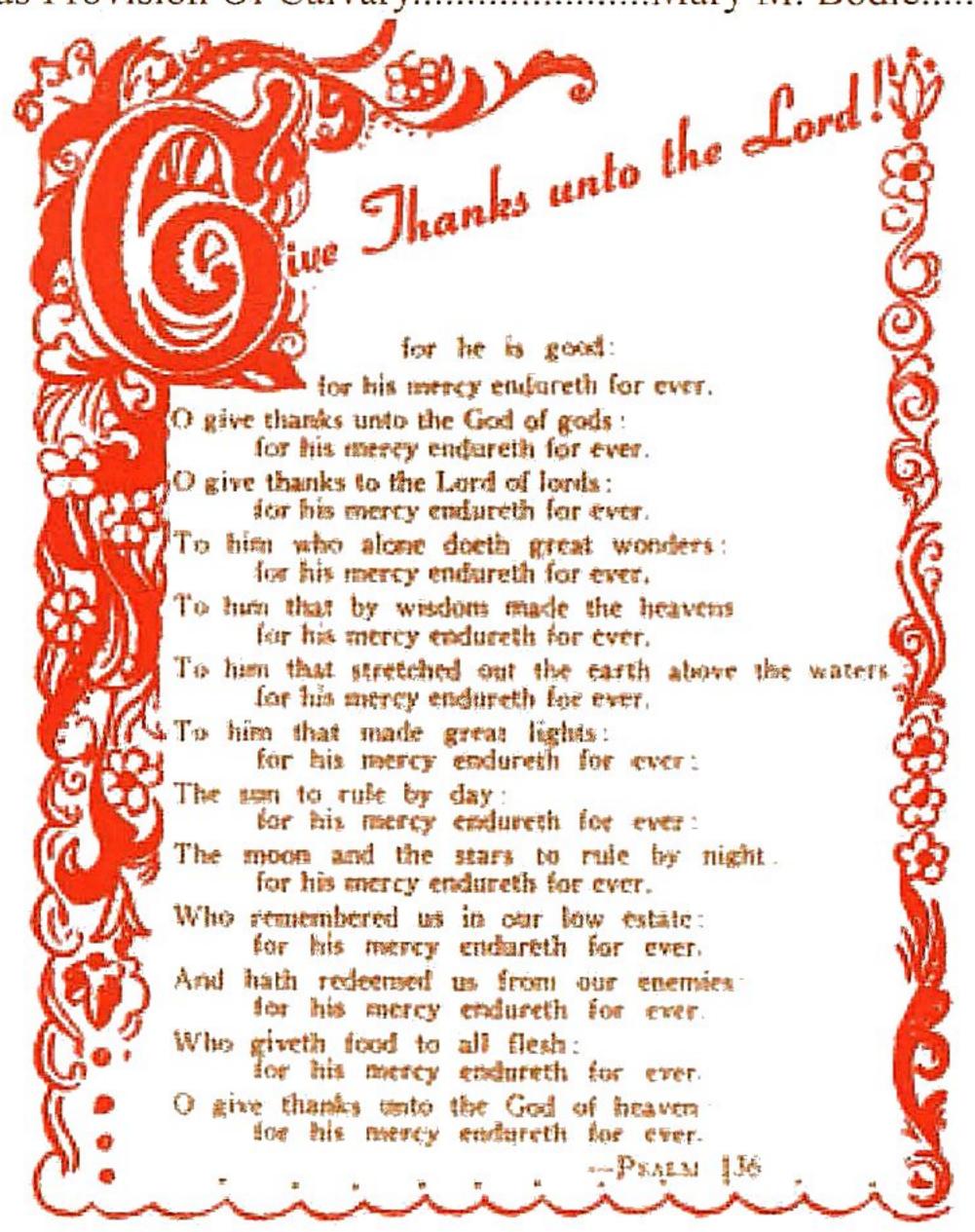
CENTRICE and CENTRO

Declaring counsel of Gop

Num. 11 Vol. 111 November 2021 for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

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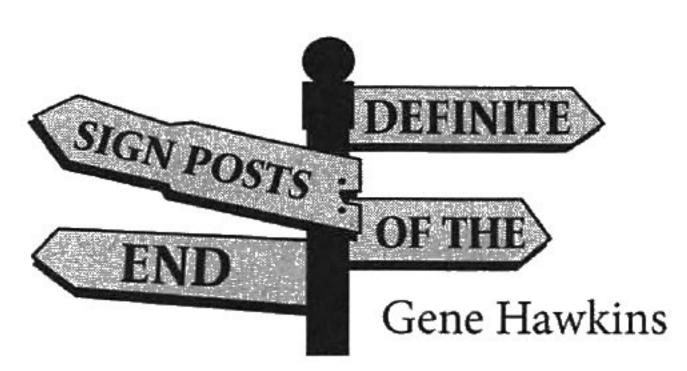
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



but is longsuffering... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, ... Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth,.... Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." II Pet. 3:9-14

"Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people,... That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet,... and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Dan. 3:4-6

"All the presidents of the kingdom,...and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree,...that it be not changed,... Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. 6:7-10

The above citations from Peter and Daniel most assuredly

have a direct correlation with one another as they apply to the deplorable and often impossible conditions of these last days identified in scripture as "...perilous (dangerous, furious, fierce) times..." II Tim. 3:1 God's Word declares a whole host of end time signs designed to announce the coming "...day of the Lord..." but the Holy Ghost specifically singled out the fact that "...the elements shall melt with fervent heat,..." to unveil the mystery of "global warming or climate change." That is no coincidence or accident, for this is the major political world-wide talking points at this present time. He then asks a very pertinent question directly based upon this particular end time condition. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" II Pet. 3:11-12 The fact is, that "...the day of God is coming..." and there is nothing man can, or cannot do, to stop the "heated" atmosphere which will prevail. Peter then gives his audience instruction on how to properly conduct themselves, in view of it. "Wherefore, (because of the foregoing verses) beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." II Pet. 3:14

Daniel also is a major prophet of these last days, and his message not only prophesies the specific order of events which will take place among the nations but also presents a clear demonstration of HOW those of our day can be the "...manner of persons..." described above. Both of these prophets inform us that godliness can and must prevail in our lives even during the very difficult and impossible conditions which prevail across the entire planet earth.

Grace and Glory received an e-mail recently, which beautifully outlines some of the conditions which prevail in America and around the world. Some very pertinent and pointed questions are also asked, which are undoubtedly on the minds and lips of many conscientious believers in view of the complications and subsequent reactions of many nations regarding the

coronavirus pandemic. Consider the following excerpt: whole world knows that the dreaded disease called the coronavirus has taken a huge toll on the lives of people around the entire earth. No doubt, it can be very scary to anyone with good common sense. Both believers in the Lord & non-believers have died from contracting the disease. During Former-President Trump's administration he pushed very hard for the manufacturing of the vaccine... The American government urged & still does that everyone get the vaccinations & now under the Biden administration people working for the federal government are being threatened that if they don't get it, they will be fired from their jobs. I can understand the mind set but many of us feel that our democratic liberty is being slowly taken away from us. I believe there is more to it than our freedom possibly being taken from us: What about our complete trust in the Lord? We all go to a doctor from time to time ... but we who are Christians also ask for prayer from those we know that are Bible believers...We read: "Is anyone among you sick?... the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up...." Jas. 5:14-15 Doesn't that say: ... And the prayer of faith will save (heal) the one who is sick? Sounds very clear to me.... I, like everybody else, go to the doctors... By doing that am I really saying I don't believe in God's healing? Yes, I got vaccinated against all known diseases since childhood & had my children vaccinated because the scientists have made a serum to cause my body to create antibodies against the disease. My question: Am I really trusting the Lord against diseases? Or do I try everything first then try to trust the Lord as the last resort?"

Such questions surely merit answers and Bless God! Scripture has them. Healing is most assuredly included in the atonement which Jesus purchased on Calvary as recorded by God's Word. Many have been Divinely healed of cancer and many other ungodly diseases which have plagued our world, but such healing is most assuredly dependent on individual faith. It is also imperative to understand that there are times when God does use doctors to accomplish His purpose, and it is so gratifying to hear a number of those same physicians declare that only God can heal. Medication likewise does not always work and one must conclude that if it does, it is only God Who makes it effective. Most Americans did have childhood shots against measles, mumps, & polio, but there is a great difference with

the current coronavirus vaccines. Those which many received as children had a prominent history of being effective. The current vaccines simply do not have that same record as is noted in another portion of this e-mail. "We were supposedly protected against getting the corona virus. First the CDC said, "yes we were protected against contracting the virus then later it said no, we weren't." First Dr. Fauci said, masks didn't protect us then later he declared they did. Nobody is sure they do protect us, even now."

Government assertion that anyone who took the vaccine would not be a threat to others can also be added to this list. That claim was later reversed. Not only so, but the record is also quite clear that, some who received the vaccine did succumb to death, as witness the demise of the very popular and fully vaccinated General Colin Powell, which was reported at this writing. Reports also assured that anyone who received the shot would not get the virus, but they did. Others have also had some very violent reactions to their injections and suffered severe side effects. Thus the new message is that if one contracts the disease, they should simply "put up" with these little inconveniences for they will not die. That opinion has also proven to be untrue.

All of these contradictions simply add to the extreme confusion in these last days which Jesus also described. "And there shall be signs in the sun,... and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; (state of quandary, to have no way out, at a loss mentally, doubt) the sea and the waves roaring;" Lk. 21:25 This latter illustration of troubled waters surely does reflect the uncertainty found in many hearts at this hour due to all the conflicting information bandied about today.

The writer of this e-mail is also greatly concerned that personal liberties are being assaulted, and such control over humanity is certainly in harmony with God's Word, for the antichrist will most assuredly try to enslave all men. It has been noted in the Sign Posts previously that the entire world is witnessing early signs of that control, in direct preparation for the bondage which will be demanded by this man of sin when his one-world government comes to power.

Many of the mandates demanded today could most

assuredly infringe on the "rights" of one who would "trust the Lord" for his well being. There are those who would claim the above promises of healing from God's Word, along with a beautiful declaration in Psa. 91. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress:...in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee...from the noisome pestilence. (plague)... Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; ... Nor for the pestilence (plague) that walketh in darkness;... A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it (this plague) shall not come nigh thee." Psa. 91:1-7 Some might ask "Why do not these promises apply to me?" However, today, our own ears have heard this refrain: "those who refuse to be vaccinated are idiots!"

Paul addresses the truth of personal liberties in Rom. 14, and these principles must surely apply to the personal choice of receiving the coronavirus vaccine or not. The apostle opens that chapter, declaring plainly: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." Rom. 14:1 The example 7 he uses is that of one's personal liberty to eat certain meats and drink wine. He undoubtedly had the Jew in mind regarding the meat, for pork was forbidden under Jewish law even though God specifically told Peter: "... What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Acts 10:15 This was God's response after Peter saw a vision "Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, ...wild beasts, ...creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." Acts 10:12-13 Paul draws this conclusion regarding that which acceptable or not: "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." Rom 14:14 The term "... any thing..." must be applied to a great number of liberties which some people have, while others would not, and it surely does include the liberty that some would have in accepting this vaccine while others are not convinced that they want to inject such a thing into their own bodies. Paul's message to believers is very clear: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and

let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." Rom. 14:3 The question might be asked. Who has the most faith? The one who receives the vaccine, or the one who does not? Some may believe they are not "trusting the Lord" if they receive it. Others may believe that God is simply using it to protect them. Regardless of which view is taken, the one must not despise the other, and none must stand in judgment of another's faith.

Paul also gives this very valuable instruction in regard to "personal faith." "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Rom. 14:22 Any person's faith must be "...before God," as though no one else were around. The object is not to please everyone else, but only Him. Not only so, but none can dictate his faith to another. Furthermore, if he bases his decision on faith, he must not allow self-condemnation which, for the most part, is often induced by Satan himself.

The apostle then declares that one must abide by the faith he has, and not by what he or others think he should have: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23 Regardless of what a person's conscience or faith may be, it is sin if he does not abide by it. The fact is that every person must ascertain where he stands in all the verses mentioned in this chapter. All of us must live our lives before God rather than the opinions of others.

Note another issue raised in the aforementioned e-mail related to personal liberty and "trusting the Lord." "Now concerning the disease called the coronavirus, I see some of the mega churches in some states that were forced to close by the government & some of the pastors under the idea: "We are trusting God & the government has no right to take away our religious freedom." Some pastors defied the government & ultimately kept the doors open & were arrested. Who is right? The pastor or the government? Didn't Daniel & his friends disobey by defying the kings decree when it came to going against their godly faith? I believe it could be argued both ways." Recent reports also indicate that in addition to the previously mentioned government employees being fired for failure to be vaccinated,

pressure is also being applied to private companies to follow the same pattern.

The above citations from Daniel provide some very beneficial answers to these dilemmas encountered by many devout believers today. They illustrate how those under authority must conduct themselves, "...what manner of persons..." they ought to be, when decrees are issued which are directly contradictory to their own deep convictions of faith. Paul's message for this entire Church Age from beginning to end is also very clear: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Rom. 13:1-5 Some might conclude that there is never a time when one must take action against authority, but Paul's message here is qualified. He boldly states that there is most assuredly a consequence to be borne by one who "rebels" against authority. Note also that the leader whom God has ordained is intended to be "...the minister of God to thee for good...." Not only so but he is also "...the minister of God, a revenger to execute to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Daniel and his three companions give us instruction when these government leaders DO NOT have our good in mind and when they are NOT executing "...wrath upon him that doeth evil...." When government demands that one do what is contrary to God's decree, government must be resisted, but the key here is the attitude that the resistance is not found to be rebellion, for which there is severe consequence from God. Furthermore, such action must be because a person is in harmony with what God wants rather than simple rebellion against government decree.

Jesus' disciples, for example, were in no wise guilty of rebellion when they said "... We ought to obey God rather than men," after they were commanded not to teach in the Name of Jesus. Acts 5:29

The three Hebrew children are also confronted with this same dilemma when they were commanded "That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, ... and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Dan. 3:5-6 It is a scriptural fact that these three did not rebel against the authority over them when they refused to fall down in idolatrous worship. However, just because they followed God's decree rather than man's, they, like the early apostles, still had to bear the consequence for their actions. God did not keep them from being cast into the burning fiery furnace. Thus, anyone who feels that he has no choice but to disobey government requirements in regard to Churches must also be prepared to endure the consequence. God did not keep the three Hebrew Children out of the furnace, but He did make known His Presence when four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire appeared and "...the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Dan 3:25 These three men of faith had vehemently declared "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But ... be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not ...worship the golden image..." Dan. 3:17-18 The record is clear that God did deliver them, for "...the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them." Dan. 3:27 He will likewise provide deliverance those today who may literally and conscientiously choose to endure "the burning fiery furnace."

Daniel, too, deliberately disobeyed the authority over him but again it was not in rebellion. He had engaged in prayer with God for at least 70 years when King Darius signed the decree that "...that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of

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lions." Dan. 6:7 We can almost hear the cry of our day: "Daniel, don't be such a fanatic. It is only for 30 days. Just do what you are told." Once again Daniel's decision was based on a deeply held conviction of faith. It was not a passing "religious" whim, and he could in no wise violate his own faith and conscience in the matter. He was in total harmony with God but, he, too, must endured the consequence of the lion's den and risked being torn to shreds. That did not happen, for God always defends His Own. Again, those today who would choose to "resist authority" had better be sure in their own hearts that they are believing God and not just using "God's Will" as an excuse for their own rebellion and desire.

Finally the aforementioned writer enquires, "Where is our faith in God? Are we...just following a belief system that has no good outcome or do we honestly believe in a God that indeed protects & cares about us. Of course, I believe in God but do I too, follow the rules exactly, for fear of a disease?" The key here is "fear." It is imperative that God's people know that our lives must not be controlled by fear or dread. Fear hath torment, and more than once scripture reveals that when men make decisions based on fear rather than faith, they most often make the wrong choice. Paul told Timothy, "...God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." II Tim. 1:7 We must at all costs believe God to quicken us with this latter spirit. Thus, it is vitally imperative that our hearts be attuned constantly to the Word of God, for therein will be found the faith we need in these closing days of time. Real faith does not come through the opinions, desires, and efforts of men but rather "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17

Peter is very emphatic that, "...the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;..." Paul likewise asserts, "...that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." I Thess. 5:2 Both of these men also proclaim that men are to live their lives in view of that event. Peter asks his hearers to answer the question "...what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, ..." Paul likewise exhorts, "But ye,

brethren, are not in darkness,... Ye are all the children of light, ... Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch...For they that sleep sleep 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 by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." I Thess. 5:4-10

Those whose hearts are centered on Jesus' soon return realize that the wrath of which Paul speaks here is that of the tribulation, rather than a threat of hell. This world is on the very threshold of it, but Philadelphia believers have been promised that "...I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10 Even with all the fearful destruction caused by the coronavirus and other tragic displays of adversity and misery due to the fulfillment of prophecy, such promises as this must cause us to look up in hope of deliverance rather than bowing to fear and desperation.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Tit 2:13

13

The Tempted Prophet

John F. Ney

But he himself went a days journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, 0 Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." I Kings 19:4.

Thank God that some of the failures of His people are recorded, as well as their victories. Elijah, the man of God, was tempted with discouragement. He just said, "...It is enough;..." Others have said the same thing. That great man of prayer and faith won a great battle and God answered his prayer, and heaven was shut for three years and a half, so that it did not rain, and then it rained because he prayed again. Then he interceded **against** Israel and against his own translation. Paul tells us in Rom. 11 that he interceded to God against Israel.

God sent down an angel to prepare a feast for him. The prophet not only sat down and said, "...It is enough;..." but he laid down and went to sleep. While in that condition, an angel of the Lord touched him and said, "Arise and eat." When he awoke, he found the table all spread. He ate and laid down again. "And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights." Some say, "Whip the horse that pulls;" but here the Lord had a bushel of oats for the tired, weary, tempted prophet.

On the surface, it appears that the prophet's prayer was right. "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away." V. 14 Where were those seven thousand who had not bowed their knees to Baal and kissed him when Elijah was out and out for God? Why did he not hear a peep out of them? It would have been more encouraging to Elijah, if some of those 7000 had sent him an offering rather than listening to those ravens (type of the old creation) squawk, squawk, saying, Do we have to feed you? Where is the God in whom you trust? And when the poor widow was giving him her last bite, why did not some of those 7000 send him a check?

Surely, they were not all as poor as this widow. Praise God, that He does not answer every prayer, whether it is directed against ourselves, or others. Christ, our faithful High Priest, "ever liveth to make intercession for us;" for all of us at all times. Who has not been tempted with discouragement and felt like sitting down and laying down on the job and go to sleep, saying, "It is enough," or there is a limit? Others are not doing their part. I have to almost do it all. I am just giving my very life and no one seems to care, or appreciate it. I see no results for my sacrifice. Nobody seems to go on with the Lord. I am afraid I am laboring in vain; so I will just sit down and wait for the coming of the Lord.

A discouraged person is in no condition lovingly to look for the coming of the Lord, nor can he intercede for or encourage others. How good and faithful of our God that He did not whip, or leave the lonely prophet there under the tree to die. But rather He spread a table before him and encouraged him to eat. The angel exhorted him the second time, to "...arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee."

the battle is fierce and that He needs them in a special way in the battle front. After Elijah had a square meal and was strengthened and went forty days and forty nights in the strength of that meat, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" And he began to intercede against Israel. Then God had to teach him by an object lesson. He let him stand upon the mount before the Lord. "And behold, the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering of the cave."

Others besides Elijah have gone the same route, especially in these latter days since the Holy Spirit has been poured out according to Acts 2:4. Some have had the God of power answer their prayers in a wonderful way. They have seen mighty revivals. Multitudes were saved and filled with the dynamite from on high and multitudes healed from all manner of diseases, and captives were loosed that were bound by Satan through various habits.

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But there came a time when such successful workers had to hear the still small voice of the Spirit, even as Elijah did. Here, many Pentecostal people have failed. They have interceded before God against others and said, "We are the only people who are left." They have not recognized the still small voice of the Spirit in others. That thundering spirit is in order against the prophets of Baal. They need to be beheaded but it is not appropriate against God's own blood-bought people. It is a good thing that God saw to it that there were none of His. When we yield in any measure, to discouragement, we are in no condition to intercede for others. Rather we are apt to intercede against them. And we are not in a right heart attitude lovingly to be ready for the coming of the Lord. And, besides, discouraged people are nearsighted and forgetful. Elijah, what about Obadiah that hid one hundred of the Lord's prophets in a cave and fed them when Jezebel cut off the Lord's prophets? Did he not say that he feared the Lord greatly from his youth? Did he not do a great work in secret when he fed those prophets? What about that self-sacrificing widow that gave him her last morsel of bread? Elijah, you better move slowly and not intercede against Obadiah and the widow. I am sure they were praying for Elijah while he was under the juniper tree.

Thank God for our New Testament Elijah, the Apostle Paul. Though he was God's chosen man with a special message for the church, and God used him as no other was used before, he never interceded against any of God's people. Rather, he continually had the care of the whole church upon his heart; and also for Israel he had great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart that they might be saved. He even wished that he might be made a curse for them. Paul preached at Troas till midnight and a young man named Eutychus fell out of the window from the third loft and was picked up for dead, but Paul did not get discouraged and intercede against him. He did not say, I am pouring out my life for you at my own expense, preaching until midnight and you do not take in the word at all. No, but he "went down and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him." He always recognized the still small voice of the Spirit in others and endeavored to kindle every spark of life. So they were comforted and he continued to preach till break of day.

The children of Israel rejected the word of the Lord through

Samuel. They wanted to be like the other nations and have a king to reign over them. Samuel's heart was broken and he went to the Lord about it. The Lord told him that they had rejected Him by rejecting Samuel and his message. But how tenderly Samuel warned them that they would be brought into bondage, and added, "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way." I Sam. 12:23.

Oh, Beloved, these are testing and trying times. Satan is stealing a march on some. He knows the time is short. And he would discourage those who are being used of God in every conceivable way. But Hallelujah! God's grace is sufficient. What an honor to be identified with Christ in this last great spiritual conflict for the church! God forbid that any of us should fail in this final battle by glancing at others as to whether they do their part, or not. We that believe that the time for translation is at hand, blush with shame that we ever sat down under the juniper tree for one day. Surely, if we are ready for translation and expect the trumpet to blow at any moment, our hearts must go out for others, that they also may be ready. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:37

(Original Printing 1931)

Thanksgiving

Thankful for all life's leanness here below, For all earth's little heartbreaks and despairs, For every loss sustained; that I might know How much, how very much, my Father cares.

Thankful for every wound unto my pride,
For all ambitions of the flesh that failed;
For poverty and pain, and dreams denied To teach me how completely Christ prevailed.

"In everything give thanks," seems hard at first;
But, oh, it is the gate through which I see,
When men forsake and life has done its worst,
The Christ of God who hung on Calvary And gave me so much to be thankful for.
Though all else fails, how could I ask for more?

- Helen Frazee Bower

A man's daughter asked the local minister to come and pray with her elderly father. When the minister arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows. An empty chair was beside his bed. The minister assumed that the man had been informed of his visit. "I guess you were expecting me," he said.

"No. Who are you" asked the father.

"I'm the new minister at your church," he replied. "when I saw the empty chair, I figured you knew I was going to show up."

"Oh yes, the chair," said the bedridden man. "Would you mind closing the door?"

Puzzled, the minister shut the door. "I have never told anyone this, not even my daughter," said the man. "But all my life I have never known how to pray. At church I used to hear the pastor talk about prayer, but it went right over my head. I abandoned any attempt at prayer," he continued, "until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here is what I suggest. Sit down in a chair; place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith, see Jesus on the chair. It's not spooky, because He promised that He would be with you always. Just speak to Him in the same way you're doing with me right now."

So I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it often every day. I'm careful though; if my daughter caught me talking to an empty chair, she'd send me off to the funny farm."

The minister was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the elderly man to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him, anointed him with oil, and left.

Two nights later the daughter called to tell the minister that her father had died that afternoon. Did he die in peace?" he asked.

"Yes. When I left the house at two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me that he loved me and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange about his death. Apparently just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on the chair beside the bed. What do you make of that?"

The minister wiped tears from his eyes and said, "I wish we could all go like that."

("For we walk by faith, not by sight.")

--sent in

(Reprint)

REFLECTIONS

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes

before our God;" I Thess. 3:9

This annual season of Thanksgiving celebrated in America stems from the following proclamation put forth by George Washington.

"WHEREAS, it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor;

WHEREAS, Both the houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me "to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness"!

Now, therefore, I do recommend next, to be devoted by the people of the states to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be, that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country."

While many of this nation do pause to render thanks unto God, it is mostly for material bounty, which is most assuredly proper, but it does fall far short in observing the fullness of this proclamation. Men simply do not seem to "...acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will,... etc."

God's people surely do well to rejoice in His plenteous blessings, but the text above indicates that Paul went much further than that. He knew what it meant to give thanks for natural blessings but he was not obsessed with accumulating them. He rather cried out, "...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: ...I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Phil. 4:11-12

Thus, he exults, "...what thanks can we render to God again for you,..." All God's people must likewise learn to give specific thanks unto God for those with whom they surrounded. Paul taught the Ephesians how beneficial are one member of the body is to another, as he preached Christ "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4:16

Today is surely a day when those standing against the forces of evil and the darkness of this age, earnestly contending "...for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," (Jude 3) desperately need the love and faith contributed by other members of the body of Christ.

Though the numbers of the faithful may be small, it is vitally important that we, too, "...render thanks to God..." for those who do in any measure proclaim this glorious message of Divine Grace. Note Paul's "proclamation" of rejoicing: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, 19 supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Phil. 1:15 -18

Praise God for those special worthies of faith, like unto the Thessalonians, who do send forth their love and bring forth such joy to those around them, just because they emanate that which they have by experience drawn from Jesus.

GH

STREAMING REMINDER:

Sunday Worship Services and Wed. Eve. Prayer Meeting along with the Bible School classes are being streamed at www. gracegod.com The schedule is as follows:

> Sunday School 10 A.M. Worship 11 A.M. Afternoon Service 1:30 P.M. Monday Eve. Synthesis 7 P.M. Thursday Eve. Exposition 7 P.M. Friday Eve. Prophecy 7 P.M. Central Time Zone applies to all.

God's Timing and Purposes

(Cont'd)

Dr. Vicky Moots

"...a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted." Ecc. 3:2b:

Farmers know when is the best time to plant different crops. They also know when it is time to harvest them, for there is a specific amount of growing time required for them to mature and fully ripen. They cannot be harvested too early or too late; it must be done at the right time even if it's the weekend or a holiday.

New life comes from a seed only after it is buried, or planted. Then the outer covering deteriorates and is destroyed, allowing the "germ of life" to be freed to produce life out of death. All of this has a spiritual meaning as it refers to Jesus, and also to us as individuals, for it speaks of death and resurrection.

Jesus told His disciples in John 12:23-24, "...The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily [truly, truly], I say unto you, Except a corn [kernel] of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus was using the natural example of a grain of wheat being planted to illustrate the spiritual truth of the new creation. A single grain of wheat that is planted dies and brings forth new life, a stalk of wheat, which produces many more grains identical to itself when it is fully ripened.

Spiritually speaking, it was necessary for Jesus, the only Son of God, to die, to give His life, in order to give us new life. When He arose from the dead, it made it possible for us to also become sons of God by being born again and becoming a new creation, created in His image. This is the fruit that was produced by His death and resurrection. As a result, God now has many more spiritual sons in His family. After we are born again, we must also grow and mature spiritually. We are changed into His image by feeding upon the Word of God and letting the Holy Spirit make it real and practical in our lives.

The time of plucking up has both a natural and a spiritual meaning. It of course refers to the time when the planted seed is fully ripened and must be harvested. The spiritual meaning refers to the resurrection of Jesus when God plucked Him up out of the grave three days later at the specific time that was foretold. That

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three-day time period was also typified by the prophet Jonah, as Jesus stated in Matt. 12:40: "For as Jonas [Jonah] was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." But Paul tells us in Rom. 6:5 that Christ's death also applies to us spiritually when we accept Him as our Savior: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

When we are baptized as a profession of our faith, then we are actually acting out this spiritual truth physically by being immersed, or buried, in the water, and then raised up out of it, identifying ourselves with His death. Paul further explains this to us in Rom. 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

That means that the physical act of baptism is an outward visible picture of an inward event which happened to us spiritually. It symbolizes the fact that our old life, our "old man", as Paul calls it in Rom. 6:6, was crucified with Christ and therefore planted together with Him: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him."

There is a definite time in everyone's life when this planting must take place, for there is "a time to plant." When is that time? Paul answers that question in II Cor. 6:2: "...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." If you have not accepted Christ as Savior that time is now, today! Tomorrow may be too late.

We are all dead spiritually until we find new life in Christ, and that which is dead needs to be buried, or planted. The good news is that after the planting comes the plucking up of that which was planted, the plucking up of a new life in Christ, resurrected with Him, as Paul declares in II Cor. 5:17: "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Paul further describes this spiritual death and resurrection in Gal. 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..."

Lastly, just as there was a specific time for Jesus' physical

body to die and then to be resurrected, or plucked up, so it will be true for our physical bodies, for Heb. 9:27 plainly declares that, "...it is appointed unto man once to die..." An appointment is a specific time for a specific event, and that time has been appointed by God for each one of us. Our death and planting are certain, but so is our hope in Christ beyond the grave, our plucking up in resurrection, which is confirmed by Paul in I Cor. 15:19-20, 23: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept [died]...Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The term "first fruits" implies "after fruits," or the resurrection of Christians who have died since His resurrection. God who was faithful to pluck up Christ from the grave will also pluck us up out of death, as Paul emphatically declares in I Thess. 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up [plucked up] together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

"A time to kill, and a time to heal..." Ecc. 3:3a: No one likes the idea of killing but sometimes it becomes necessary, such as in self-defense, in war, to put an animal out of its misery, or in hunting to provide food. In the spiritual sense, this verse is further clarification of the meaning of the last part of v. 2, relating to the death of Jesus.

The first killing that was necessary in the Bible was done by God, Himself, in the Garden of Eden after man sinned, in order to cover their nakedness, in Gen. 3:21: "Unto Adam also and his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." This was a picture of the future killing of Jesus who died for our sin and clothed us with His righteousness.

Jesus told His disciples in Mark 8:31 that it was necessary for Him to be killed: "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." When Peter heard these words, he rebuked Jesus for saying them. He was expecting Jesus to become King and take His throne, not to die. He could not comprehend that in order for Jesus to reign as King that He would have to die first.

Exodus 12:3-6 tells us that the Passover lamb had to be killed. Jesus had to die to give us life, for He was to become the final Passover Lamb. The Passover lamb was commanded to be killed by the congregation of Israel: "...they shall take to them every man a lamb...a lamb for a house...Your lamb shall be without blemish...and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening."

It was a "time to kill" in order that there would be a "time to heal". The lamb had to be killed and its blood applied to the doorposts of their houses. God had told Moses in Ex. 12:12-13 that He was going to execute judgment on the land of Egypt: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment...and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." God warned of coming judgment but also provided a way of escape, a way of healing, by the killing of an innocent lamb, without blemish, if they obeyed and applied its blood to the door post of each house. The blood of that lamb pointed forward to and was a picture, or a 23 type, of Christ, the perfect, spotless Lamb of God who was killed and whose blood delivers us from God's coming judgment.

But that killing also purchased our healing: body, soul and spirit. Isaiah prophesied of this in Isa. 53:4-5: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows...But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

The time for the Lamb of God to be killed was on that day over 2,000 years ago when He died on the cross of Calvary. We all, the whole sinful world, were responsible for that killing, because He came to die for the sins of the world so that we could be healed. So, when is the time of our healing? The time of our healing is the day when we each personally apply the blood of the Lamb to the door posts of our hearts. At that moment, He heals our sinsick souls and delivers us from spiritual death. He also provided healing and strength for our physical bodies by faith at whatever time we may need it. Sometimes, our physical healing is gradual, rather than immediate and miraculous, and He only gives us

enough strength for each day or each step we take, but His grace is always sufficient. However, the time of the ultimate healing of our bodies will be when we leave our earthly clay house and receive a glorified body, free of pain and disease.

The killing of Jesus was physical, to pay for our sins, but Paul tells us that there is another killing that must take place, a spiritual killing, after we are born again. Paul first of all states the fact that we died with Christ in Col. 3:3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Then in v. 5 he commands us to perform a personal spiritual killing: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth..."

What exactly does he mean by this? The Greek word for "mortify" is "nekroo," meaning "to put to death, to deprive of power, to destroy the strength thereof." "Members" is referring to the members of our physical bodies which we employ to serve sin, as we yield to our old, corrupt human nature, our "old man" with his earthly, sensual desires.

We can't literally destroy our physical body members, but we can render them powerless to serve sin by considering them to be dead to sin. Paul tells us how to do this in Rom. 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Paul then tells us in v. 11 that we must accept this fact by faith and reckon it to be true in our own lives personally: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This is both a killing and a healing, for we are counted as being dead to sin, and therefore we do not need to serve it any longer. Instead, we are healed and living and able to use our members as instruments of righteousness to serve Christ.

Awake!

Awake: Awake: The morning's here Come, face the day with a smile You'll overcome the test;
As you do your very best,
And conquer each harassing test.

Divine Patience C. H. Spurgeon

Od's patience dwelt in His Son, and will dwell in all His saints.

Patience is not Christian unless united with faith, hope and love.

Indifference and apathy may cease to be virtues; but patience never.

Patience is uncomplaining, unconquered and unconquerable.

Patience is not a sign of weakness, but of strength.

Patience springs from Christ, not from circumstances.

Patience develops by exercise.

Patience sometimes is another word for genius. She plods, yet wins the prize.

Patience pays big dividends, but never goes bankrupt. It has riches in glory.

Patience makes opportunities out of hardships and handicaps. We often chafe at delays and interruptions. We forget 25 that the music of life needs an occasional rest.

Patience is a Christian grace; impatience a Christian disgrace.

Patience has a fire department to extinguish the fires of wrath, malice and envy.

Patience is not obstinacy of will, but constancy of heart.

Be patient. God's school will not take vacation till all the lessons are learned.

An ounce of patience cures a pound of ills.

Patience is more than self-containment. It is more than a spineless indifference; more than a jelly-fish carelessness. The fire, the rasp, the plough, the harrow, the chisel and the buzz-saw all have their turn; but patience still praises the Lord.

Human patience soon wears out; divine patience never ends.

Patience has the strength of Atlas and the tenderness of a little child.

Patience is no time-server. It is faithful whether observed

or unobserved.

Patience is the ox that bears the load over rough roads and insurmountable obstacles and never breaks, nor complains.

Patience hastens, but never hurries. She glows, but never scorches. She burns, but never smokes, because she carries her own smoke consumer.

Patience grows both by use and abuse.

"I AM the Lord. I change not..." Mal. 3:6. "And Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish but Thou remainest....They shall be changed but Thou art the same and Thy years shall not fail." Heb. 1:10,12

We find decay and change all around us, as the years come and go. There is nothing secure, stable or steadfast. Our loved ones, family and friends leave us. They cannot remain. There is nothing certain in the world, nothing to which we may cling and find comfort. Our only hope is Christ, the unchanging One, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever" is our comfort and our stay. He remains forever the same, through all seasons and surroundings.

His love is unchanging, "Having loved His own, He loved them to the end." Jn. 13:1 His love passeth knowledge, the breadth, the length, the depth, the height has never yet been comprehended. Eph. 3:18,19 Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. S.O.S. 8:7 It never fluctuates, much less changes as our friends' love does. Their love may fail us when we need it most, but His remains unchanging as Himself. There is nothing that we may or may not do, that will separate us from that love. It is ever the same, abiding faithful throughout the years.

Christ so wonderful, so great!
His love is as His Name
Abiding ever strong and true.
Throughout the years the same.

T is a good thing to be always SURE. We like to be SURE of a livelihood, if possible. We want to be SURE we are living in the place best suited to our physical welfare. We like to be SURE we eat only the food that will do us the most good insofar as our means allow. If we are on a journey, we like to be SURE we get on the right train. If we travel by auto, we want to be SURE we are on the right road. Then we need to be especially SURE to get off at the right place. It causes so much confusion and trouble if we do not stop at the right place; but it brings peace of mind when we are SURE, doesn't it? Therefore we suggest that you Make Your Calling and Election SURE!

Just think for one moment, please. If you were traveling, how much peace of mind would you have if you were not SURE that you were on the right road? If it was very important you reach a CERTAIN place, and 27no other, consider how confused you would be if you were not SURE of your destination until you got there. How much MORE so, if you are not SURE you will get to Heaven. How fearful (full of fear) your life must be. How terrible not to be SURE you will not go to the Lake of Fire. Fear hath TORMENT.

Friend, why be in doubt, when you can be SURE? Yes, just as SURE as you are that you breathe. Please follow these words very closely. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the WORD OF GOD." Therefore, we give you the Word of God, so that you may have faith. God's Son says, "Verily, verily, I say unto YOU, he that heareth my words, and BELIEVETH on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and SHALL NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION, but is passed from death into LIFE."Jn. 5:24.

Believe what JESUS says and YOU WILL BE SURE. Believe that His BLOOD has atoned for your sins and

YOU WILL BE SURE. If you believe on Him, BELIEVE that you HAVE everlasting life, and YOU WILL BE SURE. Believe that you will NEVER come into condemnation, and YOU WILL BE SURE YOU WILL NOT GO TO THE LAKE OF FIRE. Believe that you have passed out of death into life, and YOU WILL BE SURE THAT YOU ARE GOING TO HEAVEN. Do not try to UNDERSTAND it, but BELIEVE what God says, and He will give you the ASSURANCE in your heart.

Albert Harding

Selected

In The Carpenter's Shop

I wish I had been His apprentice, To see Him each morning at seven, As He tossed His gray tunic about Him, The Master of earth and of heaven: When He lifted the lid of His work chest And opened His carpenter's kit, And looked at His chisels and augers, And took the bright tools out of it: When He gazed at the rising sun tinting The dew on the opening flowers, And He smiled at the thought of His Father Whose love floods this fair world of ours; When He fastened the apron about Him, And put on His workingman's cap, And grasped the smooth haft of His hammer To give the bent woodwork a tap, Saying "Lad, let us finish this ox yoke, The farmer must finish his crop" Oh I wish I had been His apprentice And worked in the Nazareth shop.

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WONDROUS PROVISION OF CALVARY Mary M. Bodie

Ogive thanks unto the Lord; call upon His Name: make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him: talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord" - Psalm 105:1-3.

This is a psalm of praise from the heart of David. He is ecstatic, celebrating the faithfulness of God; and exhorting the people to remember all His mighty deeds, His supernatural, dynamic works in their behalf. He reminds them of His faithfulness in the case of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron, as well as all Israel whom He had chosen in His sovereign grace. He exhorts them all to seek the face and favor of the Lord, because He is a rewarder of all such. He will never fail those who believe His Word and trust in His grace. He is ever faithful.

It is a marvelous psalm of praise to Jehovah for the remembrance of His mercy. There is no hint of defeat or discouragement throughout the song. It is a pean of praise for past favors, and a song of hope for future blessings. Everlasting love and faithfulness are seen as a beacon of light by the prophet, of which God's former faithfulness is the pledge.

This psalm is a historical poem. David is tracing the wanderings of Israel. God alone is the outstanding Figure. H i s power and wisdom are the telling themes. Man is the recipient of favors, not because of his worthiness, but because of God's covenant of Grace, is the declaration of the songster.

But there is one clause that claims our attention. It is especially emphasized in the psalm; hence, stands out more definitely than other points. It is found in verse 37, speaking of the time when Israel came up out of Egypt, "There was not one feeble person among their tribes." This is astounding, when we meditate upon it. Out of that vast multitude - estimated as at least two million - there was not one feeble person of full growth and stature. The statement does not signify that there were no babes in arms, nor aged men and women. There may have been some lame and deaf and blind, though not certain. But this is the great point: there were none that could not travel. None were so weak or sick or helpless that they could not keep up with the harnessed procession. Is that not a great summary? It was a healthy, robust

congregation that marched out of Egypt. Sickness is a sign of the curse, entailed upon man because of sin, and these folk represented a new creation which is delivered from all the effects of the fall. Here, of course, is the great reason for the fact that is stated so briefly yet fully; nevertheless, it was also literally true. "There was not one feeble person among their tribes."

Now as Israel was a typical people, their experiences have meaning for us, both in a spiritual and physical sense. Jehovah put Himself on record, after the people had crossed the Red Sea, that He was their Physician. He guaranteed that He would keep them in the same physical condition which they enjoyed when they came out of Egypt - not one feeble person among them.

But some one may ask, Why is this not a fact among Christians? Why are there so many weak, ailing, sick folk in the Church, even among true believers? We answer: the chief reason is unbelief. Christians are taught that God does not heal, or otherwise protect or defend His people from the oppression of the devil. The majority of the teachers are even as the ten spies which gave a false report of the land of Canaan - Numbers 13:32. They hinder the people from taking hold of their inheritance, of which the healing of the body is a blessed part. We remember, in our experience, that the leaders sought to discourage us. They refused to enter in themselves, through unbelief; and they did not want anyone else to have the victory. Like the dog in the manger, they will not partake of their portion in Christ, and growl out against those who would do so. What they will not believe, no one else must. They are the people, and wisdom shall die with them, is their estimation of themselves. But, bless the Lord, some of us break through the ranks of unbelief and go up and possess the land, regardless of false reports of our inability, and God's shortened arm to deliver; and we get the milk and honey. We eat for ourselves; hence, we know whereof we speak; not only by the Word of God, but by personal experience. We are healed by divine power, through the prayer of faith; and then we know Christ as the Physician of the body as well as the soul. It is glorious and wonderful to enjoy the fruits of Canaan to the uttermost. There is no lack in this bountiful heavenly land. We are hoping to possess more of our inheritance as the days go by. Praise the Lord! God is able to make all grace abound fully toward us who believe, in this present age as well as the next one. Nothing can dam up the

3/

healing power of God except unbelief. As long as there is any one to believe for the healing of the body, there will be folks healed by the Lord: for in the provision of the cross there is deliverance from all feebleness. The Church may have the full results of redemption, as well as Israel, if they believe.

That does not signify that they will have their glorified bodies now, any more than that the earthly people of God shall have their glorified bodies during the millennium. Neither does it mean that there shall be no babes in the Church who are unable to bear the toil and heat of the way, like the older saints, for these are not necessarily feeble. Infancy does not imply sickness. These little ones will grow in strength and stature as they are fed upon the Word of God. But there are others, feeble folks, sickly ones, in the Church who never seem to have any spiritual strength for service, and they never grow any stronger. There are some chronic cases, some sick or feeble in one way or another. They are continually in need of nursing, and spend more time in the hospital than out, in the battle fighting the enemy. One has a bad temper and does not get the victory over the ailment. Another has a sore throat, a chronic case, and is unable to speak a word for the Lord. Another 31 has the gout and cannot walk in the way of good works; while yet another has inflammatory rheumatism and cannot kneel to pray. Others have yellow jaundice --- envy and jealousy are so filling them that they cannot rejoice with those who do rejoice. Many are afflicted with leprous hands, and cannot shake hands with others, or get their hands in their pockets to give of their substance to their poor neighbor. Their heart is not right. They cannot weep with those who weep. There are all manner of diseases, all kinds of feebleness, manifest among the people of God today; and the cause may be summed up under four heads.

One. Uncertainty as to being a child of God - not knowing a definite time when they were born again. This is a very common cause of feebleness. Its results are sickly saints. They are not able to take any food from the Word, hence do not grow. They are always examining themselves, pulling themselves out of the soil of grace in which they have been planted to ascertain whether they have life or not. They are so busy looking after their own spiritual condition, they have no time or inclination to help others. They become self-centered and intro-spective; which, in the natural, often leads to suicide and the grave. This is not

possible in the spiritual; but frailty, fretfulness, and feebleness are not only possible but manifest. It stops their testimony. Hundreds are taken into the church who never have had any change whatever. If you ask them when they were saved, they do not understand you. If you ask them if they are born again, many will say that they do not know; while others will tell you they had this change when they were baptized in water. Others will answer by saying, "No one can know whether he is saved or not. We will not know until we die." They have no certainty, no assurance nor safety; consequently they are weak and sickly and many sleep, or die. They do not know that they are members of the true Church, the body of Christ, and may be nourished and built up in Him.

Two. Unsuitable food for their spiritual man is another evident cause for the feebleness of many of the people of God. There is a hue and cry today for good food for the natural man. The food with vitamins and proteins, and other necessary elements for the full development and robust condition of the whole of the body, are widely advertised. Men are apparently waking up to the fact that the body, in many cases, is often half starved because of ignorance and carelessness; consequently, there is feebleness and often untimely death. Likewise is the case in the spiritual. If babes in Christ are given the sincere milk of the Word at conversion, they will enjoy the stronger meat later and go in strength to spiritual vigor. There will be no feeble saints in an assembly where they are correctly fed. All that is suitable for the new man is found in the Scriptures, as Paul informs us. He declares that they are "able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance" -Acts 20:32.

Hence, let us eat of the Word, not sparingly, but in quantity. As strong, healthy men in the natural are always ready for a good meal, likewise, a really robust saint is always able for a good spiritual feed. But, unfortunately, some saints get hold of the wrong kind of food. They eat largely of light chaffy literature, which is easy to masticate but it makes no spiritual grit. It needs no chewing; therefore, they lose the use of their spiritual teeth. They have no cud-basket, never meditate on the things that are profitable; hence, never develop teeth. Other saints carry a bottle with them, from which they sip some skimmed or curdled milk, which entails feebleness. Or worse yet, they sip a cordial made of false doctrine, which puts them to sleep. They know nothing

Third. A scant consumption of spiritual food is another cause of feebleness among Christians. We furnish at least three meals a day for the body, when we have the wherewithal to get them; but the new life is but faintly considered. In fact, many believers make no provision whatever for the new man. It is no marvel that he is weak and faint.

Four. Another decided cause for feebleness is the indistinct line of separation from the world. The Christian that is found in fellowship with the world, whether socially, religiously, or in business, is never a strong one. His spiritual life is sapped and spent, by its defiling influences. The Lord's people are marked off from the world, and the separation should be carried out to the extreme limit; not in a pharisaical spirit, but in a holy, loving, and living energy. This latter will convince the world that we are different. They will begin to notice us, if we separate from the wicked and ungodly, and they will enquire the reason. Separation from the world becomes the Christian. He is a new creation in distinction from the old creation. He is born of God through Jesus Christ, the Head of a new race of men.

Where are we in the spiritual lineup? Are we feeble or strong? The provision for strength in the Lord is perfect, but are we laying hold of our victory in Christ? It is not sufficient to see it. We must take it. There is no need to be feeble or faint. The Word assures us of the fullness of redemption provided in the wondrous work of Calvary. Let us believe and receive, for there need not be one feeble saint within our borders.

(Original Printing 1931)

It's All in the Lord's Hands

It's all in the Lord's hands,
It's all in the Lord's hands:
My present, my future, my past.
I gave Him my troubles,
My worry, my sorrow;
He gave me a joy that will last.

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