

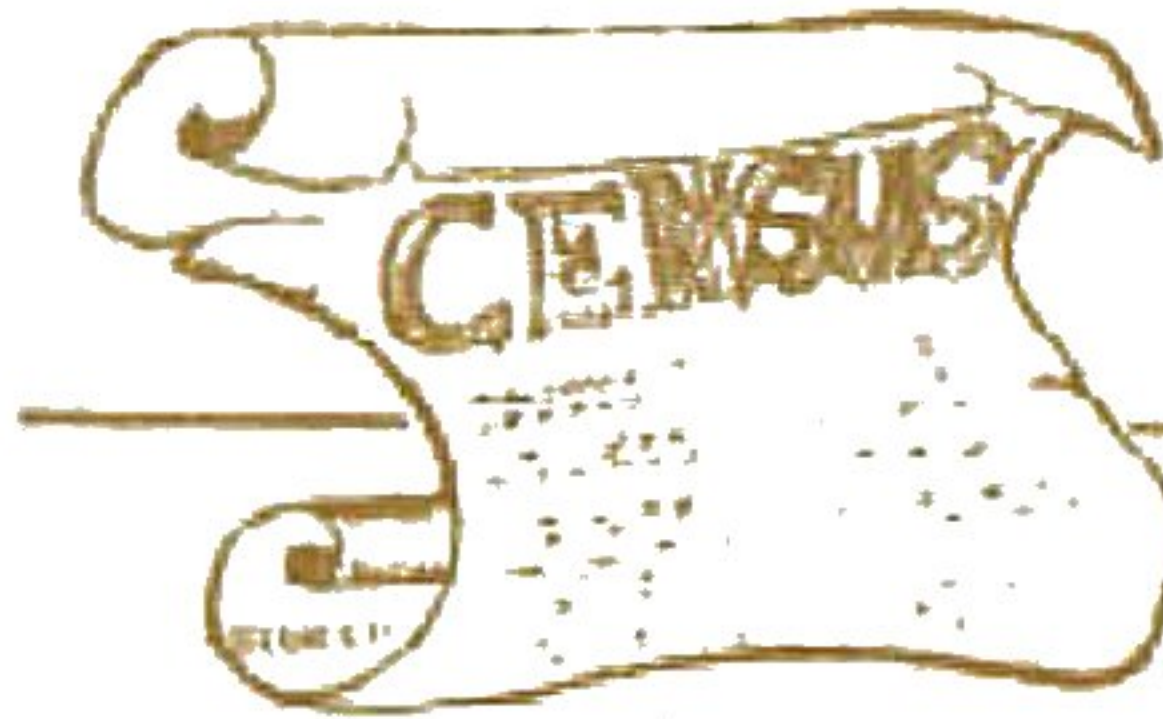
Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole counsel of GOD

Vol. 112

December 2022

Num. 12



And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Luke 2:4 KJV

***There's talk today of plans for peace,
Wherever one may go;
How to obtain it is the thing
That no one seems to know.***

***But they will never find it here,
Among earth's sin-sick men;
Their answer lies in One above,
The Christ of Bethlehem.***



Grace & Glory" (USPS # 224-300 ISSN # 279-6996) is published monthly by Grace & Glory Gospel Society, 13011 Grandview Rd. P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030.

PERIODICALS postage is paid at Grandview, Missouri.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to "Grace & Glory" P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030.

Telephone: 816-618-3306. E-mail gjhawk1@msn.com Print Shop # 816-322-2257

Web site: www.gracegod.org. Bible lessons and audio sermons are downloadable.

GRACE & GLORY is published for the purpose of proclaiming God's Holy Word. We believe that the Scriptures are inspired of God and were given to His holy apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit. (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21)

GRACE & GLORY has had continuous publication without subscription price since 1910. We are able to continue this ministry by your kind financial support.

Editor: Gene Hawkins

Definite Sign Posts Of The End!

Gene Hawkins

“Hear ye, O mountains, the LORD'S controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.” Mic. 6:2

“Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.” Ho 4:1

“For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause **all the nations**, to whom I send thee, to drink it....all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world,... Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, (vomit) and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you....For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.... A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.... Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.” Jer. 25:15-32

There is a thread of commonality running through all the above verses, meaning that God has a controversy both with Israel and all nations of the earth. That controversy, “contention or grappling” with Israel, has prompted Him “...to bring evil on the city which is called by my name,...” that is, Jerusalem. His message to the nations is that if He would bring such evil to His Own chosen city, “...should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth,...” The reason for such retaliation against the nations must of necessity be that they are guilty of the same offenses which have plagued Israel, and thus deserve the same punishment, as is evident from this same chapter. “And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, **for their iniquity**, and the land of the Chaldeans,... And I will

bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against **all the nations**. For many nations and great kings shall **serve themselves** of them also:..." Jer. 25:12-14

Hosea clearly explains that God's complaint against His Own Chosen people is "...because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." Hos. 4:1 They are without excuse because He had been faithful to send numerous prophets such as Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah, and a host of others, warning them to turn from their idolatrous ways. The nation as whole, however, had simply ignored the voice of The LORD.

4 This tiny nation has a long history of such unbelief, along with the consequences of captivity to other nations because of it. Hosea repeatedly denounces Ephraim, or the ten tribes of Israel for their adulterous ways of idolatry, before they were finally taken captive by Assyria. The record is also clear that they were never fully restored and even during the time of Jesus, the woman of Samaria informed Him that, "...the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jo. 4:9 The reason for that is because "...the LORD removed Israel out of his sight,... So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, ...Cuthah,... Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof." II Kings 17:23-24 Samaria had been the capital of those ten tribes but the Samaritans are now disdained because of their intermingling with Assyria.

Jerusalem followed the same path of idolatry as her sister Samaria, and thus she was carried away to Babylon a number of years later when God appointed Nebuchadnezzar the first ruler of Gentile World Powers in 606 B.C. as prophesied by Jeremiah. Next, Jesus foretold a day of judgment, in reference to the temple at Jerusalem, when "...There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt. 24:2 That prophecy came to pass in 70 A.D. when Titus, a Roman general invaded the City of David in fulfillment of Daniel 9:26, wherein "...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." Thus, Israel as a nation has been scattered and set aside during this present

Church Age.

Such dismal history continues down to the end of this age when the “prince” or the antichrist “... shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,... he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Dan. 9:27 This latter reference to “...the desolate...” is none other than this same nation of Israel which will be decimated during the tribulation period. However, that dire circumstance has a great “silver lining,” for Israel at long last will finally accept their Messiah, thus paving the way for their full restoration. Isaiah declares that the covenant with the antichrist will become null and void. “And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand;...” Isa. 28:18

Jeremiah most assuredly asserts that if God’s controversy with Israel resulted in grave punishment regarding Jerusalem, His controversy with the nations “...shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts....” He then elaborates, explaining that “A 5
noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.... Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.” Jer. 25:31-32

The little word “...noise...” simply means “uproar, tumult, destruction,” and it is further defined in these verses as, “...the sword,...evil,...” and “...a great whirlwind....” It is not difficult to ascertain that all such “noise” is surely being heard around the entire globe even at this present hour. Just as surely as God brought His judgment upon His city of Jerusalem, that same fate will shortly come to all nations around the world and none will be able to stay it.

God’s reasons for punishing Israel was “...because there is no **truth**, nor **mercy**, nor **knowledge of God** in the land.” It must be concluded that His controversy with the nations stems from these same problems, for present day nations have likewise completely ignored all these things even though God’s Word has been clearly available to them.

It is also rather apparent that Nebuchadnezzar learned these same lessons when God humbled him and made him like unto the beasts of the field. Note his response after he had been restored. “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven,...and I **blessed the most High**, and I **praised and honoured him** that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion,... all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing:... and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”...and I was established in my kingdom,... Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are **truth**, and **his ways judgment**: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” Dan. 4:34-37 Given the current atmosphere in today’s world, the nations have no intention of arriving at this conclusion, for they not only continue in their ungodly ways of iniquity, they very aggressively promote them.

6 America has long been defined as a “godly nation,” for it was founded on the principles of God’s Word. Many political leaders still tout it as “the greatest nation on earth,” and perhaps millions around the planet also think so because they are clamoring to come across her open borders. However, such “greatness” of opportunity also demands accountability. Israel too had been granted great advantage because she was so favored with God’s blessing, but as noted above, she was first in line for judgment because of it. Jesus’ declaration also confirms this same scenario. “...**For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:...**” Lk. 12:48 This message has long been applied to individuals who have been charged with preaching truth, but Peter must also have wondered about the scope of it, for he “... said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or **even to all?**” The context of that “...parable...” is a rather long discourse centered around Jesus’ second coming, “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching:...” Lk. 12:37

Jesus’ answer to Peter designates a “...faithful and wise steward,...” V. 42 and “...a servant...” V. 43, concluding with the somewhat all inclusive “...whomsoever...” of V. 48 Finally, The Master seems to follow the same pattern set forth in God’s controversy with the nations in these last days, announcing that “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already

kindled?" Lk. 12:49

The entire complement of earthly nations has most assuredly either ignored or disregarded the voice of the Lord even as Israel did. It is no surprise that some who have openly rejected even the very existence of God such as China, Iran, Russia, and N. Korea are so secretive that very little is known about what happens or is taught within their borders. However, the people of "the greatest nation in the world" have made no pretense in simply conducting themselves according to ways which are totally **contrary to God's Word**. The recent and most surprising "mid-term election" seemed to reveal that many voters cast their ballots with the intention to reverse the Supreme Court decision on Roe V. Wade. Two very prominent politicians have also tried to explain that the reason America must throw her borders wide open to illegal immigrants is because there are not enough children being born in this country and thus those of other countries are desperately needed to do the job which these younger generations will not be able to accommodate. It is a marvel to even contemplate such foolishness due to the fact that if this country had not defied God's decree which forbids shedding the "innocent blood" of the unborn without restraint, this lack of children would not exist. 7

Same sex marriage is another major violation of God's truth and judgment which describes it as an abomination comparable to having sex relations with a beast. "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion." Lev. 18:22-23 Some modern day prognosticators declare that since this is of the O.T., it is simply for Israel and does not apply to modern society. Paul begs to differ: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, **burned in their lust one toward another**; men with men working that which is unseemly (shameful),..." Rom. 1:26-27 Many politicians of our day are working tirelessly not only to allow such shameful behavior, but to promote it with legislation demanding that all citizens accept it, and sadly as indicated below, it is disguised as a way to achieve "religious freedom."

The International Business News published the following headline Nov. 17, 2022 **“Here Are The 12 GOP Senators Who Voted For Same-Sex Marriage Bill”** This explanation then followed, listing these **“KEY POINTS: The Respect for Marriage Act avoided a filibuster after 62 senators, including 12 Republicans, voted in favor. Sen. Susan Collins, a staunch Republican supporter of same-sex marriage, is one of the bill's cosponsors. Sen. Mitt Romney supported the legislation after the Mormon church declared its support for the bill.”**

A further report by The New York Times stated that, **“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gave its support on Tuesday to a federal bill that would provide increased protections for same-sex marriage, a limited but notable step from a church that historically has aggressively opposed gay rights. The move came on the same day senators announced a religious freedom amendment to the legislation in hopes of securing broader support. It signaled church leaders’ tacit backing for Senators Mitt Romney and Mike Lee of Utah to support the bill. Mr. Romney and Mr. Lee, both Republicans, are members of the church.”**

8 Fornication, also forbidden by scripture, has become a way of life, as many couples absolutely insist on **“living together”** outside the confines of marriage. Paul warned the Corinthians, representative of the Christian community today, **“And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.”** II Cor. 12:21 God’s Word, the same truth neglected by Israel, is very clear that repentance must be forthcoming in order to comply with the demands of God rather than the opinions of men, teaching that men must cease and desist from such practices.

And then there is the **“transgender”** issue which has recently erupted, whereby men are once again blatantly rejecting the **“truth”** which God has set forth in His Word. Scripture is unequivocally clear that, **“...God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”** Gen. 1:27 He followed the exact same pattern with ALL creation, in regard to separating male and female. **“And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.”** Gen. 6:19 We can only wonder whether man in all his absurdity

will suddenly try to alter the sex of the animal world. The fact is that when the people of these nations presume to change what God has made, they are in fact proclaiming before all men that **GOD MADE A MISTAKE!** That is very much akin to blasphemy and as God has boldly declared to those with whom He has a controversy "...he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword,..."

Finally, it is noteworthy to point out that one great desire of all nations is that "... many nations and great kings shall serve **themselves** of them also:..." Jer. 25:14 The simple truth is that many leaders of these nations are committed to serve their own interests rather than those of the people. Their quest is to dominate those under them, which will be the primary goal of the antichrist. Global warming has become one primary tool which a number of nations are using at this very hour to achieve absolute control of an entire nation. Some have also exploited the recent "Covid or China virus" to achieve the unquestioned compliance of their subjects. A great many national leaders today fall into the same category as Nebuchadnezzar before his fall. "The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of **my** power, and for the honour of **my** majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee." Dan. 4:30-31

Nebuchadnezzar's fall was only temporary, but that of the nations who have adopted his attitude as their own, will not recover from it and be restored to their kingdoms. The reason is simple; "...Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and **rise no more**, because of the sword which I will send among you...." Jesus also, as seen above from Luke's gospel prophesied; "I am come to send fire on the earth;..." Lk. 12:49

God's controversy with the nations and Israel will end in dire judgment, and none can stop it. However the glorious news for those who are truly looking for Jesus' promised and eminent return is that they will be completely separated from those nations. Their fate will be quite different due to the fact that they will be taken out of this world **BEFORE** God's wrath is poured out. Now is not the time for such folk to be terrified, angered, or intimidated by current events. It is rather high time to claim the promises of God's Word, which indeed separates

them even now from the world. Jesus' promise to the Church at Philadelphia must be claimed immediately. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation,..." Rev. 3:10 Paul likewise conveyed the same message to the saints at Thessalonica. "...let us not sleep, as do others;... 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, (of the tribulation) but to obtain salvation (out of this world) by our Lord Jesus Christ," I Thess. 5:6-9

Jesus also prayed specifically, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory,..." Jn. 17:24 Finally, He dictates both what we are to do, and why, in the midst of these present perilous times. "And when these things **begin** to come to pass, then **look up**, and **lift up your heads**; for (because) **your redemption draweth nigh.**" Lk. 21:28

10



Christ's First Advent

Not to condemn the sons of men
Did Christ, the Son of God appear.
No weapons in His hands are seen,
No flaming sword nor thunder there.

Such was the pity of our God;
He loved the race of man so well,
He sent His Son to bear our load
Of sin and save our souls from hell.

Sinners, believe the Savior's Word;
Trust in His mighty Name and live.

A thousand joys His lips afford,
His hands a thousand blessings give.



Anon

Running for the Prize

Vicky Moots

(A continuation of Heb. 12:1-2)

The second choice we are given in V. 1 is to lay aside "... the sin which doth so easily beset us..." In order to run to win, we must not only lay aside every weight, but also "sin which doth so easily beset us..." The word "the," which precedes "sin," is not present in the original Greek, so it is not speaking of a specific sin that besets us.

The Greek word used for "sin" in this verse is "hamartia," which means "a missing of the mark," and so not to share in the prize. "Sin," in this context, is not only referring to any immoral act, but to anything which would cause us to "miss the mark" and therefore keep us from winning Christ as our Bridegroom.

In running a race, you must keep your eyes and mind focused on the goal and not on the ground or on the other runners or you may become sidetracked or stumble. Similarly, if you are shooting an arrow, you must focus on the center of the target, not on anything around it, or you will miss the mark. Likewise, spiritually, if we fail to keep Christ as the focus of our life and as our preeminent love, we will miss the mark and not share in the Prize. 11

In the first three chapters of Revelation, John describes his vision of Jesus Christ, the Righteous Judge, walking among seven golden candlesticks, which are seven churches which represent different spiritual conditions during this Church Age. Rev. 2:1-7 records the assessment and judgement against the church at Ephesus. It begins by commending them for their labor, patience and steadfastness, but then v. 4 states, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first [preeminent, foremost] love."

The Ephesian saints had allowed all those other things to take the preeminence in their lives and to become more important than their love for Christ, Himself, in much the same way that Martha had done in the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42.

This is the condition that we find in many churches and individuals today. They are so preoccupied with their many good works, their outreach programs and humanitarian projects that they have no time for prayer and Bible study, no time to commune

with the Lord, and so their love for Him grows cold. They soon lose their desire to have an intimate, close relationship with Him, for He is no longer their first love.

Paul goes on further in Heb. 12:1 to state that sin is something that easily besets us. The word “beset,” according to Strong’s Concordance, means “a competitor thwarting a racer in every direction; an attack of the enemy.” To “thwart” means to “obstruct, frustrate or defeat.”

This would refer to Satan, our enemy, who attacks us from every direction by trying to obstruct our race course with things that hinder us from running. We become so busy with our daily affairs, our family, our friends, our jobs, as well as hobbies or things we do for recreation or pleasure that we forget all about running the race.

Satan also keeps throwing things in our pathway to try and cause us to stumble. We may try to jump Satan’s hurdles in our own strength and end up falling flat on our face, and then we become so frustrated that we just sit down and stop running.

12 Unbelief is another sin that will cause us to “miss the mark.” Unbelief is simply a lack of faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). The sin of unbelief was what kept many of the children of Israel from entering into the promised land of Canaan, as we are told in Heb. 3:19: “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

Satan tries to put doubt in our minds in place of faith, so that we fail to lay hold of God’s promises or fail to lay hold of His strength when we are weak. Our faith to overcome Satan’s attacks will increase as we read God’s Word, for “...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). As we study the Word, we will learn to recognize Satan’s attacks and be able to lay those things aside by faith and keep on running for the prize.

Now that we have chosen to “lay aside every weight” and “sin that so easily besets us”, we are able to start running for the prize, to win Christ as our Bridegroom. This is the third choice which we have been given to make. In the last part of v.1, Paul encourages us and gives us the choice to run with him: “And let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

We cannot run the race without patience. Patience is the result of our trials and tribulation, as we are told in Rom. 5:3:

“...we glory in tribulation...knowing that tribulation worketh patience...” The word “patience,” in the Greek, means “passive endurance and active persistence.” A successful runner must run at a pace that enables him to keep on running without having to stop and catch his breath. That is an example of “passive endurance.” “Passive” means “yielding” and “endurance” is “the ability to last, continue or remain.” He must yield to his body’s ability to take in adequate oxygen to continue running. Then he must actively choose to continue running. That is “active persistence.” “Persistence” means “enduring continuance, as in a chosen course or purpose.”

This is likewise true spiritually. We must yield to the Lord and not try to get ahead of Him, for without Him, we can do nothing. John 15:5 In order to run with endurance and persistence, we need the strength of the Lord. When we run out of our own strength, we will faint, and no longer be able to run, unless we chose to tap into His inexhaustible power source.

We are told how to do that in Isa. 40:29-31: “He [God] giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;...they shall run and not be weary...”

13

So, we see from this Scripture that none of us are strong enough in ourselves to continue running the race without falling. We must acknowledge our weakness and call upon the Lord, wait upon Him and allow Him to renew our strength.

The word “renew” in the Hebrew means “to change.” We exchange our limited strength for His almighty power. But how do we do that? By waiting on the Lord! The Hebrew word translated “wait” in that verse means “to bind together (by twisting); to look patiently for.” As we spend time communing with Him in prayer, we become one with Him, entwined together with Him, like the strands of a rope. His will becomes our will, His strength becomes our strength, His desire becomes our desire, and we look patiently for His return. We can then run the race in the power of His might, not ours, and we will not be weary.

What is “the race that is set before us?” For any given race, or marathon, there is a prescribed course that must be followed. A runner must stay on track, or he will be disqualified from winning the prize. There are no quick shortcuts to the finish line.

God has chosen the course for each one of us. Sometimes the way is rough and steep, just as it was for those faithful runners in Hebrews 11 and for the Apostle Paul. But God has promised that His grace is sufficient for any test or trial that may confront us on our pathway. He told Paul in II Cor. 12:9, "...my grace is sufficient for thee..." In II Cor. 4:8-9, Paul testified of God's faithfulness to him in the midst of the severe trials which he had to face: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

It is because of God's faithfulness, His grace and His strength that we are able to keep running. If we continue running the race, with Paul as our example, then we will one day be able to win the prize and share it with him. In I Cor. 11:1, Paul encourages us to follow in his footsteps: "Be ye followers of me even as I follow Christ." He left footprints of faith for us to follow, so that we may be able to stay on course. Those footprints can be seen as we study his epistles and apply them to our own lives.

14 The course that was set before Paul is not the same course that each one of us is given to run. However, the goal and the prize are the same, and we can learn by his example and his instruction how to run our own race with patience. By faith we, like Paul, will be able to run the race that is set before us, for God's grace is still sufficient for us today.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..." Heb. 12:2 As stated previously, this is a faith-based race. In order to win, we must keep our eyes and our minds focused on the source of our faith and on the goal of our faith, which is Jesus Christ, Himself. The specific Greek word in this verse which was translated "looking" literally means "to be looking away from everything else." So, this phrase should then read, "Looking away from everything else unto Jesus." This is an important step for those who are running to win.

We cannot run forward if we are looking backward. Our eyes must not be focused on ourselves, on our accomplishments or on our failures. If they are, then we may become lifted up with pride, or perhaps we may become discouraged by thinking that we are not good enough or worthy to be a part of the bride of Christ. Neither should our eyes be focused on our circumstances or on other people, only on Jesus.

If we desire to win the prize, we must purposely choose to look away from everything in this world and to look unto Jesus alone. The more we look at something, the more we will desire it. That is why TV ads are so effective. In Col. 3:2, Paul warns us to turn our affection away from the things which the world has to offer: "Set your affection on things above [heavenly things], not on things on the earth." The only way to do this is to look away from everything else and keep "looking unto Jesus."

Hebrews 12:2 refers to Jesus as both the "...author and finisher..." of our faith. The word "author" indicates an originator, but it actually means a "captain" or "leader", according to Strong's concordance.

A captain is one who is in charge and leads a group of people. In Heb. 2:10, Jesus is called the Captain of our salvation. Our faith and our salvation are therefore under His control, not ours. By faith we accept Christ as Savior and begin our faith journey with Him at the starting line. He continues to lead us all the way safely to the finish line, for He is also the "finisher of our faith."

The word "finisher" means "perfector; one who brings to completion or to full maturity." Our faith is small at first but it will grow and strengthen as a result of the trials which we face along the way. Our Captain is the one who is responsible for bringing it to maturity, to perfection or completion.

Paul confidently declares to us in Phil. 1:6 that God will bring to completion the work which He started in us and that He will continue working in us until the day that Christ returns: "Being confident of this very thing, that he [God] which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God's work in us is a continuous work as we yield to the Holy Spirit in our lives, for He is preparing us to be a suitable bride for Christ.

That work is done by faith. By faith we not only accepted Christ as Savior, but we also have the choice to accept the proposal of an espousal that was given to us by the apostle Paul in II Cor. 11:2 to become a chaste virgin who will be presented to Christ. By faith we run the race to win the prize, to win Christ as our Bridegroom.

But what does it mean that our faith will be perfected or completed? When we reach the finish line, our faith will become

sight, for we will finally be able to gaze upon our Beloved Bridegroom, who is now the object of our faith. During our entire race course, our eyes will have been fixed upon Him by faith, but when our course is completed, our faith will be also, for we shall then behold Him face to face. What a glorious day that will be!!

A STORY WITH GLORY

It is the same old story
That men told long ago:
How a baby came from glory
To dwell in scenes below.

The angels sang, "Good will to men
And peace upon the earth."
The shepherds ran to see the sight-
This babe of matchless worth.

They saw and left with joy,
Telling others of the birth,
The one of whom the prophets spoke
At last, now come to earth.

He lived and blessed the people
And died upon the cross.
Religious men put Him to death-
Alas! It was their loss!

He's coming back for those who watch
And long for Him each day.
Look up! Rejoice! The time is near!
Perhaps He'll come today!

--Beula Clark

When Jesus Cried

The night was dark. Perhaps the wind was cold.
However, He was held in gentle arms ---
The little Christ Child, God to man come down.
For Mary held Him close from all that harms.
We did not hear sweet music from His lips.
He had no words of wisdom then to tell.
And yet no sound so ominous and clear
From helpless, little infant ever fell.
I hear Him cry, thank God! I hear Him cry.

That cry is His first sign to all the world
That now with needy man He takes His place.
His voice now joins creation in its groan.
He lifts the cry as ancient as the race.
O Love of God, so wide, so deep, so free,
You used no words to tell your Advent here.
But by a language known to all mankind,
You spoke a mystery in accent clear.
The deep, deep love of God is heard to cry.

In love the miracle of words He gave.
Embodiment of Truth and Light was He.
To all the world He spoke the words of Life.
Alone, He speaks to God upon the tree.
The words are few. And then He cannot speak.
Past words the love to Him He loveth most.
I read it in the ancient Scripture clear,
He cried aloud and yielded up the ghost,
O, deep, deep love of God, I hear Thee cry.

--John Wright Follette

REFLECTIONS

...From the Editor

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...” Isa 9:6

This is a verse upon which many sermons will be preached this Christmas Season. It announces the birth of Israel’s promised Messiah, but it is of tremendous import to God’s people individually. Jesus is born in the heart of every believer as an infant, following the same pattern as that of Mary when the angel informed her that, “...The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Lk. 1:35 The Holy Ghost likewise implants that same “...holy thing...” within the heart of every person who elects to receive Him. The experience begins as Isaiah announced, **18** “...unto us a child is born....” This new life, the Life which literally makes us a new creation in Christ Jesus is actually that of an infant. Jesus referred to this experience as being “...born again...” and “...born of the spirit.” Jn. 3:3 & 8. The same Spirit which overshadowed Mary likewise overshadows every sinner, convicting him of sin, but extending the invitation to receive this glorious and invaluable gift from God.

Sadly, there are many who seem to be content with this first stage of redemption when that “...holy thing...” is implanted within them. Note, however, that Isaiah then promised “...unto us a son is given....” The word “...son...” literally means “a builder,” signifying growth and maturity. The angel who spoke to Mary also declared that, “...that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” God intends that this life which begins in infancy should grow into maturity as a full grown man. A babe or infant, a little child, has little control over the environment around him. However, as a full grown Son, Jesus can and must assume full control and dominion over the house which now belongs to Him.

There surely came the day when the infant life implanted

within Mary's womb became fully visible to everyone around Him. This account is written of Him after His birth. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." Lk. 2:40 God intends that the same pattern be repeated in the life of every believer. The "...child..." of the new birth must give way to Son within, Who will then assume the burden of responsibilities next described by Isaiah. "...and the government shall be upon his shoulder:....," meaning the government of personal lives which have now come under new management. Note further that "...his name shall be called Wonderful,..." because it is Christ, rather than self, Who must be recognized, as Paul loudly shouted, "...Christ liveth in me..." He likewise must become "...Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" in all the daily activities of those who have received this tremendous Gift, directly from the Hand of God.

The promise dictated in the next verse of this marvelous text from Isaiah should also be of great encouragement to every believer who desires to obtain the above status in his own life. "...The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:7 All we need do is surrender to such zeal and rest in His ability to perform such a marvelous work.

19

GH

ANNOUNCEMENT!

President's Day Fellowship Meeting at Living Waters Tabernacle, 1701 S. Sherman St., Denver, Colorado 80210
Friday February 10 through Sunday February 12.

Services will commence on Friday at 7 P.M. and adjourn on Sunday after Lunch at 2:30 P.M.

If you plan to attend or for further information, please contact Polly O'Dorisio at (303) 594-0933 or pollyodorisio@gmail.com

Two Sublime

And Supernatural Births

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Lk. 2:11

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Joh. 1:12-13

During the closing days of each year, multiplied thousands of people are occupied with Christmas. The great majority of these masses scarcely know what Christmas really means. Oh, how the money-makers and the pleasure-seekers take advantage of this occasion for their own selfishness. I also will take advantage of it, and turn it into spiritual blessings for others.

20

The birth of Christ was Divine and Sovereign. He did not come here by accident, nor as an afterthought with God, to repair a breach or fill an emergency. He came with a preconceived design to accomplish an eternal purpose. Study the first chapter of Ephesians. Christ's birth was destined to be followed by the spiritual birth of many others. He must bring "many sons unto glory." Heb. 2:10 "Unto us a Child is born," wrote Isaiah. Yes, He came by being conceived of the Holy Spirit, and was born into this wicked world. So all who receive Him by faith are also born with a spiritual birth. The Holy Spirit truly broods over human lives and woos them to Jesus and as they yield to and believe on Him, the Spirit imparts the same new Christ-life into them. They are born from heaven, even as was Jesus. They are new creatures.

Believers constitute a new heavenly race --- the product of the previously planned process of Divine love and wisdom before times eternal. Hear the voice of God's Son before He became flesh. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. Then I was by Him . . . rejoicing in the habitable part of this earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Prov. 8:22, 30, 31

"A multitude of the heavenly host" rejoiced greatly at the advent of the world's Redeemer. They pronounced glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men. But Heaven is also in constant ecstasy as people are being saved. It is written: "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than

over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” Lk. 15:7

Joseph took Mary and the young Child and fled into Egypt, because the spirit of anti-Christ stirred up Herod to seek the life of God’s Salvation. But the Father’s eye was over His Firstborn, and His strong arm was by Him continually. This same murderous spirit was in the Jews who laid plots to kill Jesus, but all their efforts were futile. He was ever in His Father’s keeping.

Likewise, the same spirit of anti-Christ is in men today, seeking “to kill, and to destroy” all those who believe on Jesus, because they have His life, and are a part of His sacred body. But none can succeed. We are all in our Father’s keeping, just as truly as was Jesus; and we are equally as safe. “....your life is hid with Christ in God.” Col. 3:3 Jesus’ Father is our Father. He can no more neglect you and me, than He did His Son. We, too, are His sons. We take care of every part of our own bodies, and our Father will take care of every part of the Body of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Anon

The Best Christmas Gift

21

We seek for joy in worldly gifts,
All tied with ribbons bright,
But the greatest Gift that was ever given,
Came that first Christmas night.

That holy night our Savior was born.
A precious Gift from God to me.
He came, a Babe, in human form.
He died from sin to set me free:

Risen, He went to Heaven above.
His gifts are still so freely given;
All wrapped in tenderness and love,
And sent all the way from Heaven.

No earthly Gift such joy can give
Than Jesus’ promise that I shall live
With Him forever in Heaven above;
Earth cannot match His Gift of Love.

--Dorothy Rangel

The Child Jesus

A.S. Copley

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Lk. 1:30-33

This is the greatest message ever carried from heaven to earth. It is the message of the angel Gabriel to Mary, the virgin of Nazareth. The first part has been fulfilled. The Promised One was born to Mary. His Name was Jesus. He was great and was called the Son of God. But what about the latter part of the angelic announcement? Has the Lord God failed of doing what was promised? Why is He not reigning over the house of Jacob now? Why is He not sitting on the throne of David? He has not received the Kingdom.

22

The first part of the prophecy was fulfilled at Christ's birth: the latter part will be fulfilled at His second advent. It would have immediately come to pass; but He was rejected. The prophets had foretold this. He received a cross instead of a throne. The house of Jacob did not want this Man to reign over them. They put Him into the hands of the Gentiles. When Pilate reminded them of His Kingship, they answered, "We have no king, but Caesar." Then they demanded the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of the Son of David their King. The awful choice with its terrible loss was made. After that, the mockery, the plaited crown, the purple robe, the frail reed, the marred face and form! Then we see Him on the tree; but Oh! it is written, these words in three different languages --- "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." No hand could remove this inscription. Pilate insisted that it remain.

David's throne has been empty ever since; for He, who alone can fill it, was rejected. The King is no more wanted today at the end of the age than He was at the beginning. The world does not want David's Son to reign. He is a Jew ... And yet He is the world's hope. While the throne of David is empty, the world

will groan in misery, disorder, sorrows, and suffering. All evil has its source in the fact that the Son of the woman, God's Son also, is rejected. Wars will continue; unrighteousness will rule; no permanent peace; no better world will be enjoyed until He is enthroned.

But Who will put Him on the throne? The Lord God will give unto Him the throne of His Father David. He will set Him upon His holy hill of Zion. He will give Him the nations for His inheritance. The world waits that glad day when all pain and sorrow will be gone; tears will be wiped away, death will be held in defeat. Happiness and peace will be manifested in the morning of joy that is just ahead. "Come Lord Jesus, Come."

The Wonder of Christmas

Christ said to the world about Him:

"I love you!

I love you when you scorn My Message.
I love you when you turn away from My entreaties.
I love you when you laugh at My sorrow for your sins.
I love you when you mock My concern for your redemption.
I love you when you ridicule the sting of My tears.
I love you when you sneer at My breaking heart.
I love you when you are indifferent to My compassion.
I love you when you jeer and call Me names.
I love you when you spit in My face and jerk out my beard.
I love you when you crush cruel thorns into the tenderness of My brow.
I love you when you nail My throbbing body to a splintered cross.
I love you in the agonies of death.
I love you more than riches, more than honor, more than glory.
I love you more than My very life.

I love you!"

What is love? This is Christ's definition. Can we make it ours?

---Ruth Vaughn

Trial of Faith!

Ray Quintana

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” Jas 1:2-4

With this word “...brethren,...” James shows a true brotherly sympathy with believers in their trials. We bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, which is a part of our high calling. So, with faith, we must encourage those around us. Grace leads to the joy of pardon: grace was never meant to make men miserable, but to wipe all tears from their eyes. Notice the subject of this text is affliction.

Our faith is the target to which Satanic arrows are directed; the furnace is kindled for the trial of our faith. Then, notice the valuable blessing gained by the proving of our faith. This trial discovers whether or not it is genuine. Such proof is a blessing of which we cannot speak too highly. Thirdly, we see the priceless quality which is produced by this process of testing, namely, **24** patience; for the proving of your faith produces patience, and this is the soul’s truest enrichment. Connected with that, patience is spiritual completeness. James says, “...count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience.”

“...let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.” V.4 It is the faith of the believer which is tried, the same faith which is given by God and detested both by Satan and the world. If we did not have faith, they would not be our enemies. Faith is the mark of all God’s chosen people, but the enemies of all the faithful spew their venom, especially upon their faith. The enemy bites at the heel of the True Seed as Genesis 3:15 tells us. Therefore, mockings, persecutions, temptations, and trials are sure to affect the pathway of faith.

The hand of faith is against all evil, and all evil is against faith. Faith is that blessed grace which is most pleasing to God. So therefore, it is the most displeasing to the devil. By faith, God is greatly glorified, and by faith Satan is greatly annoyed. He rages at it because he sees his own defeat, and we have the victory of grace. The trial of your faith brings honor to the Lord, and He Himself, is trying our faith, which brings out praise, and

pours forth His grace, wherein faith is built up in His saints. Our chief end is to glorify God, and if our trials enable us to grow and glorify Christ more and more, they are for us.

So, what is the reason to count it all joy when we fall into manifold trials? It is by our faith that we are saved, justified, and brought near to God, and therefore it is no marvel that it is attacked. It is by believing in Christ that we are delivered from the reigning power of sin, and receive power to become the sons of God. This is the joy we have. Faith is as vital to salvation as the heart is vital to the body. So, that is why the javelins of the enemy are mainly aimed at the heart of faith. Faith is the standard bearer, and the object of the enemy is to strike him down that the battle may be enjoined.

If the foundation could be removed, what can the righteous do? The glorious news is that it cannot be removed. Because of Christ, "...the righteous is as an everlasting foundation." Prov. 10:25 All the powers of darkness which are opposed to righteousness and truth are sure to fight against our faith in God, but faith is the fighting and conquering principle.

We must understand Satan wants to slay our faith, even as Pharaoh sought to kill the male children when Israel dwelt in Egypt. If he robs a Christian of his faith, he will be like Samson when his locks were cut away and the Philistines were upon him. We should not be alarmed when the full force of the enemy beats upon our faith, for it is the foundation of our spiritual house, and must therefore be found true through this earthly journey.

Now, think of how faith is tried. The text says we fall into manifold temptations or into divers temptations, meaning that we have no control over them and must therefore expect very many and very different trials. In any case these trials are most real. This epistle was written to the twelve tribes who were a tried people. The Jews were greatly persecuted by all other nations, and when they became Christians, they were brutally persecuted by their own people. A Gentile convert was somewhat left alone but not the Jewish Christian. They were crushed between Paganism and Judaism. The Israelitish Christian was usually so persecuted by his own kin that he had to flee from them. There was no place for the Christian Jew to go. They were hated by other people. But today God's people find that trial is no fake word. The rod in God's house is no toy to play with either. The furnace is no place

of extra warmth to which we can get accustomed. It is often heated seven times hotter, like unto that of Nebuchadnezzar.

Our temptations are no inventions of nervousness or fear. We have heard of the patience of Job, which was real patience, and his afflictions were genuine. We are not taken out of this world of temptation, but are kept in it for our good. Our old nature is depraved; and makes occasions for sin, but by grace we overcome the tendency of that nature, and thus derive benefits from tribulation. We all know the season of fierce trial, but there have been flowers of grace which blossom in our climate of trial as we are being tried with frost and blight. Our way is up the river, against the current, struggling against a flood which would try and lead us to destruction.

26 The trial or temptation of each individual is distinct from that of every other person. There was no precedent when God told Abraham, to take his only son and offer him upon a mountain for a sacrifice. Nobody was ever tried in that way, nor will it happen again. We may have trials, but certainly not the trial of having to offer our only child in sacrifice. That was something peculiar to Abraham. Jesus likewise said to the young man in the gospels, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Matt. 19:21 Some might think that every man's duty would be to offer a child in sacrifice or part with all his goods, but scripture does not really teach that. God ordains particular tests for each person. The test most severe to me would perhaps be no trial to you; and that which tries you might not be a temptation to me. What one person would deem as nothing, another might perceive as a most fierce and terrible blast from the enemy.

Temptations or trials come suddenly when we fall into them as noted above. They could well be likened unto a lion leaping from the thicket. When Job's children were eating and drinking in their elder brother's house, suddenly a wind came from the wilderness, smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead. Then the cattle were plowing, the sheep grazing, and in a moment of time, fire fell from heaven, whereby the whole of these possessions vanished.

One messenger had not told his story before another followed on its heels. Job had no breathing room; the blows were thick and fast. The trial of our faith is most severe when

diver's trials may come in rapid succession. Is it not strange in light of these things that James says, "...count it all joy when ye fall into divers trials?" Happy is the man whose shield can catch and quench all the fiery darts of the enemy. Who is our shield? "But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Psa. 3:3

Paul exhorts men to take up the shield of faith in Eph.6, for the purpose of extinguishing all the flaming arrows of the evil one. The word translated shield, refers to a large shield, as the shape of a door, thus signifying a door. The shields used by the warriors in those days were that large covering the warrior entirely. David also declares, "For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield." Psa. 5:12 The shield covers the entire man, just as faith covers us entirely, in protection from all the missiles, wherever they may be aimed against us. Jesus is my shield much larger than a door! He is the door! Faith in Him protects us entirely.

Scripture plainly teaches that the assault of Satan will be against the mind. He will try to deceive us with only part of the word tempting us to doubt those things we have received from God. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," but while many may hear, all surely have no desire to be led into faith. It is like the butterflies which go from flower to flower. They extract no food for honey because they do not come for such a purpose. But the bees dive into the cups and bells of the flowers, and come up loaded with their luscious food. God's people must become bees, extracting all the pith of God's Word. Oh, if men came to hear, praying to be endowed with faith in Jesus, faith would surely come to them by hearing. Many persons hearing a sermon, are like children looking at a cornfield. It is full of yellow luscious corn, and they cry "what a lovely field." But the farmer is looking for the wheat, the fruit. Some hearers seek the pretty speeches, and say, "How well he puts it!" But surely that is not the purpose for coming to the house of God.

Full faith in Christ preserves us against Satanic attacks, and enables us to hold fast those things we have made our own by experience. One who has strong faith in Christ possesses a hand that gets a grip of grace, whereby nothing can unclasp it. We know what we have believed, and received. It is grace for grace or "...grace upon grace;..." our foundation is firm in Christ. One

great fact on which genuine faith stands is the foundation of the Word which "...was made flesh and dwelt among us..." Jn. 1:14 Another is the great pillar of substitution, as "...Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:" I Pet. 3:18 I should have been the one that took the punishment, but He did it for me!

Faith is the gift of God, but man must receive it. Faith is not a feeling or a sensation. It is rather found in what Christ suffered on the cross, through which He saved us; and is saving us today; as well as throughout the eternities to come. The very qualities of Christ must be taken by faith; therefore, Paul exhorts, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:8 These are the characteristics of Christ. Hang onto these when trials come! Say them over and over in your heart till the sweetness of these characteristics and the qualities of Christ lie deep within. Take the character of Christ to yourselves. That is faith! These are yours! Hear these things and add them to your faith! Chew on each morsel and savor each word, for it is Christ Himself.

How are we to think or meditate on these things? It is by our washing in the laver of His Word. The laver in the Old Testament was used by the priests to wash themselves for service. It is a fitting expression of washing in the water of the Word. Titus 3:5 describes the experience as "...the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" Both the laver and the water portray the Word of God. Daily we must continue to go to that laver in order to have peace. The only way of real victory is by the power of the Holy Spirit through the word of God. It is when the word of God is appropriated, chewed, and meditated upon! This is where the Strength of The Racer, the full overcomer comes from.

Paul states in Phil 4:7 that, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts..." What does he mean by this? It declares that the mental capability of carnal man can never understand it, nor attain to it.

We see men of scripture wandering about in sheepskins and goat skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented; and yet, we

also see upon the Christian's brow a calm serenity. We cannot understand this; we do not know what it is. How is it that the Christian can attain a rest so calm, so peaceful, and so quiet? Mental understanding can never get to that peace which the Christian hath attained. The philosopher may teach us much; he can never give us rules whereby to reach the peace that Christians have in their conscience. We also find that these disciples of old were not always able to have this peace at times. But the Christian does with faith, that which man can never do himself. While the poor in understanding is climbing up the crags, faith stands on the summit; while the poor understanding is getting into a calm atmosphere, faith flies aloft and mounts higher than the storm, and then looks down on the valley, and smiles while the tempest blows beneath its feet. Faith goes further than understanding, and the peace which the Christian enjoys is one which the worldling can never comprehend, and cannot himself attain..... "...the peace of God, which passeth all understanding..."

And this peace is said to "...keep the mind through Christ Jesus..." Without Christ Jesus such peace would not exist; without Christ Jesus this peace, even where it has existed, cannot be maintained. It only exists when one is daily in His Word, continually looking by the eye of faith to Him who bled upon the cross, thus reflecting continual drawings from his ever-flowing fountain, to make this peace broad, and long, and enduring. A Christian hath no peace with God except through the atonement of his Lord Jesus Christ. So, brethren, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." You have no place in which to pour your troubles except the ear of God which is our peace!

29

KIND WORDS

Speak kindly in the morning; it lightens the cares of the day, and makes the household and all other affairs move along more smoothly.

Speak kindly at night, for it may be that before the dawn some loved one may finish his or her space of life, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness.

Speak kindly at all times; it encourages the downcast, cheers the sorrowing, and very likely awakens the erring to earnest resolves to do better, and with strength to keep them.

Kind words are balm to the soul. They oil up the entire machinery of life, and keep it in good running order.

--Author Unknown

Hosea 12

“Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt.” V. 1

Ephraim is once again primarily a reference to the ten tribes of Israel who continue in their gross idolatry, and the futility of such ungodly practice is described as following “... after the east wind.” This nation which was once dedicated to the Lord now “...compasseth me about with lies...” according to the indictment of Ch. 11:12 and the text above testifies once again that they are steeped in their idolatry, for Ephraim “...daily increaseth with lies and desolation;...” The lies are against God as the people pursue other gods. Not only so, but their allegiance has changed from looking to the Lord for their needs to making “...a covenant with the Assyrians...” and literally trying to buy Egypt’s favor with gifts of oil. Notice further that even though these accusations are leveled against Ephraim, “The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah,...” It has been stated numerous times that Judah did not succumb to idolatry as quickly as did the ten tribes but she did eventually follow that same path and therefore opened the door for her own captivity to Babylon. Thus, this verse concludes with the promise that “...the Lord... will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him.” The reference to Jacob must of necessity include all 12 tribes of Israel, for God raised him up and gave promises which include the entire nation.

That glorious history began when Jacob “...took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God:” V. 3 The message to Israel during these days of Hosea is that they are identified with their father Jacob insofar as God’s purposes for them. Jacob “...took his brother by the heel,...” meaning that he would be in control rather than “under the heel” or authority of Esau. This is simply one illustration of the promise given to Jacob’s mother, Rebekah, that “...the elder shall serve the younger...” She was a barren woman before God’s miraculous intervention, but she was in tremendous straits during pregnancy because “... the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.” Gen 25:22 Rebekah was a woman of faith and God answered her with the explanation that “...Two

nations are in thy womb, ...and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.” Gen. 25:23 So it is that the promises given to Jacob apply to the entire nation of Israel. There are many throughout the years who have maligned both Rebekah and Jacob for being deceitful and dishonest, accusing them of stealing that which belonged to Esau. That supposition is in no wise true. Jacob’s benefits were given to him by promise, even before his birth as declared, “... the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.” Scripture is also very clear that Esau willingly SOLD his birthright, for this same chapter clearly declares the fact that when “...Esau came from the field, and he was faint:... Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee,... for I am faint:... And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob... thus Esau despised his birthright.” Gen. 25:29-34 Esau, the firstborn, had been blessed with the “right” to all the choicest blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, but he had absolutely no regard for the tremendous advantage given to him by birth. Paul pronounced him “...a fornicator,... profane person...who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Heb. 12:16 This must undoubtedly be one major reason that God concluded, “...Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” Rom. 9:13

31

Hosea would hold before the nation of his day the fact that God still wanted them to follow in the steps of their father Jacob. The promises were most assuredly theirs by promise and he further invokes the history of Jacob, proclaiming, “Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us;” V. 4 Two major experiences are recorded here. First, Jacob’s “...power over the angel,...” took place in Gen. 32 when he was on his way back to Canaan “...and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint,...And he said, Let me go,...And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel:

for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed....And he blessed him there.” Gen. 32:24-29

This experience produced a very significant “name change” for Jacob, for now he is no longer the “supplanter,” assuming the place of another, but rather Israel, “prince of God.” This latter name has given him the tremendous advantage of having “...power WITH God...” That status is also enjoyed by the entire nation.

The second experience recorded in this verse is that “... he found him in Bethel...” and this declaration again reaches down to the nation for “...there he spake with us.” Bethel means “house of God” and is symbolic of the place of learning and fellowship which God desired for this chosen vessel and nation. The record in Genesis is clear that Jacob would have settled short of that place and consequently he endured great heartache surrounding his daughter Dinah, as outlined in Gen. 34. After that devastating time, “... God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.” Gen. 35:1

32

Bethel is the place where God first introduced Himself to Jacob and personally reaffirmed the Abrahamic covenant immediately after he had left his father’s house in Gen. 28. Now Jacob has returned and is instructed to “...go up to Bethel and DWELL there...” meaning that he is to enter into the constant experiences signified by “the house of God.”

Hosea’s message now is addressed to those at the time then present for “...there he spake with us; Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial.” V. 4-5 Jacob’s experience with the LORD at Bethel is “...his memorial,” or legacy left to his progeny and therefore the current nation hears the plea, “Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” V. 6 Ephraim must turn away from their idolatry unto God. They must follow His path of mercy or grace, trusting his “...judgment...” or decisions and wait on him “...continually...” even as Jacob was instructed to “...go up to Bethel and dwell there:...”

“He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress.” V. 7 The indictments against this idolatrous nation continue as the subject of this verse seems to be Israel or Jacob who is portrayed here as a “...merchant...” His

merchandise is idolatry, his attitude "...deceit,..." or fraud and God is the One who has been robbed by their idolatry. Still these ten tribes will not acknowledge their condition, for "...Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: in all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." V. 8 This people have become very self sufficient, attributing the blessing which God has given unto themselves or their own "...labours..." and insisting that none could find fault or "... iniquity in me..." This is exactly the same attitude on display by the Church at Laodicea, whose testimony will also be, "...I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:" Rev. 3:17 The decision of The Judge in Revelation declares that "...I will spue thee out of my mouth," (Rev. 3:16) but God's ultimate purpose for Israel shouts "...I that am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast." V. 9 God does not excuse the idolatrous conduct of Israel, but He will fulfill His promises to Abraham. He did deliver this people from Egypt wherein they became a nation, and has preserved them thereafter, but the real fulfillment of the feast of tabernacles will be brought to fruition in the Millennium. It was during this feast that Israel dwelt in flimsy "brush arbors" free of any great wall of protection, the lesson being that God would defend them. That same protection will yet prevail in the great tribulation which will come upon them.

33

"I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets." V. 10 The words of the prophets contained both promises of the aforementioned victory for Israel, as well as warnings against their persistent idolatry and rebellion to which Hosea alludes with the following. "Is there iniquity in Gilead? surely they are vanity: they sacrifice bullocks in Gilgal; yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the fields." V. 11 God is not deceived by their outward display of "godliness" as they continue to offer their sacrifices unto idols. Such things are here called iniquity and vanity and will come to absolute nothingness or "...heaps in the furrows of the field.

The history of Jacob's sojourn out of the land is once again called to account, recalling how "...Jacob fled into the country of

Syria, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep.” V. 12 This verse seems to indicate that even though Jacob had left the land of promise, God still prospered him. Israel likewise has dwelt for some time out of the land of promise, due to their unbelief, but God’s promise to them is certain and He will surely reveal Himself to them even as He did with their father Jacob. Not only so, but just as Israel of old was delivered from Egypt, so also will new creation Israel be set free from the nations. “And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” V. 13 That specific prophet was Moses who led them out of Egypt across the Red Sea. The prophet who “...preserved...” them could refer to a number of very prominent men such as Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Elijah, for all of them prophesied in times of great declension when Israel was steeped in idolatry, yet still “...preserved...” as a nation, even at this present time.

34 Regardless of that fact, these ten tribes especially persisted in their wayward path, for “Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly: therefore shall he leave his blood upon him, and his reproach shall his Lord return unto him.” V. 14 This is the current state of Israel as a nation. God must surely punish unbelief and rebellion, and thus “...his reproach...” that is, Ephraim’s reproach against God “...shall his Lord return upon him.” Note here that despite all the charges against Israel, God is still “...his Lord...” and will in no wise cast him off forever. Paul describes that mystery with these words. “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid....God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew....But what saith the answer of God... Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” Rom.11:1-5 That grace is found in Jesus, and Israel as a nation will discover it when they accept Him as their Messiah. After that, all the aforementioned promises to Abraham will be fulfilled in the thousand year reign of Christ, wherein Israel will finally be the head and not the tail of all nations.

* The rests are important for the notes to produce meaningful music. The Lord is our Master Conductor; all the rests and stops are needed if we are to have spiritual harmony.

* Do not forget that God is between you and your enemy.



Our Corn Crib

"Buy The Truth, and Sell It Not"

Tracts

A Problem, Solution & Triumph	Freedom	Pauline Sanctification
Arrangement & End of Ages	Gifts of the Spirit	Pauls Superlatives
Attack against the Truth	Glossolalia	Phoebe
A Burning Truth	God- A Triunity	Preaching Another Jesus
A Growing Relationship	Gospel Records	Predestination
Caught up with Paul	Gospels, Acts & Epistles	Preparation of the Bride
Cherubim & Seraphim	Holy Spirit- Baptism & Anointing	Ranks in Resurrection
Chaste Virgin	How to Receive Holy Spirit	Resume of What we Teach
Comfort in Time of Sorrow	It is Finished	Salvation for the Body
Death, Hell & Lake of Fire	Jesus Heals Today	Scriptural Terms Defined
Destiny of the Wicked	Judgement Seat of Christ	Words on Eternal Security
Diamonds in the Rough	Law or Grace	The Adams Case
Dying Daily	Life Everlasting	The Two Adams
Earnest but Wrong	Light on the Law	The Sin Offering
Eternal Life	Living Ones	The Unforgiven Sin
Extra! Extra!	Made Sin for Us	This is That
Faith	Man Child- Rev. 12	Times of the Gentiles
Fear of the Lord	Mercy or Judgement	Tithing
First Day of the Week	New Birth	Water Baptism
Five Much Mores	Not Legislation, Revelation	Wheat and Tares
Five Consequences	Oneness of Christ	Why am I Not Healed

Books of the Bible

Genesis	Esther	Luke	1, 2 Thessalonians
Exodus	Job	John	1, 2 Timothy
Leviticus	Ecclesiastes	The Acts	Philemon
Numbers	Song of Solomon-A.S.Copley	Romans	Hebrews, James, Titus
Joshua	Paul's Gospel in S.O.S.-A.Mooneyhan	1, 2 Corinthians	2nd John
Judges	Isaiah	Galatians	Jude
Ruth	Prophets-Joel, Nahum, Hab, Malachi	Ephesians	Revelation
1, 2 Samuel	Zechariah	Philippians	
Ezra	Matthew	Colossians	

Music CD's

Wings of Faith - Live- '79 feat. Greg, Milita, Rick, Sue & Frank
 Tabernacle Choir Album- 1963- Beloved Grace & Glory Favorites

*All titles free of Charge. Call, Write, or e-mail your order

grace and glory

P.O. Box 831

Grandview, Missouri 64030



*May the Peace of His Presence be your Gift at Christmas
And your Treasure through the coming year . . . is our prayer.*