

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

Volume 112

November 2022

Number 11



The Lord
is gracious,

and full of
compassion; slow
to anger, and
of great mercy.

PSALM 145:8



CHAPTER 2

AND when the day of Pén'tè-cōst, was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

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THE COMFORTER ABIDES

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



Gene Hawkins

“**B**ut evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” II Tim.

3:13

Deception is but one of the many characteristics describing the “...perilous times...” of these last days which Paul announced at the beginning of this chapter. Such a statement can certainly be applied to mankind in general, but it is especially applicable to the nations of our day. It is quite true that Satan has been the “chief deceiver from the beginning of time. He left his mark on Eve in the Garden of Eden as Paul notes, “...the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty,...” II Cor. 11:3 The apostle further emphasizes that fact, declaring plainly that, “... Adam was not deceived, but the woman **being deceived** was in the transgression.” I Tim. 2:14 John is very clear that Satanic deception is especially directed toward the nations in these final days of the Church Age, declaring that Jesus “...will cast him (Satan) into the bottomless pit,... that he should **deceive the nations no more**, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Rev. 20:3 This arch enemy will be bound during the Millennium, but he will then be “...loosed for a little season...” to go out and do what he does best. “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan ...shall go out to **deceive the nations...**” Rev. 20:7-8 Jesus likewise accused Satan of his ungodly practices as He spoke to the Pharisees. “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” Jo. 8:44 Satan is absolutely at the center and heart of deception, but men today must realize that they cannot “excuse” or ignore their own actions by basically saying “The Devil made me do it.” Though the serpent took full advantage of the fact that Eve was both innocent and naïve; God still held her accountable for her actions, and present day rulers must also bear that responsibility and blame, even though they are victims of Satanic influence.

World conditions at this present time, BEFORE the tribulation has even begun, literally reek with the “order” of

tribulation has even begun, literally reek with the “order” of deception described in the opening text. Yes, men are actively engaged in deceiving others, but this verse seems to indicate that those who use such a tool leave themselves wide open for the same destructive tactic to be used against themselves. Vladimir Putin tried to deceive the entire global community, declaring repeatedly that he had no intention of invading Ukraine, even though he was actively building up troops on their border. He was in like manner duped, and most assuredly “shocked,” by the aggressive opposition put forth by Ukraine. Now he is desperately trying to find some way out of this quagmire, just to save face in the eyes of those who have witnessed this gigantic blunder on his part.

4 This matter of deception is also a major characteristic defining the very vast and expansive “...mystery of iniquity,…” outlined in Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians, which will culminate with the manifestation of both the false prophet and the antichrist. Some in this choice Church at Thessalonica had apparently been deceived into thinking that Jesus had already come and they had been left behind. Thus, he vehemently exhorts, “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” II Thess. 2:3 That man of sin is the antichrist, here described as he “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, ... shewing himself that he is God.” V. 4 Paul next describes the false prophet with these words. “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, ... Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and **lying wonders,**” V. 8-9 Satan will use any means possible to promote the burden of the day, which is deception, on which the apostle further elaborates in the next verse. “**And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**” V. 10 Note here that the deception is primarily because men simply ignore truth. Thus, it is “...**for this cause** (rejecting the truth of V. 10) **God shall send them strong delusion,** that they should believe a lie:” V. 11 This is a principle of Scripture. Anytime men refuse to believe truth, they make themselves vulnerable, and thus become prime and fertile ground for the seeds of deception. Mr. Putin could certainly be used as a prime example of this truth and we would

emphasize from this verse that "...God shall send them strong delusion..." Satan is the great deceiver, but one rather impressive part of this "...mystery of iniquity..." is that God Himself, "... shall send them strong delusion..." He has most assuredly used the Satanic efforts of men throughout the ages to accomplish His purposes, but it is very clear from the account here that God will push ungodly men and nations to the limit, thus forcing them to a decision of either rejecting the light He has offered or accepting it. Quite a number of the nations in question at this hour will reject that proffered light and will, therefore, be among those who "...received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." V. 10 These are nations which will NOT even be a nation during the Millennium.

Russia is not the only power caught in this trap and from current reports, it is quite certain that China may soon make her move against Taiwan. They, like Russia, insisted for a time that invading Taiwan was not in their plans, but that sense of deception has given way recently to open threats of aggression against this U.S. ally. This conduct has seemingly forced U.S. officials to reveal their own plan if such an invasion were to take place. Vladimir Putin has also raised the fear among many that he might resort to nuclear weapons to achieve some kind of victory in Ukraine. 5

Other "signs" of current end times centered on deception include the continued proclamation by America and a number of other countries that the world is doomed unless the major threat of "global warming" or "climate change" is at least "curbed" by the elimination of fossil fuels. It is quite likely that many may be rather weary of reading about that issue in these pages, but it is the politicians themselves from a great number of countries who have been literally "hammering" their subjects with this myth for quite some time. The following report from The National Review back in 2016 quotes from a documentary in 2006 entitled "An Inconvenient Truth" where Al Gore asserted "...that unless we took "drastic measures" to reduce greenhouse gasses, the world would reach a "point of no return" in a mere ten years. He called it a "true planetary emergency." Well, the ten years passed today, we're still here, and the climate activists have postponed the apocalypse. Again."

Since that time, numerous politicians have also ventured quite a number of predictions, which have already come and

gone, that the world would be destroyed by out of control man-made temperatures. The deception here is that the powers are using such tactics to gain absolute control over those under them, and the current world situation in relation to oil is one major proof of it.

6 All the above scenarios could well be likened to "...the handwriting on the wall..." which Belshazzar saw when the Babylonish Empire drew to a close. "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and ...whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father (grandfather) Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; ...and his concubines, drank in them.... and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall ...and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Dan. 5:1-6 Many of today's national leaders, like unto Belshazzar, also seem to be "quaking in their boots" due to the great number of events happening at this present time, of which none seem to have any answers. The times are also in parallel, for Nebuchadnezzar's dominion over the first world empire would end that very night. That is the message for this last king of the Babylon's reign, as is clearly seen by the interpretation. "This is the interpretation of the thing...God hath numbered thy kingdom, **and finished it.**" V. 26 Let every world leader at this present time also realize that Gentile Times are quickly coming to a close, for such times must give way to King Jesus, Who will shortly be enthroned BEFORE the coming days of tribulation even begin.

The question here in Daniel is, "Did Belshazzar truly believe the message conveyed by the "handwriting on the wall?" He did give to Daniel the promised "reward," one part of which was, "...that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom." Dan. 5:29 Does this not signify that Belshazzar still thought his kingdom would continue indefinitely even though he was plainly told it was finished? Not only so, but there is absolutely no record of any attempt on his part to "correct" God's direct accusations against him, which declare that, "...thou...O Belshazzar, hast not

humbled thine heart...But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, ...and the God in whose hand thy breath is,... hast thou not glorified:" Dan. 5:22-23 These words not only indicate the pride within the heart of Belshazzar but also the direct insult against God for holding this "religious feast" to other gods with the sacred vessels out of God's temple at Jerusalem. Though Nebuchadnezzar had stolen these vessels 70 years earlier, they still had tremendous spiritual meaning and value in the eyes of God!

So also many today have "prophesied" the end of the world due to "climate change," and some in recent days after Vladimir Putin put forth the possibility of using nuclear weapons against Ukraine, have loudly proclaimed that "Armageddon is eminent." The conduct of these same politicians seems to indicate that they really DO NOT believe such things, for they, like Belshazzar, are making absolutely no effort to change that which is amiss before God. Not only so, but so many foretell what they INTEND to do in the future. If men truly knew **and accepted** "the light of God's Word," they would know that the battle of Armageddon will mark the end of the 7 year tribulation, and that the world will in no wise be destroyed at that time, either by war or "climate change," because Jesus will intervene as He plainly declares. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should **no flesh be saved**: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:21-22 Were man allowed to continue his destructive works of hatred, he would most assuredly destroy himself with his ungodly weapons of mass destruction. However, God will bring that final battle of this age to a close, and replace it with the glorious utopia ushered in by the Millennium.

Paul declared plainly that, "...the mystery of iniquity **doth already work**..." II Thess. 2:7 This simply means that those seeds of iniquity were already manifest in the early days of the Church Age **at the time then present**. This same mystery has grown progressively worse down through the ages and the culmination of it will be realized in these last days, when both

the antichrist and false prophet are finally revealed. However, the apostle announces another great mystery in the remainder of this same verse. "... only he who now letteth (hinders) will let, (hinder) until he be taken out of the way." Paul enlarges on this latter mystery in his letter to Timothy as he instructed his young son in the faith to heed his writings. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." I Tim. 3:14-15 The apostle wanted to come to his son in person but if he was not permitted to do so, the letters he had written were meant to teach him "...how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, **the pillar and ground of the truth.**" Paul then joins this instruction with the mystery of godliness. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Tim. 3:16. This mystery introduces the next chapter, which also describes the same deception and rejection of light manifest in "... the mystery of iniquity..." "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;" I Tim. 4:1-2 Paul's counsel to Timothy was to explain how he, too, must follow his father's example and thus be an intricate part of the "...mystery of godliness." There are six major points expressed in that mystery, all of which testify of Christ. (1) "God was manifest in the flesh..." proclaiming that fact that "...God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;..." II Cor. 5:19 This happened when Jesus became a Man and then was hung on the cross to bear the sins of humanity. (2) "...justified in the Spirit..." This testifies of Jesus' resurrection which was God's guarantee that the offering for sin had been accepted. (3) "...seen of angels..." as a further declaration of the fact that "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said...." Matt. 28:6 (4) "...preached unto the Gentiles..." This was one primary message which was made clear on the Day of Pentecost "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,..." I Cor. 12:13 This fact was

also reinforced when the Gentiles spoke in tongues as did the Jews on the Day of Pentecost as the house of Cornelius. Acts 10:46 (5) "...believed on in the world...." These last two points reveal how believers, like unto Timothy, are indeed a part of this "...mystery of godliness,..." for they are those who have believed upon Him. Finally, number (6) "...received up into glory..." which bespeaks the fact that Jesus ascended into heaven and is now at the right hand of God interceding for us. Rom. 8:34

Paul informed the Thessalonians that, "... he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." His instruction to Timothy fully explains that such resistance comes only as believers become an active part of the mystery of godliness, for Timothy is challenged: "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, (Paul's gospel) thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and **exercise thyself** rather unto godliness." I Tim. 4:6 The mission of the faithful today is also to be "... nourished up in the words of faith...and exercise thyself...unto godliness," in order to combat the tremendous deception due to the lack of light and truth prevalent in our world today. Paul also instructed the Ephesians that they must "... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but **rather reprove them**.... But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph 5:11-14 Thus "...he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." The bridal company is the greatest fulfillment of this verse, for when she is removed, most of the resistance to Satan's agenda will have been removed. That will bring great hardship for the world, as is symbolized by the plaintive cry of those left behind after Solomon took the Shulamite away. "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." However, the good news for this very elite company is the glorious prospect of GLORY, which is even at the door!

“....Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”
Rev. 22:20

The King And Queen

Amy A. Copley

“**M**y heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.” Psa. 45:1-2

10 This Psalm sets forth two outstanding characters: a king and a queen. The first eight verses speak of the king. The characters and companies of people in this Psalm are typical of spiritual things. This king and queen are types of the heavenly King and Queen. And does it not make your heart glad to know that God is delighted to let us study about them and understand their real typical meaning? My heart is just filled with the glory of the Lord that our understanding is enlightened. To study them with delight is positive proof that our heart is reaching out to know Christ, the Son of God, as the King, and we may lay hold of the victory purchased for us that we may qualify to be the Queen. David was king in Jerusalem, reigning over Israel. Someone wrote these words to him and said, My heart is inditing a good matter," or as the margin reads, "My heart is boiling up or bubbling up." Is it not wonderful that the Holy Spirit made someone hundreds of years ago write a precious Psalm like this to the king of Israel? Oh, that writer was inspired by the Spirit of God. His pen could not go fast enough. It was as though it were a tongue. He had such a vision of the king and the queen, of the wonder, the glory, the power, the greatness and the authority of them that he could scarcely find words to express it. In the natural, the king is always put first and then the queen. So it is in the spiritual. It is Jesus first and then His Bride.

It is so wonderful to me when I read about Jesus praying for His "darling" on the cross (Psa. 22:20). That was when He bore your sins and mine, our shame and our reproach. It is no glory or honor to us, but it is all to the glory of God. He had to bear our reproach and be cut away from the presence of God before we could be highly exalted with Him. Should we not worship

Him and praise Him, that while He was suffering He thought of us? When Jesus was here on earth, people did not see Him as fair. No, He was despised, the lowly Nazarene. There was no beauty in Him that we should desire Him. The Spirit of God took the writer away on into the ages, away past David's experience. God only used David as a little background to show forth things concerning His Son in the ages to come

"Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee forever"-V. 2. Grace is poured from highest heaven into the lips of the Son of God. I could dwell right here. Every verse here is so wonderful. We cannot begin to do justice to it in a few minutes' time. We could talk about Calvary, the background of this Psalm. But we will pass on. Though the Son of God bore our reproaches, though He took the lowest place, God has highly exalted Him and He is highly blessed for evermore; but the blessing is not yet made manifest. The full victory of Calvary has not been manifest; but the Spirit of God caused this writer to say the Son of God was blessed forever. There is coming the day when the Son of God will be blessed **11** forever.

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously; because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." Vs. 3,4 The Spirit carries us to the end of this two thousand years. It is wonderful how the Spirit of God in one little verse can carry us clear across the ages and bring us marvelous truth in just a few lines. Let us turn to Revelation 1:13-15 and see a description of the majesty of Christ.

"And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters." This is a picture of the majesty of Christ as the Judge of Christendom. He is now walking in the midst of the churches, examining separating and classifying the saints. He is seen here, not as a weak, lowly Man,

but as Judge, with Divine authority. Can you picture anything so wonderful? What an amazing vision John had while he was on the Island of Patmos of the greatness and glory of the Son of Man. When Jesus was on earth, He was Man in humiliation, in weakness, and went to the cross and bore our shame. He was marred with our sickness and our sins; but He was raised from the grave, the glorified Man of God.

"His hair and His head were white like wool and His feet like fine brass." The Son of God is judging in Christendom today, and He is going to judge the world when He comes back in righteousness. He will reign in righteousness, judge everything and put down all rule and all authority and all power. He will do that in the world at large. Today He is doing that in every individual that yields to Him. When we begin to yield to the Lord, He begins to put down all rule. When we say, Yes, to Him today, He puts down a little more rule; tomorrow we say, Yes, and He puts down authority and power. I see the Trinity of God putting down the trinity of evil, the world, the flesh and the devil. God is

12 Ruler in our lives. Jesus is the Authority, and the Holy Spirit is the Power. How can we do anything else than the will of God when the Trinity of the Godhead is in our lives? It is perfectly ridiculous to talk about backsliding. Let us go forward and let the Son of God do it all in us. Now that is a little description of the majesty and glory of the Son of God.

The Lord Jesus will sit on His own throne. The Father will give Him a throne which He will bring down from the highest heaven into mid-heaven, and He will bring other thrones with Him. We see that in Dan. 7. There He will first judge the earth for about seven years. Now I want you to see a little of the judgment that will take place.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war"- Rev. 19:11. This is still the vision of John. White speaks of purity. The horses speak of power. The Son of Man is coming back in the purity of God and in the power of God. He is the only One that is able to judge righteously and make war. Jesus is going to make war against

everything that is evil in this world. There will be a terrible fight on in heaven before the Son of Man comes back. Michael will hurl the devil out of heaven. Thus, the heavens will be purified and made holy for the Son of God and His Bride, the Queen. Then after that battle, there will be a battle on earth. Jesus with His saints will judge the religious systems of Christendom. After that, will take place the marriage supper of the Lamb; then they will come back in the power of God Himself to put down the false prophet and the anti-Christ ; and the devil will be cast into the pit for a thousand years. What a vision John had when he saw all of this. I am sure that he saw much more than he put on paper.

We truly are a favored people in being brought into the light and truth and the liberty and privileges we have in Christ Jesus. To me it is wonderful.

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Vs. 6,7

Here the Son of God, as if already upon His millennial throne is addressed as God. When that day comes, the Father will sit back for a thousand years and give His Son full sway as universal Ruler. The Father will rest, and say to the Son, Now I will take a vacation for a thousand years; you and your companion, who has been separated from you for so many years, take full control and show to the universe what your redemption has done. I will enjoy my sabbath, while you and your Bride enjoy the throne life. This is why we have that wonderful Scripture, "Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. Then, not now, He will be called by those titles. Then He will be called the Counsellor of heaven and earth, and every council meeting will have to be held under His judiciary. Then, Jesus will be called the Mighty God. Then, He will be called the Everlasting Father.

"...The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter...." Justice will be meted out on every hand then; for divine righteousness

will reign supreme. Bribery will have no weight with King Jesus. He always loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Because of this fact, His Father anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows. The Spirit was poured upon Him without measure.

"All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad"-V. 8. The odor of Calvary will never leave the Son of God. He will be seen as the Lamb slain, thru-out eternity. Myrrh speaks of the sufferings of Christ. The Queen will be known as the "wife of the Lamb," not the wife of the Son, but of the Lamb. She too suffers today in being qualified to be His Bride.

Another Scene

14 "Kings' daughters are among thy honorable women; upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy Father's house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him."Vs. 9,10. Here the story changes. A new character steps forth. The King will not be on the throne alone. Does that mean anything to you? The Queen will sit with the King in His judgment over the world. Why will she? Because she judges the world with Him today. She begins by judging the flesh in herself now. If we first judge ourselves, we will judge the flesh in others with grace and tenderness. If thru grace we have the victory over our own flesh and over the world now, we shall be able to judge and reign with Christ hereafter.

Therefore, there is a process of preparation between conversion and the throne. First, she hearkens to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who will guide her into all the truth. Then she must consider what the Spirit says, and incline the ear. If we do not incline our ear to the Spirit's voice, we will never hear the sweet things our Beloved has to say to us. Finally, we must forget our household. Let me quote Paul's amazing words, "Brethren ... one thing I do; forgetting those things that are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Indeed we do some pressing, We press thru all kinds of hindrances. We

are determined to win.

"So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty." He does Not see us in the old creation, but in the new creation, "without spot or wrinkle." He sees us as His Love, His only One, His choice One, His undefiled. Our beauty consists in our wholehearted love and devotion to Him. He works in us the beauty which delights His heart. Our beauty is shown forth by acknowledging Christ as our Lord and by our worship. There is not one word said here about doing anything. But we read, "He is thy Lord; worship thou Him;" for the Lord seeks worshipers.

"The King's daughter is all glorious within. Her clothing is of wrought gold" -V. 13. Here is given us a description of the Queen. The king's darling is so precious to him, that he loves to speak of her. I will quote a portion of Scripture that gives us a wonderful pattern. "And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make it in the two ends of the mercy seat." Ex. 25:17,18 That mercy seat is a picture of our Lord and His Bride, or the full overcomers joined to Him. That mercy seat and the cherubim were beaten out of one piece, which speaks of our likeness to Christ and our oneness with Him, "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh." He was beaten for us, and we are being beaten for Him. It hurts us to be beaten. We do not like it at the time; but after the victory is won, then the glory floods our souls. Then we are so happy, because we have a greater vision of Christ than ever before. They who take the grace of God and accept this beating process will be rewarded the first place with Jesus hereafter; "for I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18. Thank God, because we let Jesus Christ execute judgment in us down here, we shall stand with Him in glory and with Him execute judgment over men and angels.

The Queen's Presentation

"She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework. The virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee"-V. 14. Some of us have to wear second hand clothes here sometimes, garments often that are a misfit; but

we will not wear that kind up there. We shall have a wonderful wedding garment of "wrought gold." What is that garment? First of all, we have a wonderful standing in Christ Jesus. Because He is righteous, we are righteous. Because He is holy, we are holy in Him. Brother Paul wrote, saying, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." His righteous life must be wrought in us; then we work it out in righteous acts, John, writing of this Queen, said, "To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen pure and white; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" Rev. 19:9 Greek. As we yield to God, He works in us to do His will. We go the way He wants us to go. We minister to the needy and homeless. We pray for the sick, and maybe do some house work for them. All things that we do in the Father's will are the "righteous acts of the saints." All those deeds make up our wedding garment of "wrought gold in fine needle work." Friends, is your shuttle weaving today?

16 Finally, if we yield to Christ and walk in His perfect will, some virgins will follow us and also appear at the marriage in the air. You say, "There goes ranks again. Well, we cannot get away from that truth. I see three classes of people in this Psalm. The Queen is one company. The group represented by the daughter of Tyre is another company. Is the Lamb going to marry the daughter of Tyre? No, but she will be at the wedding with a gift for the Bride. Will the Lamb marry the virgins, the friends of the Bride? No, yet they will be there; for the wedding will not be complete without them. How wonderful! We are stripped of everything down here. We suffer the loss of all things; but up there we will receive the gifts. The very people who persecute us because we go this way, may have to bestow gifts upon us then by acknowledging that we were right. And those gifts will last forever. Then the Father promises to make "the name of His Son to be remembered in all generations; therefore, He adds, the people shall praise thee for ever and ever."

(Reprint 1959)

Know God's Will

E. J. Witte

The Christian life is not governed by a great lot of rules, doing and not doing. This leads to bondage. One will sooner, or later break man-made rules and get into condemnation.

Nine tenths of all our troubles will be overcome when our hearts are ready to do God's will in anything and at any cost.

The whole secret of guidance is an absolutely surrendered will, ready to obey at any cost, even when God crosses our wills.

Many of our uncertainties about God's guidance are simply because we are not really willing to do what God is guiding us to do. We are tempted to say, "I can't find out what God's will is," when the real trouble is we have found something we do not wish to do and are trying to make ourselves believe that God wants us to do something else. We believe in God's ability, but not in His willingness to help us in whatsoever our need is.

We cannot depend on feelings, probabilities, impressions and appearances, or what people say or think of us, if so we are liable to be deluded.

God's will can only be found thru the combination of the Holy Spirit and the Word. The Holy Spirit always guides us in perfect harmony with the Word, never otherwise.

All supposed leadings of God should be tested by the Word and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never leads one to disobey the Word. The Word must be studied carefully and prayerfully under the lens and guidance of the Holy Spirit. How essential, therefore it is to possess the Holy Spirit in His fulness. Watching providential circumstances often plainly indicate God's will if taken in connection with the Word and the Spirit. Our prayers must be definite, asking God to reveal His will aright.

Thus, through prayer, Bible study, and reflection we come to a deliberate judgement according to the best of our ability and knowledge and if our mind is thus at ease and continues so after few more prayers and we proceed accordingly, step by step, God may only show us a step at a time; that is enough, all we need to know is the next step.

God's path is as clear as day. Satan's path is full of obscurity, uncertainty, anxiety and questioning. If there are some leadings of which we are not quite sure whether it is of God's will or not, we simply go to our Heavenly Father and say to Him "Precious Father, I desire to know thy will if Thou wilt make it clear. Thou art light and in Thee there is no darkness at all, if this is Thy will for me, for Jesus' sake and in His Name make it clear as day and I will do it. Then wait quietly upon Him and do not act until He makes it clear, but the moment it is made clear, act at once.

REFLECTIONS

...From the Editor

“**T**he blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.” Prov. 10:22

This is the time of year when men are encouraged to count their blessings and fill their hearts with thanksgiving. Many of God’s people know assuredly that every day should be a day of thanks rendered unto The Lord because all blessing stems from His glorious plan of redemption. The above text asserts that God’s blessings result in riches, with “...no sorrow...” added to it as is often the case when men pursue ill gotten gain or blessing for themselves. But the blessing of the Lord is often qualified. The Psalmist stipulates that, “...thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous;...” Psa. 5:12 The only righteousness which God accepts is that of Christ Jesus, which fact Paul surely recognized with this promise to the saints at Ephesus. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:” Eph 1:3 The glorious blessing proffered here is directly promised to those “...in Christ...” The above Psalm also identifies a specific blessing for “...with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.” Such protection is surely experience daily by many whom Satan would destroy in a heartbeat were he given the opportunity.

Psalm 115:13 likewise places somewhat of a limit on the blessing of the Lord, for “He will bless them that fear the LORD,...” Such reverence of submission is absolutely required in order to gain the full complement of God’s blessing today, and that blessing would surely include David’s claim that “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.” Psa. 29:11

It is also imperative to CLAIM the blessing which God graciously offers. Paul declares plainly, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, ... Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God;...” Heb 12:14-15 He then uses Esau as an example of one who was not diligent in such pursuit, warning, “Lest there be any fornicator, ... as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place

of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” V. 16-17 Men often accuse Jacob of “stealing” such a blessing, but the responsibility here must lie with Esau, who willingly “...sold his birthright.” Any blessing today is in Christ and none can be blessed without that birthright, for the two cannot be separated. The birthright demands the blessing and vice versa. Jacob, on the other hand, sought every opportunity to obtain the bounty which was most assuredly his by promise, for God said to his mother Rebekah, “...Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people... and the elder shall serve the younger.” Gen. 25:23 The “sale” of the birthright resulted in this blessing: “And Isaac... said,... I have eaten... and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.” Gen. 27:33 That last statement unequivocally states that the blessing of the Lord cannot be revoked, for the blessings of redemption are eternal.

However, that fact did not deter Jacob from diligently seeking the blessing to which he was entitled. He had to learn that he could not obtain such blessing in his own strength, but still he wrestled in his weakness after the angel had “...touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint,...And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” Gen. 32:26 Jacob was surely rewarded for his diligence for the angel then declared, “...Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men,... And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” Gen 32:28-30 There are multiple blessings here for Jacob is promised “...power WITH God...” which is even beyond having the power OF God, for Jacob has learned in essence that he has a certain influence in gaining God’s favor. Furthermore he has gained a more personal and intimate revelation of God expressed here as having “...seen God face to face,...”

All God’s people have also been blessed by promise as was Jacob, but it is imperative to look “...diligently...” unto Him “...lest any man fail of the grace....” that has been so freely offered.

Running for the Prize

Dr. Vicky Moots

Paul made several references in his writings to running a race. He likened our Christian journey unto a race course and also spoke of a prize to be won. He exhorted the Hebrews to "...run with patience the race that is set before us." Heb. 12:1 He also posed this question to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize..." I Cor. 9:24 Then, in Phil. 3:14, he proclaims, "I press toward the mark for the prize..." Paul considered this prize to be highly valuable or he would not be striving earnestly to win it.

Now, the big question to be answered is, "What is the prize to which Paul is referring?" Let me begin to answer that question by first stating what it is not. It is not salvation. Salvation is a gift. We do not have to run to win salvation, nor do we have to run to be able to keep it. It is a free gift which is given to us by faith in Christ Jesus. It cannot be earned or won. Rewards can be earned, but not salvation. Therefore, salvation is not the prize.

Let us look into the Old Testament book of Song of Solomon to see if it will help us to understand the nature of the prize for which Paul was striving. It is a love story, written by King Solomon but divinely inspired, which he calls his "song of songs." The relationship between him and the Shulamite woman is considered to be a spiritual type of Christ and His bride.

In the first chapter, v. 4, we see that she has a desire to win his affection and says to him, "Draw me, we will run after thee..." As he wooed her to himself, she continued running after him. His love drew her closer and closer to him until she was no longer concerned about the others who had started out running with her. Her only desire was toward him, and in S.O.S. 7:10, she exclaims, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." It had now become a one-on-one intimate relationship. She had run after him and won.

This seems to indicate that the prize of which Paul is speaking is a person, or a special relationship with that person, and not just a crown. For the Shulamite, it was King Solomon himself. For the Christian, it is to win Christ as Bridegroom and to reign with Him.

Now let us go on to study each of the 3 New Testament scriptures which I have previously mentioned in more detail to further understand our race and the prize. But first let me summarize the verses which we have recently studied.

We have already discussed the Scriptures in Eph. 5:30-32 in which Paul states that the physical joining of a man and his wife in marriage is a picture of Christ and His bride. Jesus left His Father in heaven and became a Man, not only to bring us salvation but also to have a bride.

We previously read in II Cor. 11:2 that the apostle Paul has espoused us to Christ as a chaste virgin. We become "virgin" by virtue of the new birth, for the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all unrighteousness and makes us a new creation in Christ. We then become "chaste" (pure) in character by yielding to the daily cleansing power of the Word of God in our lives as we read it.

However, not all Christians have a desire to accept that espousal or to submit to the Word which washes and sanctifies us and prepares us to be a spotless bride. We must choose, as individuals, to say, "yes" to the proposal. We must also have a desire to run after the One whom our soul loves above all else, as did the Shulamite, and to lay hold of that place for ourselves by faith.

Paul continues the thought of running whereby he had exhorted the Hebrews to "...run with patience the race that is set before us," in I Cor. 9:24-27, where he discussed a race in which many people are running, but he is primarily focusing his attention on the runners who are running to win, as compared to those who are simply running. Verse 24 states, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." There can only be one first place winner in any race, no matter how many people are running. That does not mean that the other runners are not good runners. It means that they have not excelled to the same level as the one who wins the prize.

Perhaps it is because some have not put as much effort and time into their training. Other things may have taken precedence. Some of them are satisfied with only attaining a lower level of excellence. They have not truly set their heart on the prize. To them, attaining third, or even fifth place is good enough. They are not willing to make the sacrifices in their lives required to attain unto the higher level of first place.

Let us take, for example, the Boston Marathon. In order to

compete in this race, you must first qualify by being able to run at a specific speed, which is based on your age range. It is considered an honor just to be able to qualify to run in that race. There are usually 30,000 runners, but many of them have no real intention of actually winning. They only desire to be able to say that they were a good enough runner to qualify to be a participant in the Boston Marathon. However, there are also those runners who have trained rigorously and are running with the hope of winning. They are not just running; they are running to win. Their eyes are on the prize.

Now, apply this spiritually. In order to qualify for this race, you must be born again. The blood of Jesus is the qualifier, not your own works or ability. All Christians are placed on the race track and given the opportunity to run for the prize. Some are contented with merely jogging slowly along, knowing that one day they will cross the finish line and enter into heaven.

22 But there are others who are willing to follow Paul's instructions in V. 24, "So run, that ye may obtain." That means we are to run in a manner showing that we are intent on obtaining the prize. Who is the only one who truly has the desire to run to win the prize? It is the Bride of Christ, that group of believers who have fallen in love with Him and accepted the espousal of II Cor. 11:2, that they might be presented as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Paul included himself in that group, for he stated in v. 26, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly..." He was running for the specific purpose of winning the prize. He was running "certainly.". There was no question in his mind; he was determined to win. We can also be in that group if we submit to the training. Paul explains in V. 25 how a runner in the natural realm trains to be a winner: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things..." To be temperate means to have self-control. An Olympic athlete in training knows that he must not indulge in anything that is going to affect his performance and keep him from winning. He must be in control of bodily appetites and cravings and eat a healthy diet. He must also exercise regularly and get adequate rest.

This is likewise true spiritually regarding our race course. Paul uses himself for an example in v. 27 when he says, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection [I buffet my body, and lead it captive] ..." This means that he is keeping his

body under subjection as he would a captive, making it serve him instead of being a servant to his body. This is done by the power of the Holy Spirit.

He then continues, saying "...lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway [disapproved]." Paul was admitting that even though he was a minister, he was not perfect and still had to overcome the fleshly desires of the old nature, just like we do. We cannot allow our old nature, our "old man," to rule in our lives. If we do, it will disqualify us from obtaining the prize. It will keep us from becoming a winner.

Paul spoke not only of a prize to be won, but that the winner would also receive the victor's crown. In ancient Rome, the crown was a laurel wreath, which originally was a garland woven from the leaves and branches of the bay laurel plant. The leaves were smooth and shiny and slightly fragrant. This crown was much coveted, but didn't last very long, for it would soon dry up and lose its beauty.

Paul compares this crown to a heavenly one in the last part of V. 25. "Now they do it [they run] to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Their crown of glory was only temporary, but ours is eternal, as Peter also declares in I Peter 5:4: "...ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." So let us follow Paul's instructions, and Paul's example, and run that we may obtain.

23

Hebrews 12:1-2 beautifully set forth instructions as well as encouragement in running the race which God has set before us. This race is a faith-based race, as we will see from this scripture. We walk by faith, and we must also run by faith.

The preceding chapter, Hebrews 11, is known as the faith chapter of the Bible. It begins in V. 1 by defining faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is, of course, speaking of faith in God and His promises, not in the things of this world. Then V. 6 asserts that faith is absolutely necessary in order to please God. We cannot please God by our own works, no matter how great they are, for only faith can do that.

The rest of the chapter lists many Old Testament saints who walked by faith, despite overwhelming circumstances or whether or not they received deliverance. The purpose of listing

them was not to bring glory to their names, but for them to serve as examples for us to follow so that we might be encouraged to also walk by faith. It is not God's Hall of Fame; It is His Hall of Faith.

Heb. 12:1 also states, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Paul initiates this verse with the word "Wherefore..." When we see the word "wherefore," we must stop and consider what it is there for. "Wherefore" means "because of which." So, to what does he refer? He is calling attention to those faithful men and women of chapter 11 who laid hold of God's promises and stood on His Word by faith and looked beyond their present suffering to their future joy.

24 It is because of the testimony of their lives, which is recorded for us in the Scripture, that we are able to see the faith of God in action, so that we can apply it to our own circumstances and run our own race by faith. Paul compares them to a great cloud of witnesses who are encompassing us on our faith journey as we run the race. Their testimony is cheering us on every step of the way from the grandstand of faith. We can almost hear their voices shouting to us and encouraging us to keep on running, as we read the Scripture and meditate upon it.

The faith that enabled them to overcome is the same faith to which we have access today. A measure of faith is given to each one of us; it is a gift of God, and it will grow with each step we take as we exercise it.

Note also in this first verse that Paul includes himself, for he uses the personal pronouns "us" and "we." He says, "Let us..." This is a choice, not a command. We are given a choice as to whether or not to run for the prize.

But in order to win, he tells us that there are three things which we must be willing to do. The first choice we are given is to "lay aside every weight."

A successful runner must strip down to light weight clothing and shoes. He cannot wear or carry anything that will weigh him down, and he must be able to move freely, without restriction. He must also strip himself of excess body weight, which means denying himself sugar laden, high carbohydrate

foods which taste good but have no nutritional value.

What does this mean to us spiritually? We must feed upon the pure, unadulterated Word of God, the Word of His grace, which builds us up and strengthens us. Legality weighs us down under the heavy burden of the Law. Grace sets us free, so that we may run.

In addition, we must be careful to avoid spiritual obesity. This condition can happen to us if we yield to the desires of the flesh and allow our old nature, our "old man", to have whatever he desires. If we let our soul feed upon the things of the world which please the flesh, instead of feeding upon spiritual things, we will soon become spiritually weighted down with fat and become sluggish and lose our desire and even our ability to run. Our eyes will become focused on our possessions and our pleasures instead of upon Christ. To avoid this, we must follow Paul's advice in Col. 3:2: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

There are also many things in our daily lives that can weigh us down and become a burden to us spiritually if we fail to turn them over to the Lord. Even Paul himself was burdened down with the care of the churches and his own personal trials, but he did not let those things slow down his pace. He took his burdens to the Lord in prayer. We cannot carry our burdens and run at the same time. We must give them all to Him, not just a part, as we are told in I Peter 5:7: "Casting **all** your care upon him; for he careth for you." We do the casting, and He does the caring and the carrying.

Sometimes we create our own burdens and carry unnecessary weights that take up our time and prevent us from being able to spend time sitting at the feet of Jesus and taking in the Word.

Luke 10:38-42 records the story of Mary and Martha. Verse 40 tells us that Martha was "cumbered about with much serving." She had taken upon herself the burden of doing too much serving, above and beyond what was needed. Sometimes this happens to us in our desire to serve the Lord. We spend so much time serving Him and helping others that we have no time to spend with Him, in His Presence.

The word "cumbered" means to be "burdened down." Jesus rebuked her for doing this, in v. 41: "...Martha, Martha,

thou are careful [anxious] and troubled about many things.” Yes, it is the “many things” we think are important that weigh us down and hinder us from running to win.

Furthermore, Jesus instructs Martha, in v. 42, that only one thing was needed, and Mary had chosen to do that. That “one thing” was to sit at His feet and hear His Word. That is the secret to unburdening ourselves and laying aside every weight. We must bring our burdens to the Lord, lay them at His feet, and then let Him speak to us through His Word. He said “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
Matt. 11:28

(To Be Continued)

INFINITE JOURNEY

I'm going on a journey
And I won't be coming back;
I'll have no need of luggage
So I do not need to pack.

26

I have a straight through ticket;
There will be no delay
When my Captain calls for me;
I'm waiting for that day.

I do not know the route I'll take,
Nor do I know the hour.
But this I know, it will be soon, A
nd He'll come with mighty power

The dead and living shall arise;
We'll all go up together
To meet our Bridegroom in the air,
And be with Him forever.

When I reach my destination
There'll be many to welcome me,
But the thing that is most exciting:
My loving Savior I'll finally see.

--Beula Clark

Victory Over Sin

“**K**nowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Rom. 6:6

While taking my morning bath (I speak of washing in the Word), this passage of Scripture wonderfully impressed me. In the face of the fact that we see sin all around us, we may live a victorious life. In this Scripture, we see three outstanding facts: Christ's crucifixion, our old man crucified with Him, and victory over sin as the result of such. If we do not see the truth of our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, we remain dormant to the victorious life, which is in Christ for us. We remain babes, being occupied with blessings and not with the Blessor. We may wonder why we fail. It is not because we want to fail, for we are actually striving against failure. But not knowing the Word and how to lay hold of it is the main cause of all failures. Not knowing that sin is a hidden, hideous monster, secreted in the flesh, and having never seen the flesh as having been put to death, naturally we take the situation in our own hands to cope with sin. 27

Knowing This

But the power of the Pauline Gospel is knowing this. God would have us to know some things as our beloved Brother Paul knew, and to make such things practical in his life. He received the revelation of the grace of God. He was turned completely about. He had been more legal than most men; but God turned him away from it all by revealing His Son in him. "Our old man was crucified with Christ." Where was Christ crucified? On Calvary, of course. Then in a provisional sense, the old creation was put to death there. The correct rendering then is our old man WAS crucified with Christ. It is in the past that Christ was crucified and not at the present; though at present, the old man is held in the death-state as we walk after the Spirit. No one need to be overcome with sin in his members, for we may lay hold of the Word of the Lord. God had a specific purpose in view in putting away the old man. It was that His people might not be the servants of sin, but the

servants of righteousness, and live unto Himself. In this respect only, God can be glorified. Who would think that God is glorified when we yield to the flesh and a distinction is hardly seen between us and sinners? It is never His purpose, when saving anyone, to let him continue in sin, but to enable him to live for His glory. However, many do fail, and God is not glorified in their lives, and He is compelled to take them out of the world as fruitless branches. That there is a victorious life cannot be gainsaid. The same grace is extended to all to enjoy such a life. Some leave their old man in the death state, but never count the new man as out of the grave, alive with Christ. But we should know that we are alive from the dead, and that Christ is our life. Christ is no longer in the grave, and neither are we. In the measure that we take hold of Christ, we enjoy Him. How much of Him shall we take? All of Him, that we may enjoy all the victory that all the promises hold out to us, so that God may receive all the glory due to Him. Praise the Lord! "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me."

-Contributed.

28

(Reprint 1950)

Walk by Faith

We walk by faith
And not by sight.
We walk in love
And in the Light.
We walk in wisdom
to do what's right,

And in the Spirit
And by His might.
We need not fear
The coming night.
He chose us; We
are his delight.

Dr. Vicky Moots

The Refiner's Fire

Anon

1. He sat by a furnace of seven-fold heat,
As He watched by the precious ore.
And closer He bent with a searching gaze,
As He heated it more and more.
2. He knew He had ore that could stand the test;
And He wanted the finest gold
To mold as a crown for the King to wear,
Set with gem of price untold.
3. So He laid our gold in the burning fire,
Though we fain would say Him nay.
And watched the dross that we had not seen,
As it melted and passed away.
4. And the gold grew brighter and yet more bright,
But our eyes were dim with tears.
We saw the fire, not the Master's hand,
And we questioned with anxious fears.
5. Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow,
As it mirrored a form above;
That bent over the fire, though unseen by us,
With a look of unutterable love.
6. Can we think it pleases his loving heart
To cause us a moment's pain?
Oh no! but He sees through the present cross
The bliss of eternal gain.
7. So He waited there with a watchful eye,
With a love that is strong and sure.
And His gold did not suffer a bit more heat
Than was needed to make it pure.

Hosea 11

“**W**hen Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” V. 1

Matthew quoted the first part of this verse surrounding the fact that Joseph fled Bethlehem into Egypt when Herod decreed that all children two years old and under should be slain. When Herod was dead, Joseph returned to the land of promise “...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Matt. 2:15 It is rather fitting that this verse should apply both to Jesus and Israel, for, His deliverance out of Egypt, or the world, is simply a guarantee of the fact that they will follow the same pattern because of His redemption. Hosea’s reference to this nation as “...a child,...” at the time then present bespeaks a people who were chosen by God even before they became a nation. His love and overall purpose of deliberately choosing them for a special people is beautifully expressed with the following declaration put forth after He had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. “For thou art an holy
30 people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” Deut. 7:6-8 He honored His oath to Abraham and “...your fathers,...” the day they came out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. That process began on the basis of sacrifice with the Passover. “And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month (Abib) they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:.” Ex. 12:1-3 This feast is then designated at “...the LORD’S passover,” in V. 11, because “...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.” Ex. 12:13

The Passover is symbolic of Jesus’ death at Calvary, but it seems that this people was not officially recognized as a nation until after they crossed the Red Sea, on dry ground, attesting to the fact that they came through death without dying. Paul describes it thus: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;” I Cor. 10:1-2 This is exactly the same pattern followed by the Church when all believers, Jew and Gentile were baptized into one body 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus. The crossing of the Red Sea officially marks the time when “Israel was baptized ” into one body as a separate nation from all others. This first verse of Hosea beautifully expresses God’s glorious provision for Israel’s separation unto the Lord, but the next verse testifies of the gross idolatry which had been rampant since the days of Jeroboam. “As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.” V. 2 The first usage of the term “...they...” must of necessity be those who “...called them...” away from God, for “...they sacrificed unto Balaam...” God insists that, “I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them.” V. 3 He sought to teach them by intimate experience, for He took “...them by their arms...” indicating that they would be instructed during their walk with Him “over time,” yet they did not heed His Ways of healing. Furthermore, “I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.” V. 4 He not only refrained from driving them by force, but rather “...drew them with cords of love,...” He also removed the “...yoke...” of bondage from “...their jaws...” and instead laid before them His glorious provisions of meat for their sustenance. Refusing God’s overtures of love and grace always results in consequence and it is said of Ephraim, “He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return.” V. 5 Their bondage to Egypt

was forever a thing of the past, but they would incur bondage to another, that is Assyria, because "...they refused to return," to the LORD.

32 Bondage is one thing. The plague of the sword bringing death is another, and this is exactly what Hosea prophesies for this rebellious and idolatrous people, promising that "...the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels." V. 6 Rather than accepting the counsels of God, these have instead adopted their own counsels of idolatry and they seem to have no intention of reversing their path as, "...my people are bent (habitual) to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him." V. 7 God still calls them "...my people..." and that will be forever so, but they are determined to follow a path leading away from Him. Though godly prophets apparently "...called them to the most High,..." that call was soundly refused as "...none ...would exalt him." That same pattern prevails in the end of this Church Age, not only in Israel, but largely in the world as a whole. God's quandary in regard to His Own Chosen Nation, however, is emphasized by the following very pointed questions appertaining specifically to them.

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." V. 8 Such musings are directly related to His treatment of some Gentile nations. The first question directed toward Ephraim surround His intention to "...give thee up...how shall I deliver thee..." to judgment. The reason for such a question is because this Righteous God has already severely judged these Gentile nations for the same wickedness on display in Israel. "the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:" Deut. 29:23 Moses here agrees with Hosea as he prophesied of the destruction coming upon the land Israel like unto that of these other infamous nations, attesting to the fact that

God could not spare Israel of judgment if they committed the same atrocities. The next portion of Hosea's declaration does, however, include a major proviso. "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city." V. 9 Though this Righteous Judge does affirm that Israel is worthy of severe judgment, He also loudly proclaims that "...I will not return to destroy Ephraim:..." or Israel. They must most assuredly be punished, but never annihilated as were these other nations. So also will it be in the end time. Israel must go through that most devastating and unprecedented time known as "Jacob's trouble" but instead of being destroyed, their repentance as a nation will result in the national acceptance of their Messiah whereby a nation shall indeed be born in one day as prophesied by Isaiah. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:" Isa 66:8-10 This latter exhortation to "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem..." must of necessity be directed toward the Gentile Nations and also confirms the above declaration from Hosea that "...I will not enter into the city," meaning that God had no intention of entering that unique city in judgment. Rather, as again prophesied by Isaiah, "...thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her (Jerusalem) like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees." Thus, all these Gentile nations shall draw peace and sustenance from Jerusalem.

33

This theme of restoration continues, with the positive assertion that "They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west." V. 10 Israel as a nation shall most assuredly "...walk after the LORD:..." and as a result "...he shall roar like a

lion,...” that is “...the Lion of the tribe of Juda...” Rev. 5:5 It is this Lion Who will direct His judgment against all nations which have persecuted Israel. Thus, “They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD.” V. 11 Not only will these nations “...tremble...” in fear when God defends His Own, but His judgment will be so severe and so effective that they will be placed “...in their own houses...” never to assault Israel again. Though the overall future is tremendously bright for all 12 tribes of God’s Chosen People, this chapter closes with the sad refrain regarding their history, that is of Ephraim or the ten tribes at the time then present when “Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit:...” One example of such deceit and lies is found in Ch. 10:4 wherein it is stated that, “They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant:...” meaning that they made a covenant with God but did not keep it. However, there seems to be a reprieve for Judah who “...yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.” V. 12

34 Judah eventually did succumb to this same idolatry as her sister, and was taken captive by Babylon, that did not take place for quite a number of years after Israel was carried away into Assyria. Not only so, but Judah was restored after 70 years and the temple in Jerusalem rebuilt. Contrariwise, the ten tribes did not return to their land even down to the time of Jesus and beyond.

INJURIES

“Draw a curtain of night upon injuries, shut them up in the tower of oblivion, and let them be as though they had never been.”

We may not like ourselves, but we may get rid of that unlovely person by taking Christ to live in us.

Editor's Note: Postal regulations require that this statement of ownership be published annually. The Corn Crib will be returned to its regular place next month.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| 13. Publication Title Grace and Glory | | 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below 10/06/2022 | |
| 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation | | Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months | No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date |
| a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run) | | | |
| b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail) | (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) | | |
| | (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) | | |
| | (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS® | | |
| | (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®) | | |
| c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)) | | 0 | 0 |
| d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail) | (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541 | 1002 | 1061 |
| | (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541 | 65 | 63 |
| | (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail) | 25 | 20 |
| | (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means) | 80 | 90 |
| e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4)) | | 1102 | 1234 |
| f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e) | | 1002 | 1184 |
| g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3)) | | 104 | 75 |
| h. Total (Sum of 15f and g) | | 1106 | 1259 |
| i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100) | | | |

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