



By Gene Hawkins

“In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is

fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it. “ Isa 22:25

“That day” is a reference to the end time whereunto this world has now come. The fulfillment of this prophecy is assured by the words “saith the LORD of hosts,” and “the LORD hath spoken it.” Isaiah uses similar language repeatedly in this book, emphasizing the fact that there will be no reversal of God’s decree. The text here plainly indicates that the nail of security fastened by the end time coalition of nations “will be removed, and be cut down, and fall;” despite the desperate attempts of men to change course. Likewise there are a great number of direct predictions made by The Lord that will be fulfilled regardless of the efforts of men. Luke 21:11 plainly states: “And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; (plagues, diseases) and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” Jesus also stated in Matt. 24, “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark.” V. 37,38

Both these citations from the gospels portray the irreversible conditions of our day. Luke tells of the upheaval of the elements that are even now causing great distress, pain, and hardship in many parts of our world. Jesus’ reference to the days of Noah specifically targets

immorality and wickedness, and Genesis 6:11 summarizes those same days as a time when “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” The characteristics of that era prevail in this present world scene. We have been inundated over the past few years with the impending hazards of “man made global warming.” That debacle has been largely exposed as an absolute myth, but it has been used to exact a certain control over the general populace, something the antichrist will eventually achieve worldwide. Not only so, but some proponents of it have been greatly enriched through books and lectures. Still others made millions because they got in on the “ground floor” investing in alternative fuels and energies.

Though this myth took years to build, just 12 short months has brought a decided change, especially in the political arena, since some of its major supporters completely ignored the recent climate change summit in Cancun. Just prior to the summit of 2009, The British Meteorological Office was warning of “the warmest year on record.” One year later, as Britain is in the grip of yet another extraordinarily frigid winter, their admonitions are much more subdued. “The Daily Mail,” (a U.K. news agency) noted why: “Buried amid the details of those two Met Office statements 12 months apart lies a remarkable climb down that has huge implications – not just for the Met Office, but for debate over climate change as a whole.. for the past 15 years, global warming has stopped.”

Current weather patterns in the U.S. would bear that out as much of the Northeast has been smothered by snow in recent weeks. Not only so, but states like Arizona, and Georgia, both of which were ill equipped to deal with snow removal, were in some cases completely paralyzed by recent storms. These storms were also widespread as the

Huffington Post reported on January 11, 2011 “A map of snowfall in the United States is revealing right now: 49 states have snow on the ground and only one does not.”

We are plainly told that the elements will melt with fervent heat. II Pet. 3:10,12 Revelation 16:9 states emphatically that men will be scorched “with great heat.” The text above declares; “great signs shall there be from heaven.” All of these reinforce the fact that the earthquakes, floods, and many other drastic changes often caused by severe weather disrupting the lives and comfort of earth’s inhabitants, are here because “The LORD hath spoken it.” The man made global warming myth is simply another demonstration of the fact that man truly believes he can absolutely control his own surroundings. He has yet to learn that such mysteries and treasures of the universe can only be controlled by God. While cold temperatures producing snow and ice have pummeled America, torrential rains have caused severe flooding thus causing the “costliest natural disaster in Australian history.” Such demonstrations are also becoming much more frequent around the world, and before the clean-up can be completed on one tragedy, another has occurred. This pattern will continue into, and during the tribulation period and the best efforts of men will be powerless to stop it. According to God’s Word, global temperature is going to rise dramatically and even if the entire world were to “go green” tomorrow, in an effort to eliminate green house gasses and “carbon footprints,” it will not stop, for “The LORD hath spoken it.”

ABC news has been running accounts of some scientists declaring that all this havoc must be attributed directly to man-made global warming. Such affirmations sound totally absurd to many, especially those who are experiencing the complications caused by these record low

temperatures and snowfall. Evidently these men are much wiser than Job of old, who, when asked of God, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,” could in no wise answer Him. Job 38:22 The aforementioned “scientific reports” seem to us, evidence of God’s decree regarding unregenerate man: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,…” Rom. 1:22

Matthew 24 describes a great number of characteristics of the end time that are very prominent today, but the text above specifically speaks of them as being a parallel to “the days of Noe.” Verse 38 announces that they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and while God originally gave all of these “benefits” to man, Jesus’ words here carry a negative connotation. Man was created with such needs, but humanity in general is absolutely out of control. He is obsessed with gratifying his own fleshly appetites. Marriage was instituted by God, because He saw that “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” Gen. 2:18 He then specifically created a woman, brought her to the man, and thus performed the first marriage. The marriage, to which Jesus refers, is in no wise presented as being good. We have concluded for some time that it was a reference to the rampant divorce and re-marriage rate which is so prevalent in this country and around the world, and we still hold to that assessment. However, recent demands by society and the current administration to legislate the immorality of gay marriage is also a stark demonstration as to why Jesus made this statement, and Paul cites this ungodly practice as being prompted by man’s rebellion, and rejection of God. Rom. 1:21-27

The days of Noah, as described in Genesis 6, are also defined as days of violence, and America has surely come face to face with that reality. Civil unrest has been a staple in many third world countries for decades, but so-called civilized nations are quickly following suit. The recent shootings in Tucson, Arizona which took the lives of six victims, including a nine year girl, and a federal judge, and which wounded Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, the specific target of the attack, is a graphic demonstration of these days of Noah. Some were very quick to blame opposing political parties for the attack, while others were accused of taking the opportunity to use such a tragic event for political purposes of gaining more gun control. The fact is that such ungodly rebellion will never be legislated into oblivion. The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, according to Jeremiah 17:9, and as he says “who can know it?” Despite efforts to the contrary, neither politicians nor religionists will be able to curb these days of violence for, according to Isaiah’s assertion, “The Lord hath spoken it,” and it will in fact come to pass. Consider Isaiah’s summation of many characteristics describing the end time, mentioned at this writing. “Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away,....the haughty people....do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws.....Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” Isaiah 24:1-6

All of these things are coming to pass before our very eyes, because The LORD is doing it, and it is imperative that we realize none can stop it. Many of our day claim II Chron. 7:14 “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” While this verse will one day fulfilled in its entirety by Israel, after she has suffered the severe time of Jacob’s trouble which will bring her to repentance, it will in no wise be claimed by America or any other nation, and thus avert these things which “The LORD hath spoken.”

The headline “Silence...then a Roar,” appeared in the Kansas City Star just a few days after the Arizona tragedy. It means that members of Congress convened to offer a moment of silence for the victims of this rebellious uprising, and then voices and fingers of blame were loudly manifest across the land as some sought reasons and thus solutions, to prevent such things from happening. The “moment of silence” is nowhere near the example set by Daniel as he “...set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession,...” Dan. 9:3-4 The next fifteen verses of this chapter record Daniel’s confession, repentance and appeal for God’s mercy in behalf of the nation of Israel, for whom he knew the Babylonish Captivity was about over. Daniel knew change was coming for his people, and that they would soon be delivered, but rather than taking the attitude, “whatever will be will be,” he earnestly sought The Lord for His Will concerning his beloved people. We too have been inundated with the word “change” over the past few years, but we have heard neither politician nor preacher come anywhere close to the extended prayer of

Daniel. The closest thing to that would be the prayer of the Pastor in Kansas who was asked to give the opening invocation for the Kansas Senate a few years ago. He implored God to forgive America for, among others, the rampant sins of violence, abortion, and homosexuality, and many in that gathering promptly walked out. Here in our text, we would note that though the Jews were freed from the bondage of Babylon, and a spiritual faith-filled Daniel had interceded for them, God made it very clear to His beloved prophet, that they would not be freed any time soon from Gentile dominion. Thus, Daniel 9:27 along with the rest of this book, outlines the horrendous suffering they must endure before they are finally restored to their land.

So today, our prayer and purpose is not to “save the planet” as some seem determined to do. If we believe the decree of Isaiah “The LORD hath spoken it,” our prayer should rather be that God would prepare us to depart from it. Jesus has plainly told us that though we are in the world we are not of it. It is surely high time that God’s people begin to think and act as though we are bound for a heavenly land. We too can conduct ourselves as the Philadelphia Church and hear the words: “**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. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Rev. 3:10-11



IT WAS LOVE

His Blood is the seal of our covenant

His Grace opened Heaven to man

His Mercy poured forth to the nations

But Love put the nails in His hands.

No serpent, or soldier could kill Him

*It was how God planned it to be
And God's Love for the likes of lost sinners
Brought Jesus to you and to me.*

*Our sins were as black as the midnight—
Like the darkness that covered the land
While our Savior hung there in the balance
(You and I put the nails in His hands).*

*No human could bear such a banner
No demon defy such a plan
Yes, Jesus secured our redemption
And it was LOVE that put nails through His hands.*

—D. Albrecht

Love's Apprehension and Reciprocation

Albert Astle

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”
Phil. 3:12

Christ apprehends all believers. Each child of God has the same privilege, provision, and opportunity of laying hold of Jesus Christ. We all start out as Ephesian saints in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. There is no believer that is disqualified from this glorious beginning that we all have in Christ Jesus; but as the Christian life progresses, we eventually discover, that not all of God's children are apprehending that for which they have been apprehended.

I was made to so appreciate this vital message when I went to Bible School. I often testified to the fact that, if I had never gained anything else other than the truth of laying hold of Christ, I would have gained the full truth. When I first stepped up on the porch, it was just getting dark. Brother Copley answered the door; and I thought he was Paul, or Moses, or some other prophet. Sister Bodie

was not anything like I expected her to be. I expected to see a tall lady wearing black horn-rimmed glasses, and here she was just a little old lady. But, Oh! Bless God! We fell in love with them. I can remember sitting in the Bible School classes and getting absolutely nothing out of them. I went through a pretense of studying. You can have your Bible open and a pencil in your hand and a notebook open, and you look like you are studying. When Sister Bodie reached the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, she said she wanted an epitome on the previous chapters. I did not even know what an epitome was, let alone anything about the first fourteen chapters of Revelation. So I went down into what had once been the coal room, and I started to pray. Brother Copley told me later that he heard me shoveling coal. I cried out to God. I wanted so much to have His Word. The next Sunday morning Brother Copley preached on the night watches, and I was disturbed about winning Christ. Later, I asked him how I could possibly win Christ. I told him, "You are a man of God who has been living for the Lord all these years. I can see how you could easily win Christ. But, here I am, just a nineteen year-old kid. How can I win Christ?" I have never forgotten what he said: "Christ does not choose His Bride on the basis of how long you have served Him, but on how much you love Him. He does not even ask if you can cook. He chooses you because you love Him." Again I prayed. God poured His Word into my heart. It was there that I began to run this race to win Christ. God just began pouring the Truth into my heart; and I cried out to God that I was just as good as John or Peter or Paul or Brother Copley or Sister Bodie or anyone else. I have as much right to the Word as they do; and God began to open up His Word to my heart.

It is imperative that we learn to fall in love with Jesus, and lay hold of Him as our Bridegroom. The Song of

Solomon records this precious truth. "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him, but I found Him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him, but I found Him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth: I held Him, and would not let Him go, until I had brought Him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me" - Song of Solomon 3: 1-4. This dear little bride, in the third chapter, speaks of her failure. You did not think that the Bride of Christ could fail? What do you suppose the word "overcoming" means, anyway? It does not mean that our lives are going to be spent on a downy bed the moment we accept Bridal truth. No. There is a cost attached to that, and there are some things to overcome. There are only two places where she makes this expression, "I sought Him, but I found Him not." But, the mark of an overcomer is, that he cannot stand that disassociation with Jesus Christ. He has fallen in love. He has learned to apprehend that for which he has been apprehended. It is so vital today that God's children learn to move out of the realm of a song about Jesus, and a poem about Jesus, and even the simple truths about Jesus, and learn the Person of Christ- the dead, buried, resurrected, ascended, and interceding Son of God - Jesus Christ. He is the One of whom the Shulamite said, "He is altogether lovely" - "the chiefest among ten thousand."

The overcoming steps are certainly given here in this third chapter of the Song of Solomon. "By night on my bed I sought Him." This could speak of our provisional life. We have a rest in Christ Jesus, but this does not mean lethargy. It does not mean that we sit idly by and do not

occupy. We fall in love with Christ Jesus. One of the grossest mistakes that we make is to depend on the Bible teachers, pastors, and Sunday School teachers to do our studying for us. They can only plant seeds. They can only direct, and give a word of knowledge. We must find Jesus Christ for ourselves, and that is the very first step that we take. "I found Him." This is love's comprehension. I found Jesus Christ, not a song about Him. There is nothing at all wrong in a beautiful song, but the song should be the result of having found Jesus Christ. There is hardly any religious group in the land today that presents Jesus Christ. They present movements, doctrines, themes, and revival campaigns. They do not really present the Lord Jesus Christ. Only Paul's Gospel can help us to find Jesus Christ, and comprehend Him as our all in all.

"It was but a little that I passed from them." We see her desire. Then she arose and went about the city streets looking for Him whom her soul loved. The first thing that should come upon our hearts is love. I believe everyone here is aware of the fact that man is triune - body, soul, and spirit. The soul is that part of man that longs for things; and, even though it is a little thing, it is our soul that wants it. I love fried chicken - that is a soulish desire. But my soul loves Jesus more than fried chicken. It is the Word of God which communicates to our hearts. The Word of God was not written by Moses, nor by Job, nor even by Paul, Peter, James, and John. It was written by God. It is God's communiqué. It is God speaking to our hearts, and I do not care where we are reading - Genesis through Revelation. I have heard ever so many Bible teachers waste their time telling us how John felt, or how Paul felt, or how Peter felt; and they miss the complete message that God is trying to say to our hearts. When we read God's Word - LISTEN! Because God speaks in every page! The servants of God

were used to write and transcribe His invaluable messages to our hearts. Primarily, they have stepped aside and the Spirit of God says, "You listen to the Lord." When the Word of God has become that real to us, then our souls begin to love Jesus Christ. He is on every page, and we begin to see Him in every part of our lives.

I know, with all of my heart, that this works. I remember my first experiences in finding Him personally in my heart as my Beloved. It was when I was in the army. I was sailing overseas on an old troop ship; and, being a chaplain's assistant, I was lucky to be in charge of the ship's library. Being in charge of the ship's library, I had the key to it; and I could go there anytime, and even sleep in there. I would go in there in the mornings, and I began to pray for things. "Get me out of the army! Give me lots of friends; and give me this, and give me that." I asked God for a lot of things. But then one morning the Holy Spirit said, "Hush! Be still now, and listen for a while." I began waiting on the Lord, and it was then that He began to speak to my heart. The Spirit of God said, "Now make love to the Lord. Do not ask for another thing. Just praise the Lord." The Lord was teaching me a lesson. I began to praise and worship the Lord, and that little library was filled with His Presence. As a result, in two days time, the library was packed out and we were having Bible study. For thirty-eight days we had Bible study. We went through the book of Revelation. I did not want to teach it, but that is what the boys asked for. I did not even ask them to come in. I learned that God will use us. It is a very profitable thing to find Jesus.

"I held Him." This is love's apprehension. It is a very precious and wonderful thing in our lives to hold the Lord. We cannot hold Him against His will. Jesus Personally is elusive, unless our hearts cry out to Him. If we want Him out of mere formality, or try to hold on to

Him to keep ourselves saved, He is never really around. When love reaches out to Jesus, He is there. This relationship with the Lord Jesus, when we hold Him, is a hold of faith and of love. It is not only an ecstatic association with Jesus - it is more than that. There is a song named, "Standing Somewhere in the Shadows, You'll Find Jesus." When we find Jesus, it is not somewhere in the shadows. The Lord spoke that to me once, when I was so depressed in a trial. He said, "Standing right here, you will find Me." It is in a definite place. Whether we are on the mountain top or down in the valley, whether our back is breaking under a burden, or whether we are blessed and happy, Jesus is right there. He is equal to any occasion. We hold Him by love and by faith. Ruth said to Naomi, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge."

"I ... would not let Him go, until I had brought Him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me." There are not very many Christians that have the revelation of a reciprocal relationship with Christ. It is mostly - "Jesus, help me to have a world-wide revival"; or "Jesus, help us to get the whole world saved"; or "Jesus, help us to save all of Kansas City." Those things sound real good. They sound militant, and as if we are getting a lot done. We do not hear much about - "Jesus, fill my whole being with Yourself." One of the things that Jesus wants for us is reciprocated love. That is what the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon is all about. He comes to her door, and He finds it locked. What was she obsessed with? She was obsessed with her provision. Provision is good until we go overboard on it, and think that is all there is. "Sweet smelling myrrh dropping from my fingertips. I am just so pretty in Christ. Have you ever seen anything as beautiful as I am in Christ Jesus?" That is what the Shulamite was

doing. That is another failure. She was taken up with herself. She had even shut the door. Once she had shut that door, who was it shut against? Jesus. Where had He come from? He had come from the night, and He wanted reciprocation. He wants those children of God who fall in love with Him, who will find Him, and who will hold Him in love. This is what Jesus says about the Bride. It is in the seventh chapter of the Song of Solomon, when He sees her putting on her wedding garments. He says He is spellbound, and is "held in the galleries." This beauty only comes when we learn to apprehend Jesus Christ for that which we have been apprehended. This is the very heart of Paul's Gospel and the glory of God's grace.

"Appropriate" means that I have "brought Him into my mother's house." It means to abide. Our mother is the grace of God. It is the grace of God, generally speaking, revealed at Calvary's Cross. It is specifically that place. The covenant of grace was brought into sharp focus when Jesus died on the Cross. That was the place of the travail for our birth. That is where our mother brought forth a new creation. Those who have believed on Jesus Christ were born there. There are not many of God's children who so identify with Christ that they will take Him right into the very conception of their new birth. The doctrine of identification is usually lost when we move away from Romans six, but it never should be. The doctrine of identification is this: Bringing Christ into the chamber where the new birth is expressed. We identify ourselves with the triumphant Christ, our Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He is our Judge, and our Head, and our coming Bridegroom. We identify with Him. We usually take it up to the point where He has to identify Himself with us. There is nothing wrong with that, and it is all glorious, that He has come down to this earth and identified Himself with

a lost race. How is this going to work for us to win Christ? By the trials that God's saints go through. When we think of some of the trials we may face, we shudder. He will give us faith for every trial. I believe it with all of my heart, because I have identified with Christ Jesus. He is our life, our Strength, and our All in All.

"I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till He please." If we will take the little word "my" out, we will get the correct thought. This will not destroy the beauty of the thought, because "God is love." We cannot talk about the love of God without God being there; and so, when we take the word "my" out, it really exalts it to a higher realm. "Stir not up, nor awake love, till HE please." Do not disturb love. This "awakening" is "disturbing love." It is such a frustrating thing to be in an assembly where the saints try to stir up God's love. If you really love the Lord Jesus Christ, you do not need anyone to come around and try to stir it up. I remember, out in California, it was a bad habit that some fell into. I do not think they knew more than two choruses, and it took them an hour to sing them. They would sing them over and over. They would go through all sorts of gimmicks. They would try to stir up God's love, but that is not necessary. Many times it is in calmness, taking in God's Word, pitching our tent "beside the shepherds' tents" that we feed upon what He has to give us. We will find that this love is constant. It is even more constant than the breath we breathe. When we identify with Him, we bring Him along with us. One of the things that God has made so real to my heart is that we can bring along Jesus just by being there. The afterglow of Christ's Presence in our hearts can be seen by others. When Moses came down from the mountain, he had to wear a veil over his face, because the glory of God was shown forth.

We bring Christ along in our lives, and we do not have to be a great somebody as long as Jesus is living in our hearts. Do not try to fake it. Do not try to fake the Hollywood kind of love. The world today has gone completely crazy, where love is concerned. They do not have any idea of what love is. But we, children of God, need to know what the love of God is, and I think we do. The love of God has been "shed abroad in our hearts." We pray that Jesus will make Himself real to us, and that we will have a soul's love for Jesus Christ.

(Editor's Note: This sermon is a reprint of a message transcribed from an audio tape)



"He Sleeps in a Storm"

A man seeks employment on a farm. He hands his letter of recommendation to his new employer. It reads simply, 'He sleeps in a storm.' The owner is desperate for help, so he hires the man. Several weeks pass, and suddenly, in the middle of the night, a powerful storm rips through the valley. Awakened by the swirling rain and howling wind, owner leaps out of bed. He calls for his new hired hand, but the man is sleeping soundly. So he dashes off to the barn. He sees, to his amazement, that the animals are secure with plenty of feed. He runs out to the field. He sees the bales of wheat have been bound and are wrapped in tarpaulins. He races to the silo. The doors are latched, and the grain is dry. And then he understands, 'He sleeps in a storm.'

My friends, if we tend to the things that are important in life, if we are right with those we love and behave in line with our faith, our lives will not be cursed with the aching throb of unfulfilled business. Our words will always be sincere, our embraces will be tight. We will never flounder in the agony of (I could have, I should have.)

We can sleep in a storm!

Author Unknown

Feeding The Hungry

Paul N. Smith

“He hath filled the Hungry with good things.” Luke 1:53

We are saddened when we view the homeless on the streets of large cities, huddled in make-shift shelters, wearing ragged clothing, searching through refuse containers for food and begging from passersby. We feel frustration at not being able to help them permanently. Private and Governmental Agencies cannot cope with this problem. We can try to ease our conscience by rationalizing that these people could have a better existence if they really wanted to help themselves. This may be true for some of them, but the fact remains that there are millions in our own country, plus millions more in the rest of the world, who are destitute and hungry.

As I thought about all this, I could visualize millions of God’s people who are just as spiritually bereft as these Street people. I would feel safe in stating that the majority of Christians are starving for spiritual food. They are handed scraps each time they attend Church services, but never a full, nourishing meal! There is a constant hunger pang within them, even as those living on the streets. They may scrounge for scraps for themselves, buying books at Christian book stores, listening to tapes on various subjects, getting a little nourishment, but often the wrong kind of food.

It is dangerous to shop at just any religious “grocery store.” The prices are often too high, and the quality of the food is poor and harmful to spiritual health and well-being. Some religious food has been

poisoned by Satan and his mercenaries. It is as if you sent your two or three-year old into a grocery with instructions to pick out food for dinner. Spiritual babes in Christ do not have the discernment to pick out the right food for their spiritual lives. They depend on others to hand it to them, and oh, what diets they receive!

Other believers are still living along dirty “city streets,” never having been delivered from the filth and defilement of this world. Some don’t want to be delivered, and choose to remain in their make-shift dwellings, doing their own works, trying to please God. Thank God for those who have tired of such an empty, fruitless existence, and have let the Lord lead them out into freedom in the pastures of green, along the still waters.

We don’t need to be spiritually hungry; there is food in abundance! We need not be homeless. God provides both. He promised to meet our daily material needs, and He will surely meet our spiritual needs also. We can feel full and satisfied while feasting at His Table of Grace. We can have excellent spiritual health, able to run in the race to reach the goal of out-resurrection and win the Prize, Christ Jesus as our Bridegroom.

Let’s break out of our empty spiritual mold, and allow the Lord to supply all our needs!

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### PERHAPS

Perhaps today the Lord will come  
In glory from His Father's throne,  
And catch His waiting Bride away  
To be forever more His own.

Perhaps today the Lord may call

His longing ones up in the air:  
And they will rise in moment's time,  
All glorious in His image fair.

Perhaps today at ev'ning glow  
The Bride will hear His words of love,  
"Arise, my Dove, my Undeiled.  
I'm waiting for thee up above."

Perhaps today! O can it be,  
That unto us should come such bliss?  
To hear His shout and see His face  
And be the first to meet His kiss?

Mary M. Bodie

## REFLECTIONS

*... From the Editor*

"Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee,  
that God is greater than man." Job. 33:12

These are the words of Elihu when God sent him to continue Job's education. The previous verse discloses the fact that Job had indeed tried to "justify" himself even to the point of accusing God, blaming Him, at least in some measure for His plight. According to Elihu, he had said that God "... findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy, He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths." V. 10,11. This drew the above comment which is concluded with the glorious statement; "God is greater than man," and there are many ways in which we must experience it. Here, Elihu means that God is greater than man by virtue of the fact that He can make decisions

for our lives and need not give an account of it. He can do what He will with His Own, and we must surely understand that He does make corporate decisions for our lives without having to obtain our approval. Job's three "comforters" had asserted that surely Job had "done something" amiss, or all this misery would not have been inflicted upon him. Such was not the case. He was here because God was indeed Greater, and made that unilateral decision concerning him, in no wise asking for his approval.

There are many other times that God proves Himself greater than man and they too prove to be a great advantage to us. I John 3:20 promises that "...if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." The word "condemn" means to find fault with, or blame and speaks of the conviction or pain men receive because of guilt. God is greater than such guilt and is able to remove it when one simply asks for forgiveness. The next verse describes even more of His greatness towards us, when that guilt is removed, for "...then have we confidence toward God."

John further instructs us that God is greater, declaring that "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater:..." I John 5:9 We are subject to a host of witnesses from man including lies, witnesses against The Truth, witnesses of unbelief, despair, condemnation, futility, and untold wickedness. God is Greater than any of them and the rest of this verse cites the reason. "...for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son." Jesus is the guarantee of all God's promises and greatness in our behalf. We as, mere men, can overcome all these difficulties "... because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." I John 4:4

Romans 8 also loudly proclaims that God is Greater in our behalf. Ro 8:31 ".... If God be for us, who can be

against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us... neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” There is no area or circumstance in our lives where God cannot be declared Greater.  
GH

## Reminders, Of Upcoming Events

President's Day Weekend Convention

Living Waters Tabernacle 2011

February 18-20.

If you need assistance with accommodations please call:

Michelle Coe (303) 791-5567.

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### Ladies Retreat

April 15-17 Gospel Fellowship Ladies Retreat

Grandview, Missouri.

For more information contact us by e-mail:

[GospelFellowshipLadiesRetreat@yahoo.com](mailto:GospelFellowshipLadiesRetreat@yahoo.com)

The Secret Place

Ray Quintana

“And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a

lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.” I Sam. 17:34

All seemed lost to Israel at this time because no one dared pick up the gauntlet which Goliath had thrown down. God however, had His man in reserve, and in due time he appeared on the scene to vindicate the glorious name of God. The instrument chosen seemed, to natural wisdom and military prudence, a weak and foolish one. This is the precise instrument that God uses in order “that no flesh should glory in His Presence.” I Cor. 1:29 David’s training ground is most instructive for us. It was away from the crowds, in the secret quiet calm, where he learned God’s wondrous resources, which are available only to faith. There, in the fields of Bethlehem, he had, by divine enablement, slain the lion and the bear. This is God’s way: He teaches him that the soul He has elected in secret shall serve Him in public. It is the new life within, the Christ life that will have the victory.

Psalm 91:1 proclaims; “he that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Do we really esteem communion with God our highest privilege? Do we realize that walking with God is the source of our strength?

There had been direct interaction between David’s soul and God in the solitude of the fields, and this is the only way we learn the path to victory. Here we too understand; alone, in the closet, shut up to God, the great battlefield of faith!

Where is this secret place of the Most High? The priests of The Old Testament, went into the Holy place daily, accomplishing the service of The Lord. But into the holy of holies "...went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. Heb. 9:6,7 The Ark of the Covenant also rested, in the holy of holies, of which God said to Moses, "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony..." Ex. 25:22 Under the law, only the high priest was permitted into this sacred place, and that only once a year. God, however, has opened the Way into the Secret Place of the Most High for you and me. The high priest was a man separated unto God, and was required to put on garments of consecration and offer a ram, before entering the Holy of Holies. Lev. 8:22; Ex. 28:3. None could enter into that Secret Place of the Most High except those separated from the world, washed and clothed with the garments of consecration, anointed with blood and oil.

We too must leave our worldly garments, and habits behind, with all consecrated to the Lord. Consecration is the path to complete sanctification. Only a regenerated man can present himself as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. True consecration is unreserved, unconditional and irrevocable. Only as we turn to God from idols, can we serve the living and true God.

David learned a number of lessons during his life. II Sam 12, records his actions after his child was taken in death, and David anointed himself, yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit within. Next he changed his apparel or claimed God's righteousness, having none of his own. Instead he clothed himself with new creation garments. Could David change God's mind in the death of his child?

No! But once it happened, he came first, into the house of God and worshipped, before nourishing himself with natural food. Where did he learn this? It was before the Lord in the secret place, for he said, “behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.” Psa. 51:6

God orders the time, of all circumstances, and our opening text places David on the scene just when the battle was to be enjoined. Has God brought some circumstances in your life that has caused you to face a great battle? David had just completed a long journey, and was undoubtedly tired, yet he ran into the army, and saluted his brethren. V. 22

Saul and his people were in despair, occupied only with sight and circumstances, but the man of faith viewed Goliath as God did; His enemy. The Philistine, cursed David by his gods (v. 43), and vowed he would give his flesh unto the fowls and beasts. David’s response immediately revealed the secret of his confidence, the source of his strength, and the certainty of his victory. “I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” V.45 Faith, brought God to the battle, and announced the victory in advance: “This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand;...” V.46. One stone in the hand of faith was worth more than the full armor, on the giant of unbelief. That stone, though flung by David’s sling, was directed by the hand of God.

It is rather interesting that David obtained great victories, but painful circumstance still ensued. Have you had such an experience? Later, when Saul yet continued to be king of Israel, David remained a persecuted outcast, and though he had spared Saul’s life, days of sorrow continued to follow. He must have pondered the sufferings, and his

heart quailed at the prospect, for David said in his heart, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.” I Sam. 27:1 This could not be true if God’s promise was to be fulfilled. His trials had been many and varied, but God had always made a way of escape. For example, David slew Goliath, was delivered from the javelin of a madman, escaped the evil devices of Doeg, and so would continue to escape out of the hand of Saul! Samuel had anointed him as God’s king. How then could he be slain by Saul? How can we account for David’s unbelief? Quite simply, he was a man. The best of men are men at best. If faith never gave place to unbelief, we might consider a believer more than human. We must realize that a man full of faith is still a man, who must glory in infirmities, since by them the power of God is more clearly proved. God was pleased to let the feebleness show itself. It was not David who achieved those former victories, but God’s grace in him. We too may learn just how finite we are through such lapses of faith.

David had been exposed to some very long trials, not for one week, but month after month. No place gave him ease. If he went unto Keilah, the citizens would deliver him up; if he went into the woods of Ziph, the Ziphites betrayed him. He went even to the priest of God, but there found that dog Doeg, who informed Saul. Even in Engedi or in Adullam he was not secure. He was only secure, in God, the secret place, but always persecuted by his foe. Such was enough to make the wise man mad, and a faithful man doubt. So also is our experience.

1 Samuel 26 records the time that he went with Abishai in the moonlight to the field where Saul and his hosts lay sleeping. They passed the outer circle where the common soldiers lay, and quietly the two heroes passed without awakening any. They came at last to the area where

the captains of the hundreds slept, and trod over their slumbering bodies without arousing them, finally reaching the spot where Saul lay. David then forbade Abishai's to slay the sleeping Saul. A man, with God's assistance, may accomplish great things, but after this excitement there is often an adverse reaction! Elijah claimed great victory over the prophets of Baal, but later, ran from Jezebel, and cried, "let me die." Here again, David said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." It seems possible that he didn't even pray. During many other situations, there seems to be some hint that he asked counsel of the Lord, but this time who did he talk with? Instead of consulting with God he talked with his own heart. Having restrained prayer, he forgot God. He looked only at his enemy. He saw opposition and persecution, and thought I shall one day fall before him. We must not lose sight of God and His great love for us. "I shall now perish one day." Has this not been the cry of many a Satan-harassed saint! But the man of God looks within the secret place and sees what God has done for him, realizing there has been a radical change, which nature could not possibly influence, and his spirit rejoices in the hope set before him. He also sees that there is much corruption within him, and finds much weakness that aids and abets that corruption. Temptations and sore trials await him, and cold despondency falls upon his heart. Doubts and questions vex his mind. He is tripped up and has a bad fall, and then Satan roars in his ear, "God has forsaken thee," and he is almost ready to sink into despair. Under the pressure of trials, relief is what the flesh most desires, and unless the mind be stayed upon God, there is grave danger of seeking to take things into our own hands. It is so hard to sit still and let God, for we want to do something. Although he was a man after God's own heart, such was the case with David.

This shows us what poor weak creatures the best of us are, and how low our graces sink when the Spirit does not renew them! What a solemn warning for our hearts, for it shows us the wickedness of unbelief and the fearful fruits which that evil root produces. It is true that David had no reason to trust Saul, but he had every reason to continue trusting God. Unbelief, however, is the sin of all others which doth so easily beset us. It is inherent in our very nature, and impossible to root out by any exertions of ourselves. Let me see in David myself, my very nothingness, that I might fully realize that in my best moments, I can never trust myself too little, nor God too much.

Picture the sheltering wing the mother bird is to her young, and it will tell of the precious promise for the believing soul. My soul shall be satisfied. Paul's dungeons at Philippi and Rome, deathbeds, and desolations of all kinds, have been illuminated with the blessings. God covered him with his feathers, as he put his trust under His wings. It was a life hidden with God in the secret place, a life hidden from strife, malice and the world. These hardships bring nearness to the heart of God. The soul of the sheltered one beholds and feels the love of God in perfect peace, even as the young bird feels the beat of its mother's heart. This is life hid with Christ in God, meant for those who choose to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, abiding, ever trusting, in the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed, indeed, is he who can say of the Lord, He is my God! Is this just for the mighty men like David or Paul, or is it for you and me, the little sheep that seemingly have no great position?

God Himself comes forward to establish the faith of his sons and writes deeper into their souls. He hath set his love upon me; he knoweth my name; he calleth upon me. It

must become personal. Note the words, “I will,” repeated six times in the last three verses of Psalm 91 “I will deliver him:... set him on high,... answer him:...be with him in trouble... deliver him,... honour him.. satisfy him,...shew him my salvation.” God is with us! The Lord Jesus need not tell us what he will do FOR us; it is enough that He Himself will be there. He summed everything up for His disciples in this one assurance. “Lo, I am with you always..” Matt. 28:20. We will find Him in the secret place. The life of Christ lives, breathes, and energizes, the lives of His saints. He is the drink of our souls. He abideth in us, and we in Him.

What is assurance? The nightingale sits in the dark and shadowy places singing. So also, the song of the Lord is in the darkest and most difficult times of our lives. Circumstances do not necessarily have to be promising. Unbelief places circumstance between the soul and God, while faith puts God between the soul and circumstance. We will never know what God can be to us until we have gone deeply into the shadows, for that is where we find Him in the secret place. Loved ones, friends, and experiences can be comforting, but true comfort comes only from Him. Assurance is allowing the Lord to be everything to us, thus knowing Him as more than just Savior?

David had a chamber in his heart where he often visited the Lord. He never forgot the pit from whence God had taken him, nor did he forget that God had raised him from the sheepfold to make him king of Israel. That chamber was where he retired to remember, seek, and worship God. One of Satan’s favorite tricks is to undermine our confidence in God. If we would become what God intends, we must, by faith, claim the Christ He offers us. Will He ever leave me? Does He love me? Did

He give His life for me? Does He want me to have the best? Is He with me right now? These answers are imperative, to accomplish God's agenda. He is for us, with us, and in us, assuring us that all things must work together for our good. We will never go very far with Him until we have that complete assurance that "He is for me," that He has dedicated Himself to us and that He wants to see fruit in our lives more than we do.

We must allow nothing to keep us from God's purposes for us. He must possess our hearts, to fill us with the fullness of God. Only then will we know the love of God that passes understanding. Everything God has is in His Son. Although visible things may be exhausted, Jesus hasn't failed us. The love of God is our possession.

We can never exhaust God. We can only refuse Him. There is no limit to His infinite power, nor is there a limit to His Infinite Love. It is for ME! God gives ME His undivided attention because He is God. He stands with His arms outstretched saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matt. 11:28). Before we loved God or had any thought of Him, He showed us grace and protected us even in our foolishness. He waits and pleads and continues to be gracious. The years that we put Him off did not quench His love. So, as we follow our sweet Lord through life's journey, and say with the Apostle Paul, God is able to make all grace abound toward you; always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. (II Cor. 9:8)

It is one thing to be assured of God's love and power, but quite another to believe it is for ME! We must be assured that we fill a place in His heart that no one else can fill. He is with us, as though we were the only person He is looking after, rejoicing when we rejoice and weeping when we weep. He covers our head in the day of battle,

when pain is sharp, when hopes are blowing like a candle flickering in the wind, and when temptation is strong. He, Who holds the winds in His fist, will be all that we need. To suggest that God should love us as much as He does and yet deny us anything for our good, is impossible. And to suppose that Christ would have suffered for us as He did, yet deny the needful grace and strength to bear life's burdens is to say that He died in vain. Who has or could do for us what Christ has done?

Knowing The Lord Jesus Christ is the path to assurance. We will never be what God wants us to be until we recognize that His goodness and mercy follow us everywhere. God's love enables us to triumphantly leap over obstacles as He teaches us to take the high places, and never requires anything of us that He will not enable us to perform. This we learn in the secret place of The Most High.

Can we not hear our beloved bridegroom saying; "let me see your countenance; let me hear your voice?" Some people have the vision of being in the bride, while others have never even dreamt of it. We do not come to such a place by "wishful thinking." Lord Jesus, reveal it to me, in the secret place of the Most High! Lord, if I must stay here for a little while longer and face these trials, I know that soon I will be with you in that secret place, a throne across the crystal sea. I want to be alone with you in the secret place, to be like You, hear Your Word, for a faith so clear and bright that its eye will see your glory. Let your Spirit like a dove rest on me, through the deepest, and darkest night. O that I might know the secret place! Where there is divine comfort, O my Lord. I know you are mine; there in secret with Thee, heaven is nearer and nearer to me. There I hear His voice saying, come my sweet love that I might hold you in my arms that we may fly away to the

clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs. Would you like to know the sweetness of the secret of the Lord? It is here for you. And whenever you leave the silence of that happy meeting in the secret place, you will bear the image of Christ on your face. It is the glow of Divine Grace found only in the secret place.

### STEPPING ASHORE

**Oh, to think to step ashore,  
And find it Heaven;  
To clasp a hand outstretched,  
And find it God's hand!  
To breathe new air,  
And that, celestial air;  
To feel refreshed,  
And find it immortality.  
Ah, to step from storm and stress  
To one unbroken calm:  
To awake and find it Home.  
-- Robert E. Selle**

- \* When you do what pleases God, God is pleased with you.
- \* The power of love can turn an enemy into a friend.

### HIS PRESENCE IS SALVATION

*“And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him; and behold there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was asleep.” (Matthew 8:23-24)*

This little narrative is full of profound and comforting teaching. Let us consider some of its lessons. May I give them as they came to me in the midst of prolonged testing, and when others were writing to me for special help.

Jesus had just finished His sermon on Kingdom Laws in the mount. A great multitude followed Him, a leper stopped Him, worshipping, and the Lord healed him. He also healed a palsied servant. Then later, Jesus delivered Peter's mother-in-law of a fever. And at evening cast out many evil spirits. Great multitudes thronged Him, whereupon he gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the sea. He went aboard ship and immediately fell asleep.

(1) Observe that Jesus was in the perfect will of His heavenly Father. He did only that which was commanded of His Father. He could truly say, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). He did not even take a ship ride without His Father's counsel and will; nor should we. He had apparently disregarded the multitude, a great opportunity to do good, and abruptly leaves them to cross the water. Why? Simply to be in the Father's perfect will. Jesus was a man, with a human body, brain and heart. These needed rest. Here He found it and "was asleep."

(2) Jesus influenced others: "His disciples followed Him." It is stated in Verse One that "great multitudes followed Him." However, there is a vast difference in how people follow Jesus. Some follow Him for the "loaves and fishes," some for the miracles He wrought, some for an official reason, e.g. Judas. The disciples followed Jesus for Himself and because He had chosen them. They really believed in Him and loved Him. He had said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

(3) Note the hellish hate of "the prince of the power of the air." Satan endeavors to drown the "Prince of Peace" and His faithful followers, by raising a great tempest in the sea. How do we know it was Satan? Because Jesus "rebuked the winds and the sea." His Father ordered the voyage, but He only permitted the storm. Was it not folly to leave a great harvest field to take a boat ride? Was this not evidence that He made a serious

mistake; and was it not added folly for the disciples to follow? Nay! Nay! The Father had spoken and Jesus understood His voice and obeyed. All were in the perfect will and plan of God, who even knew that the adversary would raise a tempest. Yes, Jesus' whole life was breasting tempests. And the entire life of all those who truly follow Him will be at times in the midst of tempests.

(4) Behold the confidence Jesus had in His Father's Word, and how safe He felt -- "asleep." And indeed, how very safe He was. We are always absolutely safe in our Father's will. We run no risks whatever. He assumes all responsibility of our care when we trust Him and follow His Son.

(5) Behold the wakefulness of unbelief. "the disciples came to Him and woke Him, saying: Lord, save us; we perish." They had not yet learned that His presence was salvation. They had not learned that Jesus rested in the bosom of His Father's will where Satan's rage could not molest Him. He would teach them this great lesson that, in the Father's will and in the Son's company, there is perfect safety even in the midst of a tossing tempest at sea. Did the Lord reprove them? No. he simply asked them the probing question: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Then He proved not only their safety, but also His authority and power over the disturbed elements and over His adversary. "He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm."

Be it remembered that Jesus is still on land and sea, and our safety is in following Him. He still has authority in heaven and upon earth. Angels and men and demons and elements are subject unto Him. Let us take shipping with Him, committing our all to His wisdom and oversight. Let us go ashore with Him, following close by Him.

(6) One more very fundamental truth. Jesus' committal of Himself to the ship and lying down to sleep, teaches us the place of utter helplessness which He

maintained. He declared, "I can of myself do nothing" (John 5:19,30). Though He was the holy Son of God, the spotless Man of Nazareth, yet He acted not, nor spoke from Himself. It became easy for Him to trust His Father.

This valuable lesson, our Father would teach us. Few of us have yet really learned our own weakness and helplessness, and hence, have not yet learned to trust and rest in God. Most of us regret that we are weak, but Jesus chose that place, that His Father might be glorified in Him by meeting His every need -- of wisdom, guidance and power. Paul also gloried in his weaknesses and necessities (he did not feel sorry because of them), that the power of Christ, spread over him like a tent, might be manifest, and not his own power, or skill, or tact, or learning, or experience.

Christ was "crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God towards you" (II Corinthians 13:4).

Here in this utter helpless, dependent state, we are guaranteed the constant, minutest, warmest, all-sufficient care of the Eye that never sleeps and of the Hand that is never empty nor closed. "To this man will I look, to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at MY Word: (Isaiah 66:2).

(7) But how can I follow Jesus? How can I become weak? How can I be humble and contrite and tremble at God's Word? How can I learn to trust Him? Simply by definitely taking Christ for each and all of these things. You cannot be humble by setting your will to be so. You cannot be or do anything pleasing to God by setting your will to do so. But you can say, "Jesus, I take Thee for my wisdom. I take Thee for my humility. I take Thee for my weakness." Then, if Paul says, "We are weak in Him," then "I take Thee for my strength." Thus Christ Himself becomes your constant supply on land or sea, in tempest or calm, in sunshine or shade.

Ed. Note: This article is reprinted from a February-March 1915 issue. No author's name is given, but the style of writing is definitely that of A.S. Copley.

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A family was sitting at the dinner table when one of the children asked his father, "Dad, what do pro and con mean?"

"Well," replied the father, "it's like this. Pro is your convincing, unalterable argument, and con is the other fellow's contemptible drivel."

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## PAUL'S GOSPEL

### *IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON*

A. S. Mooneyhan

#### Canticle Four - Christ The Prize

*"I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? My Beloved put his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him." (5:2-4)*

When we return to our various activities after a time of feasting and fellowship, we are confronted with everyday problems, even testing and trials. We feel as though we had been on the mountain top with the Lord, but now as if we are down in the valley without Him. It seems as if the Lord has withdrawn His Presence, and sometimes He does hide Himself from us that we might seek Him out.

This reminds us of the story of Samson when he slew a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass. That was one of the greatest victories of his life, but immediately after that victory, he felt that the Lord would let him die of thirst. Sometimes, after the greatest victory in our lives, and the sweetest time of fellowship, there comes temptation and suffering.

This chapter portrays the truth given in the epistle to the Philippians. The Ephesian truth especially shows the heavenly phase of our Christian life -- seated in the heavenlies. Philippians gives us the earthward side of our training -- running the race, meeting with trials, temptations and problems.

In this little portion, the Bridegroom comes seeking fellowship with her. He had withdrawn himself for a while. There is nothing said about how it happened. There is a sudden change, for He had gone away. Now, he returns seeking her fellowship. But, what does he find? She has been asleep, which always speaks of indifference, more or less. Then when she does finally rise to open the door, her fingers dropping with myrrh, her Beloved had withdrawn Himself. Myrrh always speaks of suffering, and she was occupied with her suffering. While He was gone it was night, and she fell into temptation through suffering. Probably it was the suffering which came because she had chosen this way for His sake. Although she is "a garden enclosed," yet the hedge had been let down. Satan knew that the Lord had a hedge around Job, or anything which was his. In Chapter One, this woman had become occupied with service and had neglected her fellowship with the Lord. In the end of Chapter Two, she had allowed the flesh to rob her of fellowship with him. Now, in Chapter Five, it was self-pity and self-occupation which caused her indifference to her lover. When He came seeking her fellowship, she did not respond until he was gone.

5:6-7. "I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul failed when

he spoke: I sought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.” Is not that a sad condition for one who aspires to be in the Bride company? I have talked to some that have at one time hoped to be in the Bride company, but they realize that they have lost fellowship with the Lord, and do not know how to have this fellowship restored. They go to meetings where the ministers know nothing of the Bridal truth, seeking to get back into that close place of communion and fellowship. Instead of receiving help from the “watchmen,” the Shulamite was smitten and wounded by those from whom she should have received encouragement. The keepers of the walls symbolize sectarian leaders who rob the virgin saints of their separation unto the Lord.

If we expect to reign with Christ, we may expect to share His sufferings now. In the book of Philippians, in spite of the sufferings which Paul endured through his imprisonment, his triumph and victory over these trials are astounding. Instead of bewailing the fact that he was in prison and not permitted to proclaim the Gospel as he had hoped to do when he came to Rome, he wrote a letter of encouragement to the saints in Philippi, saying “the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel.” - 1:12. Nothing could daunt this soldier of the Cross. We should not be surprised when we are called into his suffering way, for it is written, “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake” - 1:29.

In Philippians Two. We have the example of Christ who willingly gave up His position of equality with God and took upon Himself the form of flesh and the place of a servant, for the purpose of shedding His blood on the Cross for sinful humanity. “Therefore God also hath highly exalted Him” 2:9, and all who believe on Jesus Christ are

exalted with Him. His righteousness has been accredited to us who believe. Therefore, Paul could say, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We are to take a humble place and be subject to the will of God in all things as Christ was, even the sufferings to which we are appointed.

In spite of the fact that Paul had suffered the loss of all things for Christ's sake, he expressed his deep longing in Philippians 3:10, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." It may surprise us to read Paul's words in Verses 12-14 in which he acknowledges that he had not yet won the Prize, but he was still running the race to win Christ. He is our example in his willingness to suffer, and in his untiring zeal to so run that he might win.

In Philippians 4:13, Paul's unconquerable spirit exclaims: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." We have access to this same inexhaustible supply of enduring ability, because Christ is our life and our strength. This pattern racer also states: "Those things, which ye have both learned and received and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" - 4:9. There is no shortcut to the goal. We must run the race as the Apostle Paul did. And, if we will follow his example as he urges us to do, we too, shall win the Prize, Christ Jesus.

5:8. "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love." This courtship began with the express longing of this woman for Christ. It was the attitude of her heart toward Him which brought her to His attention. It was His constant love and tenderness which drew her away from every other interest. In 2:5, when she was in sweet communion with Him, she had said, "I am sick of love." In that case she was saturated with love, but in this verse, her love-sickness was because of the loss of her Lover. This loss

caused her to implore the daughters of Jerusalem to make known her forlorn condition to her Beloved.

5:9. "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?" Many Christians know nothing of the intimate relationship of Bridal saints with the Lord. Some know Him only as the King. The saints represented by the daughters of Jerusalem will be guests at the wedding, and are friends of the Bridegroom. Other saints know Christ as the Master. These are pictured by Martha. They will be servants at the wedding in the air. But to the Bride, Christ is her Beloved. Her answer to the question is given in Verses 10-16.

(To Be Continued)

### *The Eternal God*

Before the hills appeared,  
Or rivers and the seas,  
Before the clouds were formed  
To ride on gentle breeze;  
Before a man was born,  
Or any living thing;  
Before the rain or snow  
Or flowers in the spring;  
And ere the paths of earth  
By mortal men were trod:  
Before it all there was  
The great eternal God.

When everything on earth  
Decays and disappears,  
As darkness of the night  
Dissolves when daylight nears;  
When stars no longer shine  
And heavens pass away;  
When time shall be no more—  
No longer night and day;

When skeptics and agnostics  
Are all beneath the sod,  
And none are left to challenge  
There still will be our God.

Noah P White