things of this world are rather disgusting, and we can scarcely pray for them.

We read in Rev. 2:6 of the Ephesian Church. These messages to the Churches have a doctrinal and dispensational meaning to the whole age. "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." Some leaders were lording it over others in that local assembly. It was the clergy over the laity. Bombastic usurpation of ecclesiasticism was beginning in that early day and such self-styled heads are still with us. Has God changed His mind about Christ being the Head? Does He change with conditions? People say, "You must keep up with the world, go its way; that you have to be like the world to reach them, be organized, use their methods, etc." The Scriptures do not

so teach. In Colossians we read, "And He is the Head of the body the Church. He is the beginning the first born from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence, for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." Col. 1 :18,19 God dwells in His people through Jesus Christ, Who is the Head. In Him dwelleth all of God's fullness. Someone asks, "What is the fulness of God?" You will have to wait a few years and we will show it to you. God is a little too big for us to explain His fullness. By faith we understand there is a fullness that dwells in Jesus Christ.

14 **What is the difference** between Jesus Christ and those He has raised from the dead out of trespasses and sins? There is this distinction. Those whom He raised are not yet glorified as He is. And it is wonderful to know that God is pleased with Himself in what He is making out of such creatures as we are. It is according to the good pleasure of His will. He did it and He shows it to us. The only thing He is happy about in this world is the new creation. The way to please Him is to believe Him and yield to Him, for without faith it is impossible to please God. We might as well please Him, trust Him and believe Him. He is the Chief One. The head is the one that does the thinking, that directs the activity. It is the important part of the body. The head directs all the vital functions of the body, controls its voluntary activities. But as far as we see the body of Christ, it appears rather defeated. The members who ought to be spiritual are not so. They do not listen to the Head. In many places the body is twisted and contorted because He does not have His way. Sometimes it is hard to see that they are Christians, but Christ prophesied that the Church would grow into a great spreading tree, a great organization, a great system. Matt. 13: 31,32 He knew it would grow that way. Why is this the case? They do not believe that Christ is the Head. The people do not understand what is true and real. If we want to go all the way and accept all the Truth, we have to go outside the camp. There is something to be gained by going on with Jesus Christ alone as our Head. It pays eternal dividends to follow this Head. Thank God, I have such a Head as Jesus Christ. I am joined to Him and to those who acknowledge and believe in His Headship.

We realize in the days to come we will have to test the faithfulness of this Head because the world is going the other way — and the professed Church also. The great mass of believers still want to go the way of the world, but I want, by His Grace, to be faithful to Jesus Christ, and no man can touch me unless He allows it. Such is the way that God has made provision for every man. The time is now. If anyone does not actually acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Lord and Head of his life and does not completely surrender to Him to have the right of way, he will be sorry to die and go to the tomb because he has no assurance that he will rise again.

(Reprint 1945)

The True God

The Maker of the universe
As Man for man was made a curse,
The claims of laws which He had made
Unto the uttermost He paid.

His Holy Fingers made the bough
Which grew the thorns that crowned His brow:
The nails that pierced His hands were mined
In secret places He designed.

He made the forests whence there sprung
The tree on which His body hung.
He died upon a cross of wood,
Yet made the hill on which it stood.

The sky that darkened o'er His head
By Him above the earth was spread.
The sun that hid from Him its face
By His decree was poised in space.

The spear which spilled His precious blood
Was tempered in the fires of God.
The grave in which His form was laid
Was hewn in rocks His hands had made.

The throne on which He now appears
Was His from everlasting years,
But a new glory crowns His brow,
And every knee to Him shall bow!

F.W. Pitt

"A BETTER RESURRECTION"

Jim Cramer

Praise the Lord! Isn't this a wonderful Thanksgiving Day! I have been thinking all day how thankful we are, and how amazing it has been the way the Lord comes in and provides for all of our needs and answers our prayers. Of course, there are many other ways that He has blessed us and many other things that He has done for us. We are like the ones who prayed for Peter to be delivered from prison. We know that He answers prayer, but we are amazed when He does it! It is a happy amazement, isn't it?

16 "Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. 11:35 I want to focus our attention on the phrase "...not accepting deliverance..." In this chapter, Paul has been telling us of the Old Testament worthies of faith, giving us the names and examples from Abel down to and including the others here in verse thirty-five. He told how that "...through faith..." they "...subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again."

As we recount those of whom Paul speaks here, we must realize that they were human beings just like you and I are, and they were in frail human bodies. They were subject to emotions and mental pressures that these sufferings caused. The way our text reads, it might appear that they were always in full control of their emotions and were fully able to withstand all of the mental pressures that go with being tortured; but they were not. They were not always able to endure extreme torture. They were in bodies of humiliation just as we are, and they were subject to weaknesses just as we are. When they were in trials, they prayed fervently and just as often for deliverance as we do. If we would go back in the Old Testament and take the time to read in detail about each one of them, we would find that there were times when they obviously would not accept deliverance; but we would also find many times when they were being tortured or were in a trial that they prayed to God for deliverance, and yet they

were not always delivered. Now this phrase, "...not accepting deliverance,..." tells us that deliverance was available. Why then did they not accept deliverance? The answer is in our Scripture text here: "That they might obtain a better resurrection." God knew their hearts. He knew what they wanted most. So, even when they prayed for deliverance and it was available to them, the thing that they wanted most in their hearts overruled their emotions and the mental pressures caused them by the torture of the trial. They would not accept deliverance.

That is the way it is with us today. Isn't that wonderful? Aren't you thankful that God knows our hearts? Aren't you thankful that God does not answer our prayers that are caused by our emotions and mental pressures? Sometimes, being delivered would keep us from obtaining a better resurrection. Aren't you glad that we are His workmanship? Praise the Lord! Aren't you glad that the Holy Spirit also "...helpeth our infirmities...?" "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Rom. 8:26-28. We do not accept deliverance, that we may obtain a better resurrection. Praise the Lord!

(Reprint 1972)

Thanksgiving

*At first I only gave God thanks
If I felt well that day,
And everything was tranquil
And going just my way.
But when I learned to thank our Lord
When not one thing went right,
I found His Hand was leading me,
His Presence my delight,
His keystone faith; not sight.*

Anon

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” I Thess. 5:18

We have reached another time of the year which this country especially recognizes as a season of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving has become a national holiday and none should object to it, but scripture is very clear that thanksgiving should become a way of life rather than a sporadic endeavor.

The above text declares that that thanks must rendered “In every thing...” meaning that men must learn to give thanks even in times of calamity and adversity. Job said plainly after his sons and daughters had been taken from him, “...the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:21 The word “blessed” literally means to “kneel,” carrying the implication of “an act of worship and thanksgiving.” When Job’s burdens became even greater and much more personal, after he was smitten with boils over his entire body, he declared, “... What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?...” Job 2:10 Job knew that he would “bless God” for His glorious gifts and benefits so that same pattern should also be applied to that which would be “...evil...” or distasteful to him.

Psalm 100 indicates that just coming into the very Presence of the Lord should be accompanied with thanksgiving. “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.” Psa. 100:4 This should be very easy to understand because the only merit we have for gaining such an audience with God is due to redemption and our new position in Christ as a new creation. Thanks for His Divine Grace should be bubbling in our hearts constantly for this glorious benefit. Not only so, but note that thanksgiving as we “Enter into his gates...” gives way to even deeper praise as the journey continues “...into his courts...” or deep fellowship in intimacy.

An exited attitude is also important for a life which

would exude thanksgiving. David wrote “A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day,” revealing the glorious rest awaiting all who would venture into His Presence. Then follows the declaration that “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:” Psa. 92:1 Attitude or “tone” must be considered in appropriating this text. One could be a bit nonchalant and say “Well I guess it’s alright to give thanks, nothing wrong with it, couldn’t hurt.” However when men realize, as Jesus said in Lk. 18:19 that, “...none is good, save one, that is, God” it should bring forth a new excitement and value as to the meaning of “...a good thing...” in rendering thanks unto God.

Paul’s exhortation to the Thessalonians also indicates that thanksgiving “...is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Men often wonder, “What is God’s Will for my life.” That may include a number of different things at any given time, but make no mistake, it is always the will of God for our hearts to be filled with thanksgiving.

Finally Paul exhorted the saints at Colosse to “...let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Col. 3:15 This latter phrase seems to be issued as a “command,” rather than a suggestion. So it must be in our own experience. Thanksgiving is not an option. It must become a way of life wherein thanksgiving, praise, and worship must become an everyday occupation.

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GH

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Streaming expanded! Sunday School 10 A.M. Worship Services 11 A.M. Wed. Eve. Prayer Meeting 7 P.M. (All CST)

The Bible School Classes are also being streamed. They may be found at both gracegod.com and gracegod.org. The order of these classes is as follows:

Mon. 7 P.M. Doctrine
Tue. 7 P.M. Exposition
Thurs. 7 P.M. Synthesis
Fri. 7 P.M. Prophecy

We rejoice greatly that another path has been provided to “sow the seed” in these closing days of The Church Age!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

A Pattern Prayer

Dr. Vicky Moots

(Part 3)

“**A**fter this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” Matt. 6:9-13.

20 Verse 11: “Give us this day our daily bread”. This shows that we recognize our need and know who to go to in order to have our need met. We know that our Heavenly Father loves us and is willing and able to supply our needs. Notice that He provides what we need for today. He wants us to trust Him for each day. Manna was provided daily to the children of Israel in the wilderness as we read in Exodus 16. God knew exactly how much they needed each day for each household. They were instructed to gather one omer for each person (omer=6.7 pints). It was not handed to them. They had to go out early each morning and gather it. They could not hoard it. If they gathered too much (more than they were supposed to) and had some left over the next day, it bred worms and stank. There was one exception: They were to gather twice as much on the sixth day in order to have enough for the Sabbath and it would not rot. There would be none provided on the Sabbath since that was the day of rest.

Sometimes we get over-anxious and concerned about what may happen tomorrow if nothing is provided. Bread speaks of not just food, but the necessities of life. We need to just trust our Heavenly Father and obey His Word, and He will take care of us as He has promised to do. Even though we are going through a wilderness experience today, we need not fear. If we trust Him for today, He will also take care of tomorrow. “Take therefore no thought for the morrow...” (Matt. 6:34). We need to feed our souls daily also. Jesus is the Bread of Life, the true Bread that came down from Heaven.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). Jesus spoke these words when He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.

There are many people who only feed their soul once a week on Sunday morning when they go to church and they expect to be spoon fed. They do not want to go out and gather their own manna. If we only ate physical food once a week, we certainly would not have enough strength to do the things we need to do every day. We are to ask God to give us each day our daily bread from His Word, a special portion just for us, exactly what our soul needs for this day, to get us through the trials that we will be facing tomorrow. Then we would have enough strength to stand against Satan when he tries to cause us to fear or doubt. There may be some days that God gives us an extra portion of His Word because He knows exactly what we will be needing ahead of time. Verse 12: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors". "As" means "in like manner" as we forgive. Verse 14 says, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you". When Jesus spoke this, they were still under the Old Covenant, the Covenant of the Law. Under the Law forgiveness was conditional. Debts, trespasses or sins would be forgiven based on our ability to forgive others. But this is not really possible in our own strength, apart from becoming a new creation in Christ. Jesus had not yet gone to the cross to obtain forgiveness for us for our sins. As the Lamb of God, He became the final sacrifice for sin. His sacrifice fulfilled the Law's demands. We are now under the New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace. As a result, we are able to forgive others because we have been forgiven. We see this in Eph. 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you". We are now to forgive others in the same manner in which we have been forgiven. What does that mean? Our sins were completely forgiven. Heb. 10:17 tells us, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." When God forgives, He also forgets. We are to do the same: not only to forgive, but to forget. We are not to hold a grudge against anyone, no matter what they have done to us. Jesus forgave those who nailed Him to the cross. He cried out, "Father, forgive them". It was our sins that nailed Him to the cross, but He forgives us, unconditionally, when we accept Him as Saviour. Now we are to forgive in the same manner, unconditionally through the love of God which is given to us through the Holy Spirit. Unconditional forgiveness requires the unselfish, "Agape", love of God. This

kind of love is the fruit of the Spirit. It is not possible through our own self effort. Only through yielding to the Holy Spirit can we possess and manifest that kind of love and forgiveness. If you are having difficulty forgiving someone, ask your heavenly Father to give you more of His love. You must first experience His love and forgiveness in your own life before you can share it with others. You can't share something you don't have. Human forgiveness is only shallow and short-lived. We need divine forgiveness that only comes from God. Have you received that forgiveness personally? Do you know that your sins have been forgiven? If so, then when you forgive others, you are simply sharing what God has given you. Even if the other person who wronged you does not ask you or God for forgiveness, you can still forgive them for Jesus' sake through the power of the Holy Spirit. It will bring honor to your Heavenly Father and healing to your soul.

22

V. 13a: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil". This is a "3-D" request when we pray this: We are praying for Direction, Discipline and Deliverance. We can trust God to direct us, to lead us in the right path, but we must be willing to follow. We are instructed in Proverbs 3:5-6 to "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths". His Word is our road map so we understand why or where He is leading us – just trust that He knows what is best for us as our Heavenly Father. When we acknowledge that and are willing to follow, then He can direct and lead us. He will not and cannot lead us into temptation. James 1:13,14 declares, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed". Even though we become a new creation in Christ when we are born again, we still live in this old creation body with its fleshly desires. When we lean to our own understanding and desires, then we can be led astray. If we keep our eyes on the Lord, He will lead us in the right path. When we go down the wrong path by following our own desires, then our Father has to discipline us to deliver us from evil. He does this through circumstances, through His Word (our daily spiritual bread), or through other people. Because He loves us, He will chasten us. It

is His responsibility as our Father. We are advised of this in Heb. 12:5-6: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth". Does He love you? Do you love Him? Then He will chasten you. When we pray, "Deliver us from evil", we are asking our Father to discipline us when we need it and are willing to submit to His chastening, because we love and trust Him. We find out by experience that Heb. 12:11 is true: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby". Sometimes He must allow us to have our own way in order to learn our lesson because we don't take His word for it, like a child who finally has to touch something hot to find out for himself. Sometimes God gives us the thing that we keep begging for even though He knows it may harm us. He allows us to suffer the consequences of our wrong choices, but that does not mean He doesn't love us. It means He does love us and He is disciplining us through those circumstances. When we come to the end of our own resources, just like the prodigal son, then we will call upon Him again. The prodigal son in Luke 15 finally "came to himself" when he was dirty and hungry in the pig pen and decided to return to the father. I'm sure he remembered the words that his father had spoken to him before he left home. He returned to his father with an attitude of repentance, feeling unworthy to even be called a son. But his father was watching for him and ran to him and hugged him and kissed him, dirt and all. The father loved him enough to accept him just as he was, but he loved him too much to leave him that way. He cleaned him up, gave him a clean robe and killed the fatted calf. All this represents the sacrifice of Christ which cleanses us from unrighteousness and then clothes us with His righteousness. He had already been chastened through his experience and had repented and was restored to fellowship with the father who placed him as a son and not a servant. Psalm 94:12 says, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law." (the Word of God) We are blessed as a result of being chastened. This is how He delivers us when we stray. But how much better it would be if we would just heed His Word in the first place and be able to avoid the chastening! If we stay by His side, He will protect us and guide us on our path through life.

MOSES MY SERVANT

Geoff Haase

“**B**y faith Moses, when he was born was hid three months by his parents because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the King's commandment.” Heb 11:23.

We say goodbye to Joseph at the end of Genesis as they lay him in a coffin, now another man will command our attention and lead us further on into God's great redemption story. Four hundred long years had passed (it's hard to believe) since the journeying Hebrews came to Egypt, fulfilling the word of the Lord to Abram, "...know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs (Egypt) and they shall serve them four hundred years;" Gen 15:13 Joseph had died approximately 64 years before the birth of Moses and "...was put in a coffin in Egypt." Gen. 50:26

24 Things went well for the growing nation of Israel until "... there arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph." Ex. 1:8. This would possibly be Rameses 11, whose son Meneptah would be the Pharaoh of the exodus. Under this Rameses 11 the affliction began. Ex. 1:11

This day and this time brought the first of many acts of oppression to the children of Israel. During in this dark time of bitter bondage, a babe would be born who would deliver Israel out of Egyptian slavery and bring them to the Promised Land that God had given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Pharaoh commanded all males born to the Hebrews to be killed Ex. 1:22. Moses' parents must have had a word from the Lord since they have a place in the faith gallery of Hebrews 11. By faith they hid Moses. They did not fear the king. They had a plan and so did God.

Interestingly, we know Moses is a type or picture of Christ in many ways, and here when he was born it says "...they saw that he was a proper child...". (a better translation should read "...when he was born they saw a beautiful child,..." I believe they saw a deliverer and prophetically they saw Jesus who would come to bring eternal redemption. They saw beyond their day (by faith) so they had no fear of the evil king.

The story is amazing, miraculous and full of instruction but let us move on to the place where Moses meets his God. We

may see ourselves in this story.

The child grew and his mother gives him to Pharaoh's daughter, and Moses became her son and she called his name Moses because "...I drew him out of the water." Ex. 2:10 The parallel is easy to see, with Moses and Jesus, for both babes escaped the edict of death, and both were deliverers.

When Moses was grown, he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, and became judge, jury and executioner when he killed the Egyptian. He is exposed and has to get out of Egypt. He might be grown but he is in no wise ready to lead the nation of Israel to freedom.

We, too, are born into the family of God. We are nurtured and grow. We also kill the Egyptian (that is, we believe in our death with Christ). Our old man has to be seen as dead if we are to move on and move out into greater dealings of God and become more useful in spiritual things. Forty years of military training in all the wisdom of Egypt enabled Moses to be "...mighty in words and in deeds." Acts 7:20-22. He learned the mysteries of Egyptian religion, mathematics, geometry, poetry, music, medicine, hieroglyphics, and much more.

The murder of the Egyptian forced Moses to escape to Midian and "...sat down by a well." Ex. 2:15 Jacob found Rachel at the well. Gen 29 Jesus met a woman by the well. John 4 We, too, need to visit the well of the Word where we must sit and rest as we view and reassess the journey ahead.

The Scripture states that Moses was content to dwell with Jethro, who then gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. That union produced two sons. Ex. 2:21, Ex. 4:20. He settles in Midian and the Egyptian general and would be prince becomes a shepherd. God has His own way of making progress in our lives and getting us ready, making us after His image. The ways of Egypt have to be left behind and forgotten if we are to know Him in a deep and meaningful way. There is no such thing as painless progress in the Kingdom of God. We may not be called to be a Moses, but we are called to rule and reign with Jesus.

"And it came to pass (40 more years) in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage." "Ex. 2:23 A persecuted

people want freedom. A remnant of the people still hold faith in the God of Abraham. And all these years God was getting His man ready. Getting His people ready, getting events ready. The "...process of time..." is so important in spiritual matters. We can be so impatient. We need His times and His seasons. It takes years to grow a great oak tree but only months to grow a carrot. In the darkest of times God will have a people and He has a people today all over the earth, who have come through the tests and trials of life, who have become weak enough to be used of God. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro..." Ex. 3:1 Was it just another day for this lonely shepherd? What was he thinking? Was he just another forgotten man, a "has been?" Were his mother's dream and prayers still burning in his heart? God sometimes has to get us to the backside of somewhere to say something to us. He took his sheep a long way from home to the Mountain of God, Horeb. As far as we know, there was no Word all these long years. Something had to have died inside. Moses must have had suffered loss.

26 Then God got the shepherd's attention, as "...the angel of the LORD (the preincarnate Christ) appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush:..." And Moses "...looked (just a burning bush), but the bush burned with fire yet was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, and why the bush has not burnt." Ex. 3:2-3 Little did he know that nothing would ever be the same again. It's when we "...turn aside,..." when we are ready, when we are at our weakest, it is then we need a new beginning. It is when God's time is right, and we are right (I didn't say perfect). God has something very big in mind. God had Moses in that plan. The process of time always comes into play with God. And we know, when the time was right "God sent His Son" to be the great deliverer of all mankind. It was in man's darkest hour that Jesus came.

When God "...saw that Moses turned aside to see,..." He spoke. Ex. 3:4 And, yes, the Lord waits to see us turn. This has always been the problem for Israel in all her history, the Church, and also for us as believers: the failure to turn. "Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn

ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD." Zech. 1:3-4 The burning bush represents the poor down trodden nation under Egyptian bondage, burning, yes, but not consumed. She can never be fully consumed. "...he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Psa. 121:4. The bush alone is very insignificant, but to have a bush that burns and is not consumed, a bush with the flame of God ever burning, may be a picture of Moses, too. God wants the insignificant to have the significance of the flame of God burning in them even as Jesus described John The Baptist. "He was a burning and a shining light:..." Jn. 5:35

The fire of the Spirit. The strength and anger Moses used to kill the Egyptian was not going to work the works of God. It is not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord.

"...put off thy shoes from off thy feet..." Vs. 5 Shoes were removed as a sign of respect and awe. It's a new day for Moses, a new way, a new walk, a new word even as Isaiah asserts, "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth;...I will even make a way in the wilderness'..." Isa. 43:19 We stand on Holy ground. God is speaking. "He that hath an ear, let him hear." Forty long years Moses was content to shepherd sheep. It took one short moment to get Moses out of Egypt: however, it took forty long lonely years to get Egypt out of Moses. Prepared for greater things, Moses listens, learns and leads God's people to the Promised Land. Ex.3:10 You, too, are being prepared for great things. Who knows what God will do with you and me as we make ourselves available to Him and His people! Rom. 12:1-2

As we are taught and led of the Lord, we will burn on long for God and not be consumed. II Tim. 1:6 (amp.) "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." Lev. 6:13

* There is one discouraging thing about the rules of success --- they won't work unless you do.

* Men with clenched fists cannot shake hands.

* Hardening of men's hearts ages them more quickly than arteries.

* People do odd things to get even.

* The snob: An inferior person with a superiority complex.

THANKFUL FOR PLENTY

Plenty of Food. "Ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied,"
Joel 2 :26.

Plenty of Water. "Thou didst send plenteous rain,"
Psa.68:9.

Plenty of Goods. "He shall make thee plenteous in
goods," Deut. 28:11.

Plenty of Production. "The Lord thy God will make thee
plenteous in every work of thine hand . . .," Deut. 30:9.

Plenty in Store. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,"
Prov. 3:10. "Bread enough, and to spare," Luke 15:17.

Plenty for All. "A plentiful country," Jer. 2:7.

Plenty of Mercy. "Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy,"
Psa. 3:8

Plentiful Pardon. "Return unto the Lord, for He will
abundantly pardon," Is. 55:7.

Plentiful Peace. "And the peace of God, which passeth all
28 understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus
Christ," Phil. 4:7.

Plentiful Redemption. "With the Lord is plenteous
Redemption," Psa. 130:7. "For God so loved the world that He
gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him
should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16.

Plentiful Grace. "And God is able to make all grace
abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency, for all
things, may abound unto every good work," II Cor. 9:8.

Plentiful Resources. "Unto Him who is able to do exceed-
ing abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the
power that worketh in us," Eph. 3:20.

Plenty for the Future. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,
neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God
hath prepared for them that love Him," I Cor. 2:9.

(Selected)

SPIRITUAL HOLDUPS
Elsie Richardson Bagwill

These are dangerous days, both in the natural life and in the spiritual life. The boldness of the devil is surely amazing and appalling.

In the natural, there has never been a time when holdups were so numerous and daring; the robbers not even waiting for the, darkness, but committing their dastardly deeds in broad daylight and in the presence of many witnesses, fearing no one.

They are exceedingly bold in these last days. Now what are they after? They want the riches or possessions of others. Do they care how much suffering they cause for those they rob? No, just so their purpose is carried out.

Who is it that is robbed? Those who have riches and offer the least resistance. Just so, the devil has been for some time staging some daring holdups among the people of God. As in the natural, he looks not unto the spiritual darkness for his victims, among the unsaved; but he is working hard and speedily among the "children of light" - those who have accepted the truth and grace of God, even those who have been filled with the Holy Spirit. Yes, he works among those who have testified among many witnesses. If he can make them fail God while witnesses look on, he is more than pleased to show his power. In his boldness, he attacks the saints right in the face of their declaration of victory by the Word of God and His grace.

29

Now, what is Satan after? Oh, he would rob us of our place in the heavenlies. He would steal away the victory that Jesus Christ won for us at the cross and in His resurrection. He would rob us of our faith in our Heavenly Father, and leave us in doubt and fear; for he cares not how much we suffer from his deeds.

Oh, so many of God's people today are letting Satan rob them of their place in the Bride company, just because they have not practiced enough in using their weapon, the Word of God to put the robber to flight. They have not learned to hold fast to that victory which Jesus gained for them when He defeated the devil in His death and resurrection.

Our Lord gave us an excellent example of how to deal with Satan, when He was tempted of him in the wilderness after His baptism in water and His anointing with the Spirit by His Father in Heaven. Matt. 4:1-10 Here Jesus used the Word of God

as His weapon, saying "...it is written...." Therefore the devil left in shameful defeat. Glory to God for the Word!

When I asked the Lord for something from the Word for the beginning of the year, He gave me Revelation 3:11 - "Behold I come quickly: hold that fast, which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," Truly, thus far, this year has been a time of severe temptations in which Satan would have stolen away the victory from me, if he had not been faced by God's Word. There is a way of escape from each temptation (I Cor. 10:13) by the Word of God, as the Holy Spirit brings it to our minds. As we use it, we escape into a place of refuge, even Christ. "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Prov. 18:10.

30 The robbers of the world use weapons that frighten their victims; but Satan uses weapons that deceive. Sometimes he attacks a saint in financial need, making him doubt that God will supply all his need according to His riches in glory. Sometimes he attacks one who is suffering in body, and makes him doubt the healing power of Jesus and His willingness to heal; or he tells the sufferer that he is going to die because he has failed some time to please God. So, if the victim has not learned that his healing, as well as his salvation, is in Christ, he gives up in despair.

Another of Satan's weapons is to make his victim think he is out of the will of God. If the saint has not learned to get the mind of Christ that he may go on, he gives up in discouragement. One more prominent weapon which the devil uses for his holdups is to sneakingly get a saint occupied with the failures of another saint, or perhaps imaginary failures, and judge him severely; thus losing sight of Christ. He fails to count his own old creation dead, according to Paul's teaching in Romans 6. So he becomes boastful of his own life and walk, taking the attitude of --- "look how good I am." He has lost the victory over his own flesh, because he remembered not that he too is an utter failure if Christ is not his stay.

O friends, let us go on to perfection in this race. The end is almost here. Our chance for overcoming is nearly over. The race is nearly won. It seems I can even now see the crown. Let us not stop to grumble about our troubles and pains; for we are liable to be held up at any minute and robbed of the victory and our place in the Bride of Christ and of our crown.

(Reprint 1964)

A PSALM OF GRATITUDE

“**B**less the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” Psa. 103:2.

The Psalmist is fond of addressing the soul as though to arouse it from lethargy. Within is a whole choir of minstrels, let them all awake! All that is within should be attuned to God and His praise. Let us not repine for the past, nor strain after the future. We often forget the rare benefits of the present moment, because we suppose that there is something more absolutely satisfying ahead. Here and now God is forgiving, healing, redeeming, crowning, satisfying, and executing righteous acts. Live in the present! Live in God --- the same yesterday, today, and forever! It is enough. The past records of God’s dealings with His people are an incentive to faith. What He was, He is. He is a fountain brimming to the full with pitying love, which flows over in mercy and forgiveness. “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” We are reminded of the conductor of a vast orchestra and choir, whose trained ear missed the note of the piccolo. So God will miss your voice if you refrain from His praise. 31

- F.B. Meyer

GOD SEEKS THY PRAISE

It is said that, once when Sir Michael Costa was having a rehearsal with a vast array of musicians ‘and hundreds of voices, a man who played the piccolo far off in a remote corner said within himself, “In all this din, it matters not what I do,” and he ceased to play.

Suddenly the great conductor stopped. Amid a great silence, he cried aloud, “Where is the piccolo?” The quick ear had missed it.

He listens for thy praise.

GIVING - WITH THANKS

The first harvest festival was held when Israel reaped the firstfruits in the Promised Land and presented them to the Lord, as Leviticus 23:10 commanded. Moreover, they had strict instructions that they should not "make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God" - Lev. 23:22.

What a blessing God had in store for Boaz when he obeyed this ordinance! Not only did he become the progenitor of Israel's promised Redeemer through his union with the lovely Ruth, but forever he will typify the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious Blood purchased for Him a Bride.



Choices

Paul N. Smith

“**S**ee, I have set before thee this day life and good; and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways....that thou mayest live and multiply; and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. That thou mayest cleave unto Him; for He is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” Deut. 30:15-20

Moses was speaking to the children of Israel for 33 the last time. God was ready to take him home after his years of arduous labor in leading God’s people out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and now at the threshold of the Promised Land. He reminded them of God’s blessing if they continued to follow Him, or cursing if they disobeyed. They were brought together to make a decision: to follow the Lord and receive good or to forsake the Lord and experience death. Joshua also brought the people together at the end of his life and asked them to make a choice. It reminds us of the Apostle Paul who also gave a final appeal to the Ephesian elders to follow the Lord.

These three men all had to make choices in their own lives, and fortunately for them and for millions of others, they made the right choice. What we decide to do with our lives affects others, and to what extent, we do

not know. Our choice is not for our sake alone, but for our “seed” which will follow us.

There is a story told by R. Barclay Warren, who taught Bible School in Ottawa, Ontario. One of his students was George Beverly Shea, who loved to sing, and after training, sought it as a profession. He was offered a contract at one of the radio stations in New York City. He asked if he might sing Gospel Songs, but was told that he could use one occasionally, but had to use the songs on the Hit Parade. What would he do? He had to make a decision.

34 His mother was praying for him, and one night she placed a poem on the piano. Bev Shea saw it the next morning and composed a tune for it. One verse was: “I’d rather have Jesus than silver or gold; I’d rather have Jesus than riches untold; I’d rather have Jesus than worldwide fame; I’d rather be true to His holy Name!” Bev turned down the contract and a short time later he was offered a position with a Chicago radio station where he might use the Gospel songs he loved. While there he met Billy Graham....and the rest of the story is well known.

What choices are we making? We are faced with them every day; some may seem inconsequential, but perhaps have long-lasting results. Let’s start out the day asking God’s help in making the right choices for that day. Each day can be a new start, and we can say with Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

(Reprint 1999)



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