

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the whole Counsel of GOD

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Num. 1



earth,
earth,
earth,
hear the word
of the Lord.
JEREMIAH 22:29.

A NEW YEAR PRAYER

O Lord, I pray that through this coming year
Our fellowship may deep and richer be;
That I may recognize Thy Presence near,
And turn as to a friend my Lord, to Thee.
Walk with me, then, and guide me with Thy eye
I dare not trust myself to move one pace.
I know not what ahead of me may lie
Of joy or sorrow; yet whate'er the case,
One thing I know, that Thou art near my side,
And knowest well, my weakness and my frame,
Thou needed strength wilt give, if I abide
In Thee, and in the strength of Thy dear Name.
I ask Thee not to give me joy, aside
From that which comes from doing Thine own will.
To know Thy thought and purpose, naught beside,
Except that Thou wilt them in me fulfill.
Oh, help me not to fail Thee, Lord, in this,
But with Thy grace and strength, oh, keep me true.
Forbid that in Thy thought for me I miss;
But help me trust in Thee to bring me through.
Afresh I offer up to Thee my life,
To use me as Thou wilt or set aside;
To manifest Thyself in open joy and light,
Or in some hidden corner there to hide,
It matters not to me, if only Thou
Wilt make my foolish heart what Thou dost choose;
And daily yielding to Thee, teach me how
To gain more of Thy life, and mine to lose.
Live out Thy life through me, and let there flow
Such streams from Thee, my Head, that naught can stem
The currents of Thy Life - e'en here below.
These things I ask in Thy dear Name. Amen.

John Wright Follette

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Editor: Gene Hawkins

Definite Sign Posts Of The End

Gene Hawkins

“**T**his know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.” II Tim. 3:1

Those “...perilous times...” are legion, being clearly and specifically defined in scripture by a number of writers. Jesus likened the closing days of this Church Age to the “...the days of Noe...” (Matt. 24:37) wherein Moses proclaimed that “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with **violence.**” Gen. 6:11 Daniel likewise declared a time “...when **the transgressors are come to the full,**...” Dan. 8:23

The following “signs:” are direct quotes from various parts of the scripture defining very specifically WHY these end days are so perilous. “...GOD saw that the **wickedness...** the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually....**mockers...lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,...** Without natural affection, trucebreakers,...incontinent, fierce,... Traitors, heady,...Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:... Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.... these also resist the truth... some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;... eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,... Take heed that no man deceive you....ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars:... nation shall rise against nation,there shall be famines,pestilences, ...earthquakes... iniquity shall abound,... signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; ...Men's hearts failing them for fear,...”

All the pages of Grace and Glory could easily be filled with specific examples of all these “signs” depicting perilous times. Such multitudinous signs are meant to announce Jesus’ second coming and they are presently appearing daily and with growing rapidity in the eyes of those who are truly looking for deliverance out of this world. A great majority on this planet attest to the fact that “we have seen nothing like this in our entire lives” but most surely do not connect these happenings with Jesus’ Second Advent. It is important to point out that a great many of the difficulties above are due directly to the wickedness and unbelief

of men. Many are “self inflicted,” stemming from the erroneous policies of some politicians and world leaders intent on securing power and gaining full control of their subjects. But some of the great adversity above is completely beyond the efforts of men, as, for example, the fact that God Alone has the ability to bring forth “... signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;” All of these have a direct impact on the chaotic weather patterns exhibited at this time and despite all the efforts of men, all these prophetic signs will without fail come to pass.

4 There have been reports for some time, in view of the tremendous chaos across the entire globe, which indicate that various religionists believe their mission is to stop the unbelief and rebellion in this world and thus present it as a gift to Jesus on a “silver platter.” Scripture does not bear out such a mission. It is rather clear that “...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 Such words clearly do not speak of any semblance of “revival,” but rather a falling away, a **complete denial of truth as stated in the signs above**, which will culminate with the antichrist being revealed. Paul declared emphatically in view of these same perilous times that, “...evil men and seducers **shall wax worse and worse...**” II Tim. 3:13

The questions must be asked, “What then is the mission of those who are looking for Jesus’ **eminent** return? How must we conduct ourselves in the midst of the perilous times which have begun to engulf this world?” One primary answer is found in His admonition: “...when these things **begin** to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Lk. 21:28 Deliverance out of the world, rather than improving conditions to stay here and preserve the planet, is the message for us. He also declared in view of His soon return, “...Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” Lk. 12:42-43 The term “...so doing...” is a reference to giving “...them their portion in due season,” emphasizing the importance of shedding forth God’s Word with utmost urgency in this “...due season...” of Jesus’ return. Paul also instructed the elders at Ephesus to “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which

the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to **feed** the church of God,..." Acts 20:28

The Chief Apostle to the Church also instructed his son Timothy on how he must conduct himself, **even in the midst** of such "...perilous times,..." "But thou (Timothy) hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions,... Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.... evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. **But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;**" II Tim. 3:10-14 The little word "...But..." conveys the profound truth that Paul's successor must separate himself from the conduct of those contributing to this present era of perilous times and follow in the steps of Paul, who vividly set forth the example of adhering to the entire gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. He then points him to the scripture, which is "...given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **That** the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." V. 16-17 Claiming **5** God's Word in this manner will produce godly men today, who also are "...thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There are others who have already demonstrated this same pattern set forth by Timothy. The record of Noah is almost verbatim to the above account, for in the midst of the fact that "...GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," it is clearly stated: "**But Noah** found grace in the eyes of the LORD." Gen. 6:5,8 This godly man, like Timothy, found the way of separation from the chaotic and ungodly atmosphere surrounding him. "...Noah found grace...." as though he were searching for it, and that is the lesson for all those today who elect NOT to be a part of present day evil and wickedness. It will only happen when the POWER of Divine Grace is implemented in everyday lives.

Enoch is another who must be included in "the days of Noah" for he represents those, like unto the Church at Philadelphia, who claim the promise, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the

earth.” Rev. 3:10 Enoch was “translated” before the floods came as he “...walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” Paul confirms his translation along with the reason for it. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, **that he pleased God.** Heb. 11:5 This same chapter also proclaims HOW he pleased God, for “... without faith it is impossible to please him:..” Heb. 11:6 Such faith is likewise the answer for the perilous times with which this world is presently confronted. Paul directed Timothy to the Word of God and the age old premise “...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,” (Rom. 10:17) must take center stage in the lives of those who would follow in the steps of Enoch.

6 Jude also enlarges on this same path as he directly exhorts his hearers to “...earnestly contend for the faith...” in view of these last days. V. 3 “...**the faith**,...” indicating that there is ONLY one, gives reference to the entirety of God’s Word, and Jude applies it beautifully throughout this chapter. He first explains that “... there are certain men crept in unawares,... ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and **denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.**” Not only is Jesus termed **The Word of God** as in John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,...” faith is also directly attributed to Him. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2:20 This is “...**the faith**...” for which men must contend. (struggle, compete, contend with an adversary)

Jude then gives several examples of unbelief, which also prevail in the many characteristics of the perilous times recorded above, concluding that his audience must, “... remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers **in the last time**, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.” V. 17-18 He then follows the same pattern calling for change illustrated by Timothy and Noah. “**But ye, beloved**, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,” V. 15 Praying in the Holy Ghost would be a definite prayer for understanding the depths of God’s Word which once again translates to faith. “Only

that faith,” can counteract the ungodly thoughts and imaginations of men set forth in these last days. Jude issues a rather graphic summation of that atmosphere which currently pervades the world at this hour, explaining that God will eventually “... execute judgment upon all, and ... convince all that are **ungodly** among them of all their **ungodly** deeds which they have **ungodly** committed, and of all their hard speeches which **ungodly** sinners have spoken against him.” V. 15 This is the reason godly men must literally “...**contend** for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” This effort is not to “convert the world” but rather to maintain our own separation from the ungodly doctrines and ways put forth by present day society. Consider once again the way Paul admonished the Ephesian elders. “Take heed therefore unto **yourselves**, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, ... For **I know this**, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” Acts 20:28-31

7

Note one more point which Jude brings forth for those in the midst of these same perilous times. He, like Paul, encourages them to address their own lives first. “Keep yourselves in the love of God, (simply dwell in the realm of Divine Love) looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” V. 21-23 It is apparent that Jude was in no wise trying to preserve the world, but rather ascertain the difference in those following after the ungodly ways previously described and needy individuals who would be delivered from their clutches. The latter are to be saved “...with fear,...” (reverence, submission before God) with the stipulation to hate “...even the garment spotted by the flesh,” which means that one trying to help must despise any demonstration of the flesh. This simply means that the ungodly behavior of those bound by the flesh cannot continue, but the guilty can most assuredly be saved by following the principles of God’s Word. Men must realize that

God NEVER “excuses” sin, but He will FORGIVE every sinner who comes to repentance before Him. Thus it is incumbent on those who know truth to impart such a message to all who will listen.

8 Paul also describes those contending for the faith, but with a slightly different terminology. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.” II Thess. 2:7 The word “...letteth...” literally means to “hold in check, hinder, restrain.” The same truth of hindrance is expressed with this analogy. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them....But all things that are reprovèd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” Eph. 5:11-13 This same hindering, restraining, attitude is also set forth by the word “stand.” “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,... Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. **Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,...” Eph 6:10-14 The message to those at Thessalonica is that the “hinder” will hinder until “...he be taken out of the way,” meaning that this is one primary mission of every believer today who is looking steadfastly into the heavens for Jesus’ soon return. The very presence of the active faith and light of our Jesus is a stalwart hindrance to Satanic forces, but that **stand** must be made and manifest in these perilous times.

Some of that faithful company have already been “... taken out...” because The Lord has taken them home, thus it is not imagination which concludes that this world is becoming much darker and more devoid of faith in the closing days of the Church Age. That scenario was evidently contemplated even by Jesus. “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless **when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?**” Lk. 18:7-8

Paul clearly prophesied that when those who are hindering are taken out of the way, “...**then** shall that Wicked be revealed,

whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:" II Thess. 2:8 "...that Wicked..." is actually the false prophet, and when he is officially revealed he will come forth "...with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

Finally, Peter exhorts those contending with the "**signs,**" defining the perilous times of these last days. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward,... But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, ...Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,... II Pet. 3:9-12 The fullness of Peter's prophecy concerning these elements will not be fulfilled until **after the Millennium** when God will create "...a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;..." Rev. 21:1 His exhortation, however, applies to present day 9 believers, declaring that if you truly believe "...all these things shall be dissolved, **what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking...hasting unto the coming day of God...**" There are a number in political leadership positions today bombarding their subjects daily with the threat of the planet coming to an end. Peter indicates that if a person actually **believed** that such a thing were true, they would take steps to ensure that their own personal life would reflect one of "...holy conversation and godliness."

Others, even among Christians, may ignore Peter's plea, but those who will gather in the throne room must follow the path blazed by Noah, Timothy, Paul, and Enoch. It is high time to let others know by our conduct and even verbally that we have fully embraced Jesus' declaration regarding "these things," which are also called "perilous times." "And when **these things** begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh....when ye see **these things** come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand! Lk. 21:28,31

A Promise For The New Year.

Paul N. Smith

“**B**ut my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:19

This fourth chapter of Philippians abounds with faith. We could call it a chapter of thanksgiving and praise unto God who superabundantly supplies our needs. Paul begins the chapter with the admonition to rejoice. He also urges us to be careful or anxious for nothing. Why? Because he knew that when one had a need, all he had to do was to let the request be made known to God. His experiences in trusting the Lord are a pattern to us. He learned some things while trusting the Lord. Thus, he was able to give us this wonderful promise which encourages us to depend on Him for every need.

Paul said, "And MY GOD shall supply . . ." God is called "Paul's God." This does not mean that the Lord was his only, but instead He was a personal Friend to Paul. This is not an unusual statement because we often read: "I am the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." Why is it that some people were identified with
10 God in such a way? The secret is that these people were fearless in their faith in God. He, in turn, was happy to identify Himself as their God.

There is something very personal in this statement — "My God." Sometimes we acknowledge what the Lord does for other people and offer thanks, but do not say "He is my God too." A sister testified recently that it was a long time before she could accept God's grace for herself. She always felt that His grace was for others. She was always concerned that others accept His grace and manifested it by giving everything she had. The Lord reminded her that His grace was for her, too.

Paul learned what it meant to really trust the Lord. Sometimes he had plenty and other times there was a need. But no matter whether he lacked or had plenty, he learned something through his experiences. He learned to be satisfied with plenty or with nothing. If he had nothing, He was satisfied to know the Lord for Himself; if he had plenty, he knew that it was an expression of God's grace. The Lord worked in his life through these experiences. No wonder he could say, "My God." To each of us, He is not just God, or someone else's God, He is my God.

Another point which we want to emphasize is that the

promise is that God shall supply our need. We do not look to the world or the flesh to meet any need we have. When we ask the Lord for anything, then we expect Him to bring it to pass. Sometimes people bring their requests to the Lord and then look for the answer from some certain source. They already have in mind who or what will supply the need although they have asked the Lord to meet it. Of course, we know that many times, the Lord uses people to meet a need, but the difference is in the heart of the one who supplicates. Is his faith in the Lord, blindly trusting Him and not caring how the answer comes; or is his faith in some source that has already supplied another need? We have heard and known of some who prayed for something and then demanded the supply from people.

Real faith believes that God will meet the need. Real faith sits back in an easy chair and does not fret or worry about how the need will be met. How good to trust the Lord that way. We have some regular contributors to Grace and Glory, and we praise the Lord for His grace manifested through them; but it would be wrong for us to depend upon individuals for our supply. We simply trust the Lord to meet every need and then marvel at how He answers! We know that this is His work and as long as it is a blessing to others and it is God's will to continue, all needs will be met. We do not have a stable bank account to depend on, but we do have the Lord and He is enough. His people are moved by Him. They are blessed through giving; we rejoice and glorify Him for the supply; saints are blessed through the truth; they in turn glorify the Lord. What a happy cycle! Faith makes it possible.

Notice also that Paul says, "My God shall supply..." There is no lack when we trust in the Lord. David wrote, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." If Paul had to go without, it was only God's way of teaching him something more. He was never really without, because the Lord spoke to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." No one who trusts in the Lord will be forsaken. Faith in God will lay hold of whatever is needed. There is no doubt that He will supply.

And note further: "My God shall supply all your need..." Perhaps we are satisfied with only part of an answer. The promise is all that we need will be supplied. This refers not only to material things, but also to spiritual needs. We can trust the Lord for spirit, soul, and body. The Lord is perfecting us as we trust Him for the needs of our entire being. We need not be content with "half-a-

loaf" of Christian experience. If God says He will present us faultless before His throne, then we have a right to expect Him to do just that. Perhaps we know that we have a spiritual need but feel that it is no use for us to expect the fulfillment. Oh yes, if God gives the promise to one, He will not withhold from another who believes Him for that. Paul prayed that we might reign with Him, then we are not presumptuous when we believe that God will make us fit to occupy the throne with Christ.

12 This promise was written to the Philippian saints and this is by no means any accident. These saints were known for their liberality. Paul writes of these people to the Corinthians (II Cor. 3 & 9) using them as examples in giving. The Macedonian saints have not all died. There are some of them still living, and this promise applies to them. Of course, we know that one who does not know God's grace and does not have His grace manifested through them could not claim such a promise. They could not have faith to lay claim to such. But folks who are recipients of God's grace just normally expect more. They know what God has done and can still do. It is nothing to believe what He says. Meditate on the lives of the worthies of faith. See what they believed the Lord for, and in spite of circumstances. Read Hebrews 11. One outstanding example is Enoch. God told him that He would take him to heaven without dying. This had never been done before, but we read, "By faith, Enoch was translated . . ." Heb. 11:5 Abraham believed he would have a son by Sarah even when he was too old to beget children. Sarah was also too old, and besides had always been barren.

It is not in vain to trust the Lord blindly, sometimes. Yes — He will bow to faith. To the one who believes Him He says "And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency, in all things, may abound unto every good work:" II Cor. 9:8

How do we know that all needs will be met, and that His grace is sufficient? Paul did not give a promise without foundation. "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory . . ." Ah, here is the source of supplies — "...his riches in glory..." Can anyone tell how many riches there are in glory? Where would we begin to count? We know a little something about His glory and majesty and power, but only a very little. We progressively learn and are able "...to know the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye thru His poverty might be rich." II Cor. 8:9 We cannot fathom this grace to the extent we will when we are actually in heaven. We were redeemed according to the riches of His grace, but do we understand the depths and extent of those riches? Try to solve how great God is and we are sure our finite minds will be reeling under the weight of infinite knowledge and wisdom. Can we ever exhaust the riches of His grace? We will answer with another question. Do we know how Great God is? Has anyone ever plumbed the depths yet? No! Paul had a most marvelous conception of God and His grace, and yet, He did not realize it all. No, only eternity will be sufficient to learn all that the riches of His glory means — and that will never end.

So "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Here is the channel of supply. We can never lay hold of His grace and power in any measure, apart from Jesus Christ. It is He who manifested grace by His condescension to human form, servant form, and even the form of a sinner. He has opened heaven to us. God would not listen to our cries if Jesus had not opened the door to His Presence. Men may leave Jesus Christ out of their thoughts and lives, but if they do, they need not pray to God; He will not hear them. There are many prayers and requests which do not go farther than the sound which the voice travels. But a whisper of faith in Jesus Christ will bound with the speed of lightning straight to the ear of God. In this new year, let us all lay hold of the full sufficiency of His grace. There is ample provision for every need. Our souls need not be empty or fruitless. We need not lack victory in our lives. Let us take this verse for our own and let the Holy Spirit write it upon our hearts.

13

(Reprint 1962)

**Sometimes on the Rock I tremble,
Faint of heart and weak of knee,
But the Steadfast Rock of Ages
Never trembles under me!**

The Faith of God

Royal V. Starr

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”
II Cor. 13:5

What is faith? Hebrews 11 tells us that, "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Substance means also ground or confidence. Then faith is the confidence of the things hoped for. Things that we hope for are things that we do not now see. Romans 8 explains, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8:24-25 The Apostle John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him. Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure." I Jn. 3:2-3

14

If we are sons of God now, we do not hope to be sons. However, we do not now see just what we will be like, when we get our glorified bodies; so we hope and wait for them because we know we shall be like Christ. That is our faith. It is a reality to us. This hope and faith have a purifying influence in our lives, making us more and more like Him in our nature and walk even while we are in this body. Faith is the evidence or proof of things not seen. True evidence is proof of something that is not actually seen. So our faith is evidence of proof that things which we are not able to see will come to pass.

Whence comes faith? "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17 Then faith is a gift from God. I Cor. 12:9 lists faith as a gift of the Spirit. Of course this is somewhat different from the faith by which we receive Christ. Nevertheless even that faith is a gift also. We read in Eph. 2:8, "...by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God..." We see here that salvation is a gift; but saving faith is a gift also; for it says "It is not of yourselves. This statement refers to the faith rather than to grace. This faith comes

by hearing or reading the Word. The following statement, "...not of works,..." refers to grace. Faith is a gift through which we are saved. Not by our own works, but by the grace of God. In Rom. 3:3 we read, "For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the **faith of God** of none effect?"

Paul wrote in the 2nd Chap. of Galatians that, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Faith is so often spoken of as the faith. This corresponds with the "one faith" of Eph. 4:5 — "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," etc. Often one is asked of what faith he is. That is a foolish question; for there is only one faith. You either have the faith or you do not have it. What they really mean is of what creed, sect, or denomination do you claim. When we appropriate the faith of the Son of God, then only does it become our faith. We receive the gift and it becomes our own by possession, but not because it originated in us.

In Rev. 14:12, we read of "...**the faith of Jesus**,..." also "...**my faith**..." Ch. 2:13, "**Thy...faith**..." Ch.2:19, "...**the faith of the saints**" Ch. 13:10. We read "...**the faith of God's elect**..." Titus 1:1, and Jesus the "...author and finisher of our faith..." Heb. 12:2. Galatians 3:23 likewise declares, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by **faith of Jesus Christ** might be given to them that believe; but before faith came, we were kept under law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed." We see by this that the faith of God, or of the Son of God, was not revealed until after Calvary. The gift of faith could not be bestowed to all until Christ came. They were under the law as a school master until Christ came when those who believed and received Jesus Christ were justified by faith. Then the faith of God became their faith by possession, but received as a gift wrought in them by God's Word.

We are exhorted by Jude in verse three to "...contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." Paul in II Thess. 3:2 says, "...all men have not faith." It was provided by the death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead, that all men might have faith. Only those who hear about Jesus Christ can have faith, which comes into the heart by hearing the Gospel. He

is the Author of faith.

There are differing measures of faith. In Christ we have the foundation of faith toward God; but unto each one is given a measure or proportion of faith according to our several ministries or activities. To be sure, faith may be granted sovereignly as a gift of the Spirit when the believer is anointed with the Holy Spirit. Note the seven gifts of Rom. 12:6-12. However, our faith grows with our understanding of the Word. The proportion of our faith is measured exactly by the light we have received from the Word of God and by our appropriation of that Word. That is why Paul says, "Let each prophecy according to the proportion of faith." If you do not have faith for the healing of your own body, do not try to teach it to others, nor preach against it. Healing is in the Word. It is in the atonement as a provision for us all, but, "The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits." II Tim. 2:6.

16 Jesus said to the twelve, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Matt. 17:20 If we look at our problems, obstacles and limitations in the natural, they are insurmountable, impossible to overcome. They look as large and fixed as the mountain; but when we see in the Word the wonderful provision of God and lay hold of His promises by believing, nothing that is in the will of God is impossible. Hallelujah! God is not moving natural mountains at the behest of some selfish persons. But He will remove the spiritual mountains and the giants that dwell in them if we will put the soles of our feet upon our inheritance in Christ by faith. As we grow up in Christ, our faith grows and will continue to grow until Jesus comes. Then our faith will be finished. Faith will then be swallowed up of sight. We will then see as we are seen. Praise the Lord!

Going back to our text, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove (or test) your own selves..." Let us see all that God has provided for us in the faith of the Son of God. Do you measure up to your possibilities? Then as Jude wrote, Let us contend for the measure of faith that was provided by God's

wonderful grace, which was once delivered unto the saints. It is very significant that we read this admonition in the book of Jude just before the book of Revelation. Oh how we need to heed that exhortation and be ready when Jesus comes. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men; be strong. Let all your things be done with love." I Cor. 16:13,14. "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." I Cor. 15:58 Amen!

Jesus said to the twelve, "...when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Lk. 18:8 When we see saints all around us falling away from the faith, falling from their steadfastness, compromising and going back on the experience they once professed to have, we wonder too. Will the Son of God at His return find faith in the earth? God help us to fight a good fight, keep the faith and finish our course that we with Paul may know that there is laid up for us a crown of righteousness. Do you really love Him and love His appearing? Our opening text says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith..."

(Reprint 1940)

17

"O Come Let Us Adore Him!"

Christmas is here to celebrate Christ's birth.
It's because of His love, that He came to earth.
Up on the cross they put Him to shame,
Little did they know the Power in His Name.
Up from the grave He came to life again,
All to forgive us, for each 'n every sin.
It is part of God's wonderful, merciful plan
Filled with peace, love, and hope, for every man.
By accepting Jesus into your heart,
Eternal life will never depart.

Christina Rogers

REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

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

Surely none could survive without the “The blessing of the Lord,...” but all men do not realize it. Scripture is very clear that God “...maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matt. 5:45 The majority of men simply take such “blessings” for granted but only God can take credit for them.

18 The opening text above indicates that God’s blessings bring no sorrow, as opposed to the heartache and devastation awaiting those who pursue ill-gotten gain, but that is not the only great advantage brought forth by the “...blessing of the LORD...” David asserts that The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.” Psa. 29:11 There is no substitute for His strength during time of need along with the peace which follows those who would be “... be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Eph. 6:10 The Psalmist also unveils further blessing as he proclaims that, “...thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour (delight, acceptance) wilt thou compass him as with a shield.” Psa. 5:12 Oh what a joy to know deep in our hearts that we are accepted with God’s delight into His Presence, and then understand the tremendous blessing of His protection when He becomes that all encompassing shield against the horrific adversities of the present end time days.

It must be noted that such blessings as are poured out in the above examples are somewhat qualified, for “He will bless them that fear (reverential submission) the LORD, both small and great.” Psa. 115:13 Some natural blessings seem to fall on both the just and unjust as stated in the previous text quoted from Matthew, but the very select and precious spiritual bounty of which David spoke is reserved for the righteous. Not only so, but the greatest blessings of The Lord are given only those who actively SEEK them, in an effort to claim them personally.

Paul insists that men must look “...diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God;...” Heb. 12:15 He then uses Esau as an example of one who did not pursue the blessing in that manner, for he is deemed “...a profane person.... who for one morsel of meat sold his

birthright....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.” Heb. 12:16-17 Men often malign Jacob for being an imposter and “stealing” Esau’s blessing, but the burden of responsibility here must be laid at the feet of Esau, because he willingly “...sold his birthright.” Jacob, on the other hand, pursued the choicest of blessings diligently, because he valued such a treasure, bringing us to another glorious truth regarding “....the blessing of the Lord.”

Jacob did receive the choicest of blessings set forth in the Abrahamic Covenant, but it was Esau who would immediately seek “...it carefully with tears...” who heard this message, “...I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.” Gen. 27:33 This is a declaration of the fact that God’s blessings are both eternal and irrevocable and it is those who will pursue them diligently who reap the benefit. That persistent attitude belonged to Jacob. He not only insisted on having the blessing which went with the birthright, he also wrestled with the angel, proclaiming even in his weakness after his “...thigh was out of joint,... I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” Gen. 32: 25- 26 His persistence was rewarded, for the angel promised, “...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.”

19

Let us, the people of God, make a life changing commitment to diligently seek the choicest blessings “...of the LORD...” even as this world embarks on this new year!

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

Prepared for Battle

Dr. Vicky Moots

Are you prepared for battle? Paul commanded Timothy in I Tim. 6:12 to “Fight the good fight of faith...” As soldiers of the cross, we are also commanded to do the same, and so we must be prepared for battle, strengthened and properly equipped. There will be no excuse for wimpy warriors in God’s army, for He will supply the equipment and also the strength that is needed. Paul explains to us in Eph. 6:10-18 how all of this is possible, and we are going to study it in detail.

God does not choose the strong and mighty for His army, but through Him we can become strong and mighty and victorious. In fact, Paul tells us in I Cor. 1:27 that “...God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” Why did He do this? “That no flesh should glory in his presence.” V. 29

20 God used a young shepherd boy named David to fight a mighty Philistine warrior named Goliath, simply because David had a willing heart to serve the Lord. God will use anyone who has a willing heart.

King Saul tried to persuade David, who had volunteered to fight Goliath, to use his armor, as we read in I Sam. 17:38-39: “And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail... And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.”

Instead of depending on ill-fitting armour and a sword which he had never used before, he chose to face the giant with his staff, a sling and five small stones, powered by faith in a mighty God. Those were things which he had proven to be effective in the past.

David spoke to Goliath in V. 45: “...Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” David’s weapon with which he overcame the enemy was not merely the stone in his sling, but the Name of the Lord of hosts, for It has the power to overcome all evil.

David declared the reason for his victory in V. 47: “...the

LORD saveth [delivers] not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's ...” David was simply the yielded vessel which God used. Likewise, our victory over the enemy comes from the Lord as we yield our lives to Him for Him to use in this spiritual warfare in which we are engaged.

Eph. 6:10-18 describes our tried and tested spiritual armor and our weapons of warfare which God has issued to us to use, as well as our source of strength for the battle. Paul was in a Roman prison at the time that he wrote this letter, and so he uses the example of a Roman soldier's armor to teach a lesson regarding spiritual warfare. In Eph. 1:1, we see that the letter is not only addressed to the saints at Ephesus, but also to the “faithful in Christ Jesus”, and therefore it would include all those who have put their faith in Christ, even us today.

Eph. 6:10 begins with, “**Finally**, my brethren...Paul is pointing out to us that he wants to leave us with some very important final instructions which will prepare us for battle. He then begins this last section by commanding us to “...be strong in the Lord...”

His admonition is similar to that which God spoke to Joshua when He chose him to assume the leadership of the children of Israel after Moses' death and to lead them into Canaan: “...Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Josh. 1:9

The phrase “...be strong,...” in the Greek actually means “to be continually strengthened or endued with strength.” This is not a one-time event; it is ongoing, continuous. This means that our strength must be renewed daily in order for us to stay prepared for battle.

This continual strengthening cannot be through our own self-effort, for human strength is inadequate. Paul clarifies for us that our strength must come from the Lord, the Omnipotent One, whose power is inexhaustible.

Isa. 40:29-31 declares, “He 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...” We must first acknowledge our weakness and our insufficiency, and therefore our need for strengthening, and then call upon His

name.

But that's not all; we must "wait upon the Lord." "To wait" means "to be entwined with." We must become connected to Him, become one with Him, by spending time with Him in prayer and meditating upon His Word, letting Him speak to us, and thereby allowing Him to infuse us with His strength, much like recharging a battery that has run down.

Paul's command in Eph. 6:10: to "...be strong in the Lord," emphasizes the source of our strength. He then continues with, "and in the power of his might," which emphasizes the intensity, quality and quantity of that strength.

In Eph. 3:16 Paul is praying a prayer for all believers: "That he [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." This is not referring to physical strength, but to spiritual power which is "according to the riches of His glory." The riches of His glory are limitless, and, therefore, so is His power.

22 So how do we receive that power? By His Spirit! We are endowed with His power through the Holy Spirit, according to Jesus, in Luke 24:49, where He instructed His disciples to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were "...endued with power from on high." In Acts 1:8, He revealed to them how that would take place: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..."

This promise of God's power was fulfilled on The Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out from heaven and filled all those who were waiting in the upper room, as we read in Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

But His power is not limited to the 120 believers who were present on that day. Peter, under the anointing power of the Holy Spirit, boldly stood up and proclaimed the gospel to the people who had gathered around, and declared in Acts 2:39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (That includes every born-again Christian, even today, who is willing to receive it!)

What a powerful transformation had just taken place in Peter! This same Peter, who had previously denied even knowing

Jesus at the time of His arrest and trial, was now able to preach to a crowd of thousands of people without fear. He had truly been endued with power from on high!

In order for us to possess “the power of His might” in its fulness so that we may be prepared to face the enemy, we too, must be filled with the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues is not the power; it is only the sign that a person has received the Holy Spirit and is controlled by His power. If He can control our unruly tongue, then He has control of our whole body, soul and spirit. How great is “the power of His might”? In Eph. 1:19-20 Paul speaks of “...the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead...” That is resurrection power! That same power is available to us through the Holy Spirit.

Do you think that kind of power is strong enough for you to be able to stand against Satan? It certainly was enough to overcome Satan at the cross and the empty tomb! His strength becomes our strength when we allow the Holy Spirit to endue us with power from on high and to continually flow through us with the force of a mighty river. 23

We will never be able to stand against the enemy forces if we go into battle without the strength of the Lord. Our inner man must be clothed with “the power of His might” before we can even put on our spiritual armor, or it will be too heavy for us to wear. Without His strength to use our weapon, and without His power to stand, then our armor would be of no effect. Therefore, our first step in preparation for battle is to “...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” Eph. 6:11: “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Now that we are fully strengthened in the Lord and fit for combat, it is time to don our spiritual armor. We must be sure to put on the whole armor of God, not just part of it. We don’t get to pick and choose our favorite parts of it that we like to wear and to discard the rest. Each piece is necessary and just as important as every other piece, for each one serves its own unique purpose. Together they will enable us to withstand the enemy and to be aware of his tactics and trickery.

Paul states that the purpose of putting on the whole armour is that it allows us “to stand against” the devil. This phrase literally

means “to stand toward” or “to stand facing.” It is an important stance and implies victory, because it shows we are still standing; we have not fallen, nor have we turned away from the enemy or started running from him.

Standing in hand-to-hand combat is a position of defense, not attack. We are never told to attack Satan. That is God’s job. The battle has been provisionally won by Jesus Christ on the cross for all mankind, for all who will accept it by faith. Satan cannot destroy us, but he can, and does, attack us and try to hinder us from running the race to win the Prize. He will try to deceive us and cause us to doubt God’s grace or His love for us. He will also try to trick us into fighting against each other instead of against him.

But Paul makes it clear to us in v. 12 who the real enemy is: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood...” First of all, he tells us who we are not supposed to be fighting, and then he will reveal to us the identity of our enemy.

24 This is a spiritual battle and cannot be fought in the physical realm with earthly weapons or armour, as Paul declares in II Cor. 10:3-4: “For though we walk in the flesh [in the fleshly body], we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [of the flesh], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds).”

A favorite lie of Satan is for him to deceive us into thinking that the people with whom we disagree are our enemies. Even if we dislike them, they are not our enemies in this battle. Satan loves to play on our emotions and to stir up feelings of hatred and mistrust against our fellow created human beings because of something they may have done in the past or are now doing. Using this subtle tactic, Satan has caused divisions in families, among different ethnic groups, in our government, and even in churches.

If we are not fighting against flesh and blood, then who or what are we fighting against? Paul answers this question in the rest of V. 12: “...but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [heavenly] places.”

These principalities, powers and rulers are the evil forces of the spiritual realm, not earthly leaders. (Earthly leaders are flesh and blood). Paul is referring to Satan and his demons, the

fallen angels, who rule over the darkness of this world. In Eph. 2:2, Paul calls Satan, "the prince of the power of the air," and in II Cor. 4:4, he calls him, "the god of this world: who hath blinded the minds of them which believe not..." Satan, as the ruler of darkness, induces spiritual blindness to try to prevent unbelievers from seeing the light of the gospel. Light is the only thing that can dispel darkness, as Paul states in the last part of II Cor. 4:4, "... lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Therefore, we must heed the warning and admonition of Paul in Rom. 13:12 which says, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

What night is he talking about? The time of darkness in which we are now living. What day is he referring to? The day of the Lord, the day of His coming. Since we can only fight darkness with light, we need to disrobe ourselves of the old creation works of darkness and clothe ourselves with the new creation armour of light, the life of Christ in us, so that we will shine as a beacon of hope to light the way for those whom Satan has blinded.

Paul voiced this same desire for us in Phil. 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life..." This describes the full-grown, mature sons of God, who are walking in the Spirit and not after the flesh and have put on the whole armour firmly against the wiles of the devil. Are you ready and willing to be that kind of soldier?

25

(To Be Continued)

THINK...

Of passing from a storm and tempest to a calm harbor.
Of stepping on shore and finding it heaven.
Of taking hold of a hand and finding it God's Hand,
Of breathing a new atmosphere and finding it celestial air.
Of feeling invigorated and finding Immortality
Of an awakening and finding it Home.

Anon

Time

Roger Sadberry

Time Flies! How are we spending it? A person can get lost in the rush, hustle and bustle of life. Time is such a key player in our lives. What time it is? Do I have time to do this or that? How much time do I have left in this life? We do not have those answers, but we do know that time is short.

We would consider later in this message, ten scriptural things regarding time, the number 10 signifying man's responsibility according to his ability. God has given us real ability, and though we may not always think we are up to the task, God's Word is very clear that, "I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13 It is imperative to find our strength in Christ in order to follow the race course and that path that He has chosen for us. Things are not as bad as we think they are when we follow Him. The rush that we get in can get to be too much. We need to pull back and say, "Lord is this really what you would have? Is all this bringing you glory?"

26 How are we spending our time? Where are we spending it? I have always been a busy person and now I still try to find ways to stay busy. Time spent with Jesus is always time well spent and spending our time in a quality way with Him changes everything. How does that change your life? When you first get up in the morning, spend time with Him. It will change your day. Doing something to bring glory to God will change your day. It will change the direction of your life as demonstrated by the disciples. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and took knowledge of them **that they had been with Jesus.**" Acts 4:13 People think the more letters a person has behind his name the more intelligent they are, but that is not necessarily the case. They just passed a lot of tests. What matters is the perception versus the reality. We must judge the reality of our own life and spend time with our Savior. The reality is that we need to spend time with Jesus. The priests and Sadducees, those so critical of these men, saw a change when they looked at them instead of simply **assuming** who they were. Why? They marveled because it was evident that these despised men had spent time with Jesus. Two very pertinent questions could be asked here. One, "What happens when you spend time with

Jesus? Answer: "Victory!" Two, "What happens when you don't spend time with the Lord?" You get cranky and you are not fun to be around.

When men spend time with the Lord pondering His Word, changes will be forthcoming. If I have a bad attitude, I need to be changed, not those around me, and it will happen by taking it to the Lord.

Personally, I have found that it is more beneficial to spend time with Jesus rather than waiting until later. It changes the dynamics of my day. Communication with the Lord through prayer and reading His scriptures is time well spent. Communication with the Lord changes me!

Their critics saw the boldness of Peter and John, and when people see boldness in you, then they, too, will know that you have been with the Lord. It is attractive when someone spends time in His Presence.

How many times have people judged you and you have been **perceived** as not doing your best? We all want to be over achievers because we want to be in the Bride. However, that elite group is actually a company of overcomers, rather than over-achievers.

This verse plainly declares that, "...they took knowledge of them..." Others may take knowledge of changes in a life because of the Word but every believer must take his own spiritual temperature. Are you on fire or are you as cold as ice? If old things are truly passed away and all things have become new, there is a change. They knew they had spent time with Jesus. Who is going to recognize that we have spent time with Jesus? There will be a difference.

Where do I start if I want to change? One suggestion would be to get a devotion buddy or a prayer partner and encourage each other. Ask yourself "How do I spend time with Jesus?" Go out of your comfort zone instead of just following a cookie cutter pattern. Remember, it is not the length of prayer but the strength of our prayers which is so effective.

Once again, let us consider 10 verses in regard to "Time," the first being "...**time of need.**" "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16 This would be translated as what we need right now. Romans 8:18 likewise testifies "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.” It is imperative to realize what time it is in my own life, even inquiring, “What is God doing in this present time?”

Next is “...**sundry times**...” God, who at sundry (several, various) times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,” These “times” give reference to how God speaks to us through His word. Note also Psa. 29. “The voice of the LORD is upon the waters:...The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars;...The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire. The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness;...” Psa. 29:3-8

Then there is “...**due time**...” as Paul exhorts, “...let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” Gal. 6:9; We must not be weary in this season.

28 There is also no substitute for knowledge of time. “And that, **knowing the time**, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep:....” Rom. 13:11 The times here are especially perilous times which bring us to another level of watching. Thus, the acute exhortation, Wake up!

This opens the door to redeem time. “**Redeeming the time**, because the days are evil.” Eph. 5:16 This tells us that is it time to buy up every opportunity, in whatever you are doing to tell of Jesus.

For when we were yet without strength, **in due time** Christ died for the ungodly.” Rom. 5:6; Due time here simply signifies the right time, according to God’s estimation.

Paul next describes “...**perilous times**...” “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.” II Tim. 3:1 Be aware of what time it is and learn to rightly apply the scriptures, for Timothy is exhorted to “...continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;” II Tim. 3:14

This one leads to the **time of departure**. “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.” II Tim. 4:6; Paul was looking to meet the Lord even if it was through death. Our departure is surely at hand and running the race to win Christ by staying in our own lane is mandatory.

Peter also gives instruction for **due time** or just the **right**

time. “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:” I Pet. 5:6 Humble yourself before the Lord and let Him lift you up.

Let us close this message with another look at Acts 4:13 The hierarchy marveled at the lives of Peter and John, knowing they had been with Jesus. What is the reaction of people who are in your life? The Lord has the power to bring the changes. Stick with the reality of your life, and stand on the Word of God. Let Him bring the changes. The life of a believer observed by the world should be to marvel in what God has done in your life. Do not allow distractions to take you away from spending time with the Lord.

FAITH'S ANSWER

I cannot tell what shall betide
My feeble barque, as it doth glide
Along the shore of life so drear,
With danger signals ever near.
Yet, of one fact, I'm very sure,
I shall not faint, but shall endure,
For God, who guided yester-year.
Shall comfort and dispel all fear.

I cannot tell if Satan's ire
Shall rise against me as hot fire,
Or whether men shall mock and jeer,
And friends forsake this passing year.
Yet, I will trust my Saviour, Friend,
Who promised His Great Arm to lend,
And hold me up on rugged way,
To keep and bless to endless day.

Hosea 13

Gene Hawkins

“When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died.” V. 1

This “...trembling...” of Ephraim is an indication of their humble and dependent beginning wherein they acknowledged their own weakness and put their trust only in God. It coincides closely with Paul’s experience, “...when I am weak, then am I strong.” II Cor. 12:10 James likewise declares, “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” Jas. 4:10 “Ephraim,” that is, the ten tribes, along with the entire nation of Israel, followed that same path of humility and were then “...exalted...in Israel.” They were one nation exalted by God and victorious over their enemies. “...but when he offended in Baal,....” a decided change ensued.

30 It has been noted numerous times in Hosea’s account that these ten tribes of Israel designated as “Ephraim” chose to greatly offend their God as they bowed down to Baal in idolatry. The contrast is quite striking. They were “exalted” when they were subject to the God of Heaven, but “...he died...” when Baal became his god. Neither did Ephraim listen to the numerous prophets sent to warn him against such idolatrous practices for “...now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.” V. 2 Rather than heeding the repeated warnings issued by the prophets, they increased their efforts to “...sin more and more...” engaging “...the work of craftsmen...” to make “...molten images of their silver...” Hosea noted earlier that Israel used the riches she received from God to fund her idolatry. “For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.” Hos. 2:8 Now those idols have taken God’s place as “...they say of them, (the idols) Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.” What a contrast to God’s invitation for them to “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” Psa. 2:12 God would have them enjoy the glorious close intimacy with Christ rather than this ungodly union with man-made idols.

The prophet then declares the futility of Israel's persistence in "chasing" these idols. "Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney." V. 3 All these analogies are examples of that which is so very fleeting and will vanish in very short order. He then draws the contrast with Himself. "Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me." V.4 This is a stark reminder that He had proven Himself over and over again from the time He had delivered them out of Egypt. He also speaks of Himself as being in the "present," "Yet I Am..." He will not flee away as will the idols represented by "...clouds and... the early dew..." Furthermore, God reiterates His demand of them that, "...thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me." He had proven this latter statement even while they walked in unbelief through the wilderness, declaring plainly, "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." V. 5

"According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me." V. 6 This verse seems to have been originally fulfilled in the wilderness even during a time "...of great drought." The record is very clear that God met their needs during that 40 year trek, despite their repeated outbursts of unbelief. However, despite such unbelief and turmoil, God did change "...their pasture..." from the wilderness to the land of Canaan. The sad fact is that the pattern from the wilderness continued even in the land of promise, and though "...they were filled..." they did not return to their humble beginning and "...their heart was exalted..." whereby they became independent and "...therefore have they forgotten me." That last statement is an indictment against them at the time in which this prophecy is written and thus God assures them that judgment is at the door. "Therefore I will be unto them as a lion: as a leopard by the way will I observe them: I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul (enclosure) of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them." V. 7-8 The heart of Israel both at the time then present and during these end times is still "shut up or enclosed" with both denial and unbelief. However, such a fortress is no match for God as He will rend all

such “protection” and bring forth His judgment which shall most assuredly “...devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them.” This ultimate destruction will occur during the reign of antichrist whereby the entire nation will finally learn,

32 “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.” V. 9 They must discover for themselves all the aforementioned accusations against them long enough to realize that God in all His mercy and grace is still “...thine help.” This will give way to their full restoration, for the following declaration is a direct reference to Christ Himself. “I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?” V. 10 Scripture is very plain that Israel as a complete 12 tribe nation will be restored after the tribulation is over. That is when they will learn by experience the answer to the question “...where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities?” Israel as this present time, just prior to the end of this Church Age is putting her confidence in everyone except The LORD. That pattern will continue until they finally trust the man of sin as “...he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week...” Dan. 9:27 It will take this horrendous time known as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” for God’s Chosen People to ascertain the answer to the above question, which will be that none but God will be able to save them.

Hosea then relates the fact that this same scenario has already happened during the recent history of the time then present. “I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.” V. 11 Samuel was judging the nation at this time when, “...all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together,... And said unto him, Behold, thou art old,... now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.” I Sam. 8:4-5 Their desire at that time was to be like all the nations from which God had separated them. Samuel took it as a personal insult to his ability and expertise, but God insisted that he “...Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” I Sam. 8:7 Israel will make the same mistake when they choose to follow the antichrist in the end time and fully embrace his deception. God did give them “....a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.” That king was Saul, a man who “...when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his

shoulders and upward.” I Sam. 10:23 The pattern will likewise be exactly the same when the antichrist also will be the target of God’s wrath. God declared plainly in the verse above that “I will be thy king:...” This promise is made long after He chose David at the end of Saul’s reign and is therefore prophetic of the time when Jesus will ascend the throne of David to reign for 1000 years.

Meanwhile, God’s indictments against Ephraim continue, for “The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is hid.” V. 12 Such sin was hidden in his idolatrous heart, but according to V. 8 God would most assuredly “...rend the caul...” enclosure around their hearts even as Paul proclaimed “...the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” Jesus likewise asserted that, “...there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.” Mk. 4:22-23 Though much truth is “hidden” during this present hour, the light will eventually shine forth and all the secrets of men will be revealed. Israel as a nation will experience such a fate in the end time as Hosea prophesies next in this current chapter.

33

“The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children.” V. 13 Israel is here likened unto a woman in travail, but her offspring is that of “...an unwise son;...” meaning that this nation is bearing “idolatrous children,” due to her whoredom. The situation here is extremely dire, but the promise of God springs forth in glorious hope for this wayward people. “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.” V. 14 Isaiah reiterates this same majestic promise in regard to the covenant of death which Israel will make with the antichrist in Dan. 9:27. “Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; ...for we have made lies our refuge,... Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:... Judgment also will I lay to the line,...and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place....And your covenant

with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand;...” Isa 28:15-18 Israel must endure the scourge of tribulation for a season, but it will, in no wise, destroy them. Rather as Hosea here proclaims, “...I will redeem them from death:...” and as noted in the remainder of this verse, “...repentance shall be hid from mine eyes,” meaning that God will NOT go back on His promise to redeem them. Scripture is again clear that such deliverance will not come until this people repent of their wickedness and accept Jesus as their Messiah, which they will indeed do. Much deception on the part of Israel must be addressed, however, as is expressed in the following.

“Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an east wind shall come, the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels.” V.15 The opening phrase of this verse relates Ephraim’s opinion of himself. He seems to console himself with the idea that he is “...fruitful among his brethren,....” evidently measuring himself against his peers, but destruction from God is eminent, for “...the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness,...”

34 That promise was fulfilled by Assyria at the time and these ten tribes were decimated by the assault, to the extent that, “Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.” V. 16 These things happened repeatedly in Israel’s history as God tried to bring them to nothingness in order that He might bring them to Himself. These atrocities will undoubtedly ensue during the aforementioned time of Jacob’s trouble, but this time it will be effective and a new nation will be born in one day as prophesied by Isaiah. “...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.” Isa. 66:8

* **It is a wise man** who knows what to say, but wiser still is he who does not always say it.

* **When you are in doubt** as to what to do, what stand to take, what to say --- pray and God will direct you.



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