



By Gene Hawkins

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the

strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.” Dan. 2:41-42 “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD! Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words... Now the Egyptians are men, and not God... When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.” Isa. 31:1-3

Recent events on the world map reveal that these two citations, from the prophets Daniel and Isaiah, are converging with one another and coming to pass right before our very eyes. Daniel gained great prestige and respect in Babylon when he was able to reveal, not only the dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten but also the interpretation of it. This dream image shows the four world empires of Gentile Times. It begins with the Kingdom of Babylon portrayed by the head of gold and ends with the above mentioned feet and toes of iron and clay. The iron is symbolic of the strong imperialistic rule of the revived Roman Empire. Mixed with clay however, it becomes the very weak and fragile government of Democracy even as we read in Daniel 2:43 “...but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

The recent uprising in Egypt loudly proclaims the fulfillment of these prophecies. Egypt has long been a scriptural symbol and representative of the entire world, but the words above can also be applied very literally to her and her relationship with

Israel. Isaiah cries loudly, “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help,” and God is especially speaking of Israel who is trusting more in the world for help, rather than their Messiah. It is clearly stated that “both he that helpeth (Egypt) shall fall, and he that is holpen (Israel) shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.” This will come to pass more and more as the tribulation progresses, and once again Egypt, symbolic of all the nations of the world, will utterly fail and fall because God “...Also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words...” Isa. 31:2

The Middle East is presently filled with extreme unrest due to the sudden demand for change from the dictatorial government of Hosni Mubarak to the proposed democratic government of the people. This uprising began in Tunisia where former president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was forced into exile. The associated press is now reporting that Tunisia has asked Saudi Arabia whether or not he is still alive. Recent rumors have also indicated that Hosni Mubarak was in a coma. We have wondered if he had a bit of help getting to that condition. Regardless of whether or not the claims are true, scripture is still very clear that “...he (God) removeth kings, and setteth up kings,” (Dan. 2:21) and He has a multitude of ways at His disposal to accomplish it. Moammar Gadhafi lashed out at Wikileaks, accusing foreign powers of using leaked American diplomatic cables to sow instability. Fox News reported that many believe these uprisings were both incited and coordinated, using the electronic media of face book and twitter. Let us realize that we are seeing God’s Hand moving nations, kingdoms, and their respective leaders like puppets on a string.

Daniel plainly declares that democracy will prevail for a time in the end time government. This was the signature theme of the former Bush administration and has now become the rallying cry, not only of the present Obama regime, but also that of the entire world. Noted above is also the fact that Egypt is representative of all nations of the world in their collapse before God, and we see it both literally and figuratively in the present day Arab world. These Arab nations are falling like dominoes, since the Egyptian dictatorship collapsed. Gadhafi’s Libya, one of the world’s most repressive regimes, became the next test for these

pro-democracy activists, as they called for protests across the oil-rich North African nation, hoping to draw momentum from the revolts in Egypt and Tunisia.

Libya's North African neighbor Algeria, has also erupted with large scale protests in recent weeks. Add to that the demonstrations in Yemen where President Ali Abdullah Saleh rejected demands that he step aside, saying that the anti-government protests in his country are "a virus that came from Tunisia to Egypt. And to some regions, the scent of the fever is like influenza. As soon as you sit with someone who is infected you'll be infected." Bahrain, of special interest to the U.S. because the naval 5th fleet is based there, has also become the location of some very bloody protests, and at this writing "Tanks, armored personnel carriers and riot police withdrew on the orders of Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, after earlier crackdowns left at least five dead." These violent protests are calling for the "current government's dismissal and the creation of a constitutional monarchy," and is spilling over into Bahrain's neighbor and ally, Saudi Arabia. A member of the Saudi royal family, Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz warned "Unless problems facing Saudi Arabia are solved, what happened and is still happening in some Arab countries including Bahrain, could spread to Saudi Arabia, even worse."

The result of all this upheaval will affect the entire world, but the proverbial noose is especially tightening around Israel. Iran, loudly proclaimed support for the protestors calling for democracy in Egypt, and was greatly criticized by the U.S. for being so hypocritical in using great force to suppress a similar revolt in Iran just a few short months ago. Now, new protests are being waged because the Tehran regime's claim to be on the side of the Arab protesters appears in part to have prompted Mir Hossein Musavi and Mehdi Karrubi, the de facto leaders of the Green Movement, to call Iran's first opposition protests in a year. "We called for a demonstration to show our movement is alive and to stop the Iran government's propaganda abuse of pro-democracy movements in the region," Karrubi said, after calling an antigovernment demonstration for February 14. Whether or not

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and President Mahmud Ahmadinejad who, has also hailed the Egyptian uprising as inspired by his own brand of messianic Islam, will stay in power, remains to be seen. It is clearly manifest that Iran has seized the opportunity and obtained permission from the fragile Egyptian government to send two warships through the Suez Canal en route to Syria. Israel is undoubtedly witnessing only the beginning of a multitude of Arab kingdoms rising up against her. According to Reuters, Gaddafi has already told the Palestinians to revolt against Israel. Since the exit of Mubarek Israeli officials are especially pondering a worst-case scenario in which the Muslim Brotherhood dominates the next Egyptian government. They fear that the treaty they have had with Egypt since 1979 whereby Israel gave up occupation of the Sinai in return for peace with its neighbors, will no longer be honored. Dan Schueftan director of national security studies at Haifa University declares "Egypt was the cornerstone of our security in the region. Thanks to the treaty with Egypt, Israel had reduced its defense expenditure from 23% of its GNP in the mid-1970s to about 9% today. The relationship with Egypt also allowed Israel to end a costly military occupation of Gaza in 2005 as Egypt covered Gaza from the south."

Nebuchadnezzar's dream image boasts 10 toes of iron comingled with clay, which are easily correlated with the 10 horns on the seven heads of John's vision in Rev. 17:7 Those ten horns are declared to be "... ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." V. 12 Due to these present uprisings in the Middle East, we are further convinced that the "toes of democracy" and these "ten kings with no kingdom as yet," are emphatically identified as the religious factions of Islam which have been sweeping the world in these past few years. Some have suggested that this Muslim take over might be the False Church, but for reasons listed in previous issues of Grace and Glory, Catholicism remains with that distinction. However, we note here in Revelation 17 that the ten horns are used to destroy that great whore. How ironic is it that God would use false religion to annihilate false religion. Both of these organizations, Catholicism and Islam, are definitely political

despite the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood has tried to convince the world that it is only a secular organization. No one is buying that lie, because this Muslim Jihad is motivated by hatred for anyone who will not bow to Islam's Sharia Law. Why not target the one who purports herself to be the only True Church, and Wife Of The Lamb, against Whom these kings will be battling when the great whore is destroyed.

We are also witnessing the fact that this ungodly regime has Israel in its sights for the same reason: She is the chosen people of God, and though at this present time Israel is following the path outlined by the opening text in Isaiah, scripture plainly tells us that she will one day accept her True Messiah, "...and so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof,"(Isa. 31:4) destroying all the nations and kingdoms that have taken a stand against her, in the process.

But what of us who steadfastly looking up for Jesus to come and take us out of this world before the tribulation begins. The events of our day might have some convinced that these dreaded days have already begun, but be of good cheer, the tribulation has not arrived yet. There was a time when many may have thought that Jesus would come for first rank overcomers during a period of passive prosperity in this world, but tht may not necessarily be the case. We would point out here, however, that the prophesied time of peace and safety actually corresponds with the first two seals to be opened in Rev. 6. The arrival of the "white horse" carrying its rider with a bow but no arrows, tells us of a leader who will introduce a time of peaceful co-existence among the nations. The opening of the second seal brings forth a "red horse" of bloodshed showing that first seal of peace is very short lived. It is imperative that we understand the timing here. Chapter 6 of Revelation does not take place until AFTER Jesus takes His throne in chapter 4, and subsequently receives the book sealed with seven seals of judgment in Ch. 5, meaning that the full overcomers, pictured by the four living ones and twenty four elders are already in glory by the time these events transpire. Given the dire straits in which Israel finds herself today, there is every possibility that she will

retaliate, especially against Iran. This could certainly touch off a major conflict in the Middle East with no resemblance of “peace and safety.” We can only wonder what means God may use to bring about the “covenant with death” (Isa. 28:15) which Israel will sign with the antichrist. Dan. 9:27 Will she be forced to allow Jerusalem to become the capital of a Palestinian State? Prime Minister Netanyahu has resisted Western pressure to make compromises that would help revive talks on statehood for the Palestinians, but his critics say that taking such a step would defuse criticism across the Arab world.

We are plainly told that Jesus will come as a thief, and thus may take us out while the rest of the world is in total chaos, just as Israel experienced tremendous unrest just prior to the crossing of the Red Sea. These present radical changes show us emphatically that God is controlling all these world leaders and such changes can occur in a heartbeat. We also are promised that “...We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...” I Cor. 15:51, 52

So let us do what we have been doing: earnestly look up for the soon coming of Jesus! We need not look for further definitive signs that He is to appear, for they are all around us, and He could come and steal us away at any moment. We are not given the day or hour of Jesus coming, but we have been admonished repeatedly to simply “look up for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:28 Now, more than ever, “... is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” Rom. 13:21

## WHOM GOD CHOOSES

A.S. Copley

“Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” I Cor. 1:17

This chapter sets the supernatural over against the natural; the wisdom of God overtops the wisdom of men. The Lord says, “I

will destroy the wisdom of the wise; and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” Then He asks, “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world?” He is looking around for them, as if to say, “They cannot be found.” Again He inquires, “Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” How did He do it? I answer, by the preaching of the Cross, which ignorant man terms foolishness. “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching (not by foolish preaching) to save them that believe.” “The foolishness of God (that is, what wise men call foolishness) is wiser than men; and the weakness of God (what looks weak to the natural man) is stronger than men.” To preach the Gospel of Christ is the wisest thing under Heaven. That is the wisdom of God.

Though “the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom”; yet “we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The world cannot understand us. They look upon us as fools, ready for the asylum. Men listen with rapt attention to lectures, so-called, though they be only silly twaddle or empty words. They go wild, whoop, and yell, when hearing the cracked bells of orators. If we preach Christ in the Spirit, we may commit the results to God; for our ministry is sure to be effective. The Holy Spirit will certainly use that word. Consciences will be aroused. Blindness will be reprov'd. Hearts will be melted. Men will be moved. God will be glorified. Therefore, Paul exhorted elsewhere, “Preach the Word” to small and great. We have a marvelous Gospel, a glorious Gospel.

Some men would like to make the Gospel attractive by their learning. They would trim it down, polish it up, make it palatable for the natural man. Many folk think that the timber on which Christ was hanged was two pieces of very nice, sawed and planed lumber. But the type of the Cross is called “a pole”; that is, a sign, a banner - Numbers 21:8. It is called “a tree,” a timber, a stick - Deut. 21: 22,23; so also in the New Testament - Acts 5:30. The natural ruggedness of the Cross expresses the cruelty of

Christ's death and the deservings of sin. Men would dub off the heinousness of sin and the punishment due to sinners, and temper divine wrath to their own likings. Finally, they agree with Christian Science and other false teachings, that man's fall is simply "mortal error," whatever that may mean. If you want a crowd, preach Christ without the Cross and His death without the blood. Preach Him as a great reformer with a new philosophy, along side of Aristotle and Buddha. Preach Him as having died a martyr for His cause. Preach His life as a noble example of rectitude, the brotherhood of men, and the Fatherhood of God; and men will haul you around on their shoulders and glorify you. Nay! Never. Christ died as numbered with the transgressors, even as the worst of criminals; and was counted sin for sinful man. He was the effectual "sin-offering" to God.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." "This portion is especially on my heart. The stunning glory of the Gospel is hidden in these three verses - that God should employ what men reject. Why such a choice? Answer, "That no flesh should glory in His Presence." Observe both the negative and the positive here - whom God has not chosen, and whom He has. Not many wise, mighty, nor noble, are called. That must have been a bitter pill for the Corinthians; for some of them were educated, and bright intellectually. Is this the reason that certain among them became self assertive and criticized the apostle? Perhaps so. They wanted their intelligence and learning and capabilities to be recognized. Some wise, some mighty, some noble were called; but not many. Why only a few? Why does God seem to act so strangely? Why did Jesus not choose experienced priests, equipped scribes, and well informed Pharisees, to be His apostles? Why did He choose ignorant and unlettered fishermen? The former knew too much. They doted on their gifts and piety. They did not need any instruction from an irresponsible fellow who came among them unaccredited, as they thought. "Whence hath this Man this wisdom?" they sneeringly inquired. Is He not simply a carpenter and the son of a carpenter? They were too big, too high, too

wise, too mighty, too noble. Whom does He call? “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.” Not foolish, silly-Simons, does He select. That is not the meaning. But God in wisdom acts in ways that baffle the wisdom and wiles of men, which ways appear senseless to them. His ways are wiser than men, and His thoughts higher than men. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him.” The Lord chooses those who yield to His will and become willing to be called fools for Jesus’ sake. I say, here is the startling glory of the Gospel, that Jehovah uses the foolishness of preaching to confound and dumbfound the worldly wise. “And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” What apparently contradictory and impossible language! Can an ant whip an elephant? No. But a saint, through faith in God and in the Name of Jesus Christ, can outflank the devil. Jesus said, “These signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils.” Who are the weak ones that God selects? Not the weak minded nor self-conceited, but those who feel their weakness or inability, those who fear to rely upon their own wisdom or strength; and those whom the Lord makes weak by defeating their own efforts, and by cutting them back. He gave to Paul a thorn in the flesh to buffet him and keep him broken, lest he might be lifted up with the abundant revelations. Thus he was weakened. Three times he prayed earnestly for the thorn to be removed; but, instead of taking it away, He said to the apostle, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” II Cor. 12:9. Another impossible proposition to the natural mind - God’s strength is perfected in human weakness. Hence, Paul assumed an attitude that not one in five hundred takes. He said, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me,” or spread as a tent over me.

“And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen.” If we are not willing to be weak for Jesus’ sake, how will we subscribe to this proposition? Who is willing to be considered base or lowborn? My mother could not read English, only German. I was reared on a farm; but I

surrendered my poverty to a rich heavenly Father. How painful it is to be despised. It is distressing to be despised for having only mean things. But, remember, God has chosen - actually chosen - the base and despised things; and He blows on man's big, boastful, spectacular wise, too mighty, too noble. Whom does He call? "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." Not foolish, silly-Simons, does He select. That is not the meaning. But God in wisdom acts in ways that baffle the wisdom and wiles of men, which ways appear senseless to them. His ways are wiser than men, and His thoughts higher than men. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." The Lord chooses those who yield to His will and become willing to be called fools for Jesus' sake. I say, here is the startling glory of the Gospel, that Jehovah uses the foolishness of preaching to confound and dumfound the worldly wise. "And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." What apparently contradictory and impossible language! Can an ant whip an elephant? No. But a saint, through faith in God and in the Name of Jesus Christ, can outflank the devil. Jesus said, "These signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils." Who are the weak ones that God selects? Not the weak minded nor self-conceited, but those who feel their weakness or inability, those who fear to rely upon their own wisdom or strength; and those whom the Lord makes weak by defeating their own efforts, and by cutting them back. He gave to Paul a thorn in the flesh to buffet him and keep him broken, lest he might be lifted up with the abundant revelations. Thus he was weakened. Three times he prayed earnestly for the thorn to be removed; but, instead of taking it away, He said to the apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. Another impossible proposition to the natural mind - God's strength is perfected in human weakness. Hence, Paul assumed an attitude that not one in five hundred takes. He said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," or spread as a tent over me.

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Exactly why does God make such a strange choice? Here is the answer “That no flesh should glory in His Presence.” Men are glorying in men today. They boast of their own works, or of the works of others. Religious flesh is flying high these days, giving high credit to itself. That smells bad to the Holy Jehovah, who counts that “all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away” I Peter 1 :24. What astinking mass of withered religious flesh will culminate this shallow but active age. Methinks that God will shake His wise head and turn away with holy disgust at the abominable heap. Two conceited men put a sign over the doorway of a meeting place, “Let George Do It.” They were both named George. They put the same words on cards which announced the campaign. Well, George did it in about thirty days, and closed the campaign. If we let God do it, no repairs will be necessary; and it will be well done and stand forever. None can add to it, nor take from it. When we get to Heaven we will not be able to say, “We prayed through, we did it, we built the house, we conducted the successful campaign; glory be to us.” Nay. To God all wise, be all the glory.

My heart is made glad by what God is doing, for the way He is sending forth men and women to preach this wonderful Gospel of present grace and future glory. He is employing folk that the world could not use, because they give Him all the praise.

Stand faithful; never let down, nor compromise with the flesh. God is looking for faithful ones rather than successful ones. The word "success" occurs only once - Joshua 1:8 (see margin), and I Samuel 18:5 and Psalm 101:2 where it is translated "wisely." Faithfulness spells the only acceptable success. The words "faithful" and "faithfulness" occur many times in the Word. Thirty years ago a motto in the East read thus - "Let God." The "d" dropped off, and then it read, "Let Go." Someone improved it by a new motto - "Let Go and Let God." That is it. Let go of everything and everybody. Let God work. Let God call you and fit you and place you and protect you and use you and feed you and clothe you. Let God come into what you are and what you possess. Let Him have your lack and what you long for. Some folk are too much occupied with what they think is their calling. Let us be occupied with Jesus "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith. "

The Philadelphia Assembly has "a little strength," which is not said of any other. But she is faithful. She is keeping the Lord's Word and not denying His Name. She is keeping the Word of His patience. He is waiting for the Father's due time of the Son's inauguration. He is waiting for the Bride's preparation; and she is patiently waiting for His return to take her Home. For her faithfulness, the Lord promises to keep her "from (out of) the hour of temptation (or, trial), which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" - Rev. 3:10. She has enough strength to make the grade. That is all she needs; and that demands her all, and all the time. But Philadelphia saints shall be pillars in the temple of God on high. However weak, or despised, or base, or nothing - if we are filled with the Word, filled

with faith, filled with Christ, filled with the Spirit, we are enabled to fill our God-appointed places here faithfully. That will qualify us for the place in glory for which we have been apprehended, and for which we are running. For us there stands forth in bold type one significant word - "Behold, I come quickly: **HOLD THAT FAST** which thou hast, that **NO** man take **THY** crown" - Revelation 3: 11.

## HE'S THE WAY OF LOVE

*In the ages past a great plan was made,  
Ere the world was formed or its foundations laid,  
To redeem mankind from his lost estate  
Cursed by Adam's fall and the tempter's hate.  
Yes, the Son of God left His Father's Home  
Left the wealth He had, left His royal throne;  
And came down to earth, took the form of man,  
Died upon the Cross - this fulfilled God's plan.*

*Oh, what grace is this! Oh, what love Divine!  
That the Son of God would save a soul like mine.  
How He suffered there upon that cruel Tree,  
Bore my sin and shame - Oh, what agony!  
By the power of God, from the grave He rose.  
Satan, sin, and death are defeated foes.  
Evermore He lives, and He intercedes  
At the throne of grace to supply our needs.*

*Peace and joy are mine, and new life within.  
He's my Blessed Hope, He's my Prize to win.  
'Tis the Word of God - I believe it's true  
This He promises unto me and you.  
By the grace of God I will run the race,  
For I long to look on my Beloved's face.  
Soon He's coming back for His waiting Bride.  
Oh, what bliss to be ever at His side!  
He's the way of love, the way of love.*

Alene McClain

Written to the tune of "The Way of Love"  
by AI Stillman and Jack Dieval

## Through The Eye of a Needle

Rob Hawkins

I remember years ago, about every time I heard Brother Ronnie Reed speak from the pulpit, he would begin his address with, “I just LOOOOVE the Apostle Paul!” And from then on, I began to love Paul too. Or rather, I loved the way Brother Ronnie loved the Apostle Paul because it showed on his face and in his speaking. I am only now, all these years later, putting the enthusiasm Brother Reed had into context. I too have become enamored with the life of the Apostle Paul.

This all started recently with an idea I heard from a sermon by Brother Hawkins. He was expounding on the Gospel accounts of the rich young ruler, that young law-keeper who came to Jesus inquiring how he might inherit eternal life. He mentioned in passing that some, most notably Sister Mooneyhan, suggested years ago that this nameless character could well have been the Apostle Paul. Whoa! . . . . I was hooked. A supposed meeting between Jesus Christ and an anonymous, wealthy, future persecutor, future Apostle, and man entrusted with the teaching for an entire dispensation of divine grace.

What I did know about Saul was that he fit the description. He came from a wealthy family, was sent to school in Jerusalem to learn from the esteemed Gamaliel, became a Pharisee like his father, and in his own words in Galatians 1:14 he says, “And profited in the Jews religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.”

Of course, whether or not the rich young ruler was Saul or not can never be substantiated. At first, that made it feel like a guilty pleasure. Like a Hollywood script writer trying to make the story match the ending he had in mind. After all, it was not some deep mystery or hidden truth. Or was it? It had certainly intrigued me, but, I reminded myself, it had intrigued others also. Barely a month into my first semester at Grace & Glory Bible College, I found a starting point.

**‘Beholding Him, Loved Him’**

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the encounter Jesus had with the nameless rich young ruler. All three read much the same, but I discovered that one is quite dissimilar. Starting in Mark 10:17, there unfolds a rich narrative with added details. Mark describes the rich man coming to Jesus ‘running’ and that he also ‘kneeled’ before Him asking how he might ‘inherit eternal life’. It is a question for the ages, and I knew I was in the right Gospel. This scene had made quite an impression on Mark. Or had it Sister Margaret Clark gave a short lesson on Mark as we studied the book of Acts in our Thursday night Doctrine class. Mark was a boy around 12 years of age at the time when Jesus’ encounter with the young ruler took place. He was the cousin of Barnabas, and that infant Church at Jerusalem was meeting in his mother’s home, the same home to which Peter came, after being led from jail by an Angel. It was in this environment that he came to know Peter, and how he learned his Gospel narrative. Mark wrote, in fact, of the rich young ruler, using Peter’s eye witness account.

If you do not already know, Peter had somewhat of an attention hang-up. Handpicked by Jesus, and Divinely empowered, this impetuous fisherman was still hamstrung by his need for Christ’s affection, and he struggled right up to Pentecost. Much like Saul on the road to Damascus, Peter would have to look into his own blinding light. John 21 presents a record of how Christ quizzes him three times on Love, and then in verse 20, ‘ Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved. . . ’ How appropriate is it now that this story should include another apostle, and one who was quite familiar with how Christ looked lovingly upon someone else.

Returning to our scene, Jesus responds to the question on obtaining eternal life with, ‘thou knowest the commandments, do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.’ After the young man responds that he had kept those specific laws mentioned by Jesus, Mark would write in verse 21 a detail from Peter’s memory, “Then Jesus beholding him, loved him.”

Amazing! Jesus, however, needed to tell the young man about one commandment He left off the list, the same one that has stumbled His people ever since: Covetousness. But first, He would take a good long look. A look into that seemingly innocent and youthful exuberance that wanted more than anything to hear that his profitable good works would be enough. I believe Christ was beholding that chosen vessel, who in Acts 9:15, would 'bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.' Then Jesus, just before bringing his world to the ground, LOVED him, and said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." The rich young ruler Saul was starting to get his message, no differently than how Peter would get his. Jesus next compares Saul, the rich man, to a camel going through the eye of a needle. V. 24, 25 His astonished disciples ask, 'who then can be saved?' Christ's answer should be at the forefront of every believer's mind, for it does explain everything. Jesus answers us all, 'The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.' I have come to believe that our Saul of Tarsus, grouped in with the Pharisee's as they followed and confronted Jesus, managed to break away from his elders, and ran to catch up with The Master. The Gospel writers generally agree as to how he responded when he got his answer. Matthew and Luke say that he went away sorrowful. Mark writes that he was grieved. He must have had a revelation of Jesus as the Christ, for who grieves over that, in which they have not established faith? After an initial period of denial, the rich young ruler, Saul, entered into several stages of grief. The first one they say is anger.

### **The Road to Damascus**

Paul's persecution of the early Church was fierce and 'they that were 'scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word' (Acts 8:4) Seven years had passed since the Resurrection of Christ, and his denial and anger remained, only now, it was tempered with a bargaining mind. He would have to justify his actions, because we read in Acts 9:1 that he, 'yet breathing out threatenings' (do not bear false witness, Defraud not) and

‘slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,’ (do not kill), was now breaking those laws he had, ‘kept from his youth up’.

On his way to Damascus in Acts 9, his bargaining mind bolstered by papers from the high priest, he is struck down by a light from Heaven. I believe he knew immediately who it was, for Saul does say, “Who art thou Lord?” That alone could strongly suggest a prior meeting. But to me it is what Jesus said that sounds like they had met before. “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

Painful reminders are exactly what they were. The intended imagery is there: Saul, separated from his mother’s womb and, ‘called by God’s Grace,’ (Galatians 1:15) was prodded to forsake his elders, thus runs to ask a question of Jesus. He was pricked by ‘the one thing thou lackest’, and even sharper by the words and face of Stephen as he was being stoned to death. And now, on the road to Damascus, the finale, Saul would be struck to the ground and then divinely pulled through the proverbial eye of a needle, proving just what is possible with God, and not just for a rich man named Saul, but for every believer.

We are all, Requested, which is what Saul’s name means in Hebrew. He went on to preach the Gospel of Grace wherever he went named Paul, which means little, and isn’t that appropriate, because Paul’s life is our example and it shows just how little he had to become to fit through the eye of that needle, so he could, ‘come, take up the cross and follow me.’

And follow he did. Paul would take up that cross, and so many times in defense of his apostleship, he would refer back to that meeting on the dusty road to Damascus. One very telling statement in his writings, however, might suggest more than just that particular ‘appearing.’ The chief apostle to the Church would write two letters to the Corinthians, letters of correction, putting them in order explaining among other things how they had been ‘crucified with Christ’. He further expounds in II Cor. 5:16 “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”

Until, that is, we meet him face to face ourselves, and,' then shall I know, even as also I am known.' I Corinthians 13:12.

Well, I can attest to this much: I may have to wait until Glory to know the rich young ruler was Saul, but what started as an intriguing connection became something much more. The Word became more real to me, and I think I now have my own reasons to, LOOOOVE the Apostle Paul.

### THE HOPE OF AGES BORN

A Savior is born, we are told,  
In poverty's vale, lone and cold.  
The long-looked-for glory,  
Of centuries hoary,  
Has come Divine grace to unfold.

The shepherds with wonder are held;  
For hopelessness now is expelled.  
The promise of ages,  
The hope of the sages,  
Has come with a Peace unexcelled.

Oh, hear ye the angels now sing,  
Announcing the birth of the King  
The Son of the Highest,  
Has made us the nighest;  
And in our hearts joy-bells now ring.

My friend, if He comes to your heart,  
He'll save you and quench ev'ry dart.  
The Man of the ages,  
Your welfare engages,  
And from you, will never depart.

A. S. Copley.

# REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS

*... From the Editor*

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

Solomon was a very wealthy and wise man when he penned these words, and though he did in no wise adhere to all the counsel recorded throughout his writings in his own life, the wisdom of God he imparted remains absolute. The blessing of the LORD was given to the king in a great number of ways as he enjoyed abundant material wealth, along with prestige and honor amidst his peers, love and respect from his subjects, the love of the Lord, and the tremendous blessing of an idyllic relationship with the Shulamite which culminated in marriage. The blessing of the Lord goes far beyond monetary blessing but it most assuredly includes it. The words above have always been sound advice for us and the present day economy must not change them. The blessing of the LORD is exactly that: blessing directly from His Hand, and it is imperative that we allow Him to determine such blessing for us. His first intent is of course spiritual blessing and many have learned over the years that He will sacrifice material blessing to endow us with spiritual treasure. However, scripture is filled with accounts of God miraculously meeting needs in time of great hardship and chaos. He fed Elijah and the widow woman for “about a year” using only a handful of meal and a cruse of oil. He enriched four leprous men with the spoil of an entire army which had besieged Jerusalem and shut it up without any provision. II Kings 7. Gideon’s “fleece,” which only confirmed what Gideon already knew, loudly proclaimed the message that God’s blessing remained upon Israel, despite the fact that it was very dry all around them. The second time Gideon put out the fleece, it was dry though the moisture of the Lord was abundant everywhere else, showing what unbelief would do. Solomon declares that the blessing of the LORD maketh rich and addeth no

sorrow...”meaning that one need not contend with the guilt of ill gotten gain. We have known some in our day who have been greatly victimized by the greed of others, who have apparently gotten away with it. Such is in no wise the case, for God Himself will attend to such matters, but ours is not to worry about bringing reprisals upon them. We must realize that our blessing still comes from Him, and despite the greed of others, He will still take care of His Own. This day of economic chaos demands that we implicitly follow the advice that Solomon gives in this book, such as as Prov. 3:6 “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 11:24, 25 continues with this sound counsel. “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” There is no substitute for the daily trust which will bring God’s blessing upon us despite chaotic, and uncertain economic stress, and giving to the needs of others is a most intricate part of our own natural and spiritual well being. Paul chimes in with further lessons from the valuable account from his own experience. “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Phil. 4:11-13

The key here is that Paul learned all these things by the various experiences he encountered and that is exactly the pattern for us. We too can discover firsthand the faithfulness of the Lord and I have often been comforted with the fact that He has not dropped one of us yet!



## ANNOUNCEMENT

The book of Luke is now ready for distribution, and you may order as many as you like from Grace and Glory, P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030. You may also order online using the e-mail address [genehawkins60@msn.com](mailto:genehawkins60@msn.com). We are working very hard to restore many books missing from The Corn Crib, and will give notice as we complete them.

### THE POTTER

Ronnie Reed

“The word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, ‘Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause thee to hear My words.’ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.”  
Jeremiah 18:1

God told Jeremiah to go to the potter’s house, for I am going to minister to you. That is, He would teach him what we might call a supernatural word through a natural situation.

The potter’s house in that day was just a normal place of business in that day with nothing unusual about it. Were He talking to Jeremiah today, He could have just as easily have said “Go down to the mechanic’s shop;” or some other ordinary place. Jeremiah was accustomed to visiting places for the Lord and telling other people what God had to say, God did not send him to speak with the potter. Neither did He tell Jeremiah to go the potter’s house and talk to Me. He said rather, “You go the potter’s house, and I will talk to you.

Many people today speak of how that they were told to go tell you something, but God actually told Jeremiah to go the potter’s house and shut up, while I talk to you. Very few people tell you that God told them to shut up, but the God of Scripture

will tell you to shut up. He says “Hold your peace; be still and know that I am God.”

Jeremiah was about to observe a very normal situation. The potter first had to dig out some clay, pick it up, and clean it, for it might not have been ready to use right at that time. There may have had some little pebbles in it, or it may have had roots of grass and things. Maybe it had some bugs in it, you can never tell, but it needed to be cleaned. Despite that fact, God or the potter, still wanted such a piece clay.

Two things are before us in this portion of scripture. One is “forming.” The other is “filling.” The text here first deals totally with the forming, but we must realize, Saints, that this is going to be a vessel. The potter was going to make a vessel, and so filling was to be involved in that forming. No one makes a vessel without the intention of filling it, so the potter was going to form this vessel, for that purpose.

The real struggle in our lives, Saints, is not the filling. God will take care of that, if you can stand up to the forming. So often we look at our lives and we say “Well, I just don’t understand what’s going on in my life, Lord; I just can’t comprehend what You are doing.” The answer is that God is forming you, perhaps moving some things around in your life. Maybe He’s cleaning out some junk, but rest assured that He intends to fill you.

Two words are used in Genesis when God spoke of creating man. The first is the Hebrew word “bara,” used when God “created” man. The second says that God “formed” man, and you have to wonder “Well, God, what did You do? Did You create man, or did You form him?” What is the difference? It is only as we understand the tri-unity of man that we understand what God is saying there. First, He created man’s spirit, and used nothing in this earth to do it. However, when it says He formed man, He formed his body. He created his spirit, but He formed his body, and when God breathed that which He created into that which He formed, man became a living soul.

God formed the body of man because He wanted to fill it, for He is in the business, as we find throughout the Scriptures, forming and filling. He formed the earth, and filled it with

vegetation. He formed the sea, and filled it with fish. He formed the air, and filled it with birds. He formed the body of man, and then filled it with the spirit of man. He formed the Church, and then filled it with His Holy Spirit. Today we also can see that when God forms somebody, His intent is also to fill them. Some might ask, "Why is it so important to know that?" Because, when you are going through the forming, and it feels like everything in you is about to break, it helps to understand that God also has a filling process, and we can rest assured, Saints, He will fill that which He forms.

The potter, must of necessity, go into the field, dig out the clay, pick it up, and then clean it. We could almost stop with that thought. It is good to know sometimes that you have just been picked up, for when you have been really down in the mud, walked on and stepped on, with trials holding you down, you are glad to know that you have just been picked up. It makes no difference if you get to preach, or sing, or teach a Sunday School class or whether or not you hold any place of importance, it's just "Thank You, Lord, that You picked me up!"

The potter also had a lot of purging to do, for the clay is not just perfect to put on the wheel. It is still filled with impurities, which must be removed to begin a molding process. Romans 8:29 states: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." That word "conform" in the Amplified Bible is translated "molded;" The very word sounds uncomfortable, doesn't it? It sounds like squeezing and shaping, rather than fun? Sometimes we pray "Well, Lord, just take this thing away from me; fix this problem in my life. Move it, and remove it." God says "I can't do that for I'm using that problem to put your life together, to teach you to love some unlovely folks, to teach you patience, to get more anointing out of your life. I can't stop this, because I am using that storm to teach you to trust Me."

The next process is on the wheel. Some of you may say, "Brother Ronnie, I'm on the wheel right now!" You know you are on the wheel, everything is spinning. Sometimes things are spinning so fast that everything's a blur. Before you can straighten out this, here comes that, and before you can deal with that, here

comes something else in your life. We cry out “Lord, stop the spinning! But, saints, while you are in that spinning process, look under the table and see Whose Foot is on the wheel. We can rejoice because it is His. If the devil could have gotten his foot on the wheel, he would have spun you off years ago, but God is in control, and knows just how fast to spin you, and He knows what days not to spin you. He says “No, he has had all he can take; he’s about to the breaking point, so we’re going to let off on the wheel today

When we realize that God has His foot on the wheel, surely we can shout “Thank You, God that You control the times in my life. Thank You, that You are sovereign in my life, and that there’s no weapon formed against me that can prosper.”

When the Potter starts that spinning process, He is monitoring the situation on the wheel. He knows what you are going through and periodically, while you’re in that spinning process, He splashes a little water on the clay and touches it. Were it not for a touch from the Lord, sometimes we would have lost our minds. The touch from the potter holds things together. Just as that song says “He touched me.” The situation may not be straightened out, fixed or changed, but He touched you. Had it not been for that touch, we would have walked out of our house long ago, having given up and even quit the ministry.

Were it not for the potter’s occasional watering of the clay, it would have become too rigid to shape and change, and we will never be perfected if we are not willing to change. God does not follow one pattern 1, 2, 3, 4, and you are right out the door. He can do what He wants, when He wants, and for however long He wants. He need not follow a certain rigid form. God healed several blind men in the Bible, and each one of them He healed a different way. One He touched; another He spit on the ground and made some clay and put that in his eyes. Another He spit in his eyes; now how would you like that? Which one of them do you want to be, a touchite, clayite, spitite, or speakite? Do not be discouraged if God doesn’t help you the way YOU thought He was going to help you, for He truly does, have a lot of ways to bless us.

We notice in this text, “Then I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.” In one verse he calls it a “work”; in the next verse he calls it a “vessel.” It was indeed a work because it really wasn’t a vessel yet. God says many things about your life, that if anybody else said them, it would be a lie. He calls you “holy”, and “unblameable.” If anybody else said that, it would be a lie, but God, says some things about us on credit. That does not mean that He has great confidence in you, but He has great confidence in the Hands of the potter molding the clay. He knows He can take that junk on the wheel and make it become what He says is true. He may also have said some things over your life day, that have not come to pass yet, but due to the presence of His Hand, they will become reality.

The Potter also has a plan when He picks up the clay. He doesn’t say “Oh man, this is full of bugs, and little grass roots - that’s too much work; I’m not going to mess with that!” And then He throws it away. When a painter paints, he may not know all of the little details, but he does have something in mind. God knows the details in our lives and He is not intimidated by the stuff that He’s working with. If we were the ones working in each other’s lives we would probably say “you are too big a mess for me to deal with.” God is never at a loss with the stuff in our lives. Actually, there’s a battle going on, but the enemy is not fighting us over where we are. He is rather fighting us over where we shall be. If you are going through a great test in your life, which you, in no wise understand, and the enemy is fighting, rejoice, because you “shall be” something awesome. How awesome it is to know that we can become whatever God wants us to be?

We could almost stop here as we ponder the fact that The Potter picked us up, and already had a plan even before He began. He formed us, and controls even the spin in our lives. He has given us the power to become whatever He says we can become, but there is a problem. The vessel “was marred in the hand of the potter.” If the Scripture had said that the vessel had fallen out of the hands of the potter, it would be easy to understand how it got marred. We could say “Well, you’ve just got to stay in the church;

you've got to stay in His will, and if you'd just stay in His will then you wouldn't be going through what you're going through. Why did you fall out of the potter's hands?" But it doesn't say that the potter dropped the clay. We rather read that the vessel was marred while it was in the hands of the potter, so we understand that you can be in the Church and still have a problem. You can be, in His hands and be wounded, you can be His vessel and still have a struggle. One can have an injury, a memory or an incident or an accident, and yet, be still in His hands. And all of those things can cause a real shaking in our lives insofar as the security of our Christian experience is concerned. They do not shake our security in the Lord, but it shakes our thought pattern about our Christian experience. "What's going on? Is God working still in my life? Maybe I really messed it up this time;" and you probably did. But listen to the Holy Spirit, for we read "the vessel was marred in the hand of the potter. These words do not blame the Potter, they simply declare that the injury occurred while in His Hands. What can we get out of that? Do not criticize the craftsmanship of the Potter, because He is not the problem. It is rather in the clay with which He works.

This was supposed to be a vessel; maybe it was supposed to hold water, or perhaps precious ointment. We are not told, but who can use a vessel with a crack in it? It appears at first glance that the purpose of the potter has been destroyed by the weakness of the material chosen, and we know that Satan must giggle in those circumstances, because, the vessel is marred and whatever you put in it is going to leak out. Did you know that pastors all over this world throughout the church, the body of Christ, are preaching and ministering to leaky people? We are not speaking of their salvation leaking out, but the blessing of God in their lives - leaky people. "What are you talking about, Brother Ronnie?" Well, leaky people can be preached happy Sunday morning and not even bother to come back Sunday night. Leaky people can take up half of the service praising the Lord in tongues and fight with their spouse all of the way home. Leaky people go to once Church after another because nobody can preach good enough for them. What pain and despair it must be in a Christian's life to never

enjoy the fullness of the Lord. No wonder God says to bind up the brokenhearted, for He wants us to be a vessel that will hold the aroma of His anointing in our lives like the alabaster box. Not full today and empty tomorrow.

The vessel of clay was marred, and on exhibit for all to see. It has a crack in it. Justice would say “What are you holding on to that vessel for? Throw it away; it’s marred.” The law would say “Crush it under your foot.” Holiness would say “Look there’s a flaw in it.” Sanctity would say “It’s made a mistake.” But mercy proclaims, “Can I have a word? Let’s bring grace to the stand,” for were it not His mercy, we would have been thrown away long ago. Grace says “I know it’s marred, I know it has a crack in it, and it doesn’t look like it’s much good for anything else, but you can make it again another....”

I learned from a dear precious brother to whom I have listened, that when studying some difficult Scripture, you break it down into words and phrases. We read here that “he made it again another vessel.” “He made...” We must realize, that any help for us, must come from the Lord. The vessel can in no wise fix itself. Though broken, it needs to be made whole again, and “Lord, if You don’t fix it, it’s not going to get fixed,” for “He made...” He is the One Who must do it, and He is not intimidated by the cracks in my life. The mars, blemishes and flaws present no problem to Him, that are in my life. He recognizes only need, and so, “He made it.” “There it is, IT.” “I see it Lord, along with everybody else.” When you have such an obvious crack, it cannot be hidden. All the flaws and impurities of the clay are present and He made “it” again. “If You blessed me yesterday, Lord, will You do it again? If You raised me up out of my mess yesterday, You can do it again. If You loosed me from my bondages yesterday, You can do it again.” God can do it again in your life, and it makes no difference how you messed it up. Nor does it matter how the devil may come accusing you, even correctly, but God can do it again in your life.

“He made it again another,” which may present a problem for some who would say, “I thought it was it, but it’s another.” Only God can make “it” again “another,” meaning that I am the

same, but not the same. It is me, but it is not me, because “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

You might say at this point, “Well, Brother Ronnie, we’re through now.” And we are except for one thing: If we stop here, we have missed the whole purpose of the text, for as they say in Math, reduce it to the lowest common denominator. We may sum it up realizing that He put me on the wheel. He spins me, yet He controls the revolutions. He made it pliable by the splashing of the water by the Word upon me. He touched it to give it shape, always lifting it higher, for that is what The Potter does, splashing it higher and higher. It was marred while in the hands of the potter, and He never gave it up, nor threw it out. One thing throughout your life that always stays the same, regardless of whether things are going right or wrong or whether there is abundant blessing or lowest trial. It matters not if you are breaking, and you feel like dying, if you are weak, and your strength is gone, our text reminds us that the clay is still in His Capable Hands. It simply does not matter what you are going through, rest assured that He never lets you go for you are always still in His Hands.

## PAUL’S GOSPEL IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON

A. S. Mooneyhan

### LOVE’S PORTRAIT OF HER BELOVED (5:10 - 16)

5:10. “My Beloved is white and ruddy.” These two words describe Him in a twofold capacity. They speak of His Divinity and His Humanity. In Revelation One, we read: “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.” In the scene of the

transfiguration, His raiment is seen as “white and glistening” - Luke 9:29. These verses speak of His Deity. The first man was made of the earth, red earth, or virgin soil. Christ is the last Adam. He was the Word made flesh.

He is the “chiefest among ten thousand.” There is another description of Him in Colossians One. It says that He is “the firstborn (chief born) of every creature.” He is Standard-bearer. There is one like Him. In fact, there is only one real Man, and that is Christ. Adam was only a figure of Him. All Godly men are but figures of Christ. Christ is THE MAN.

5:11. “His head is as the most fine gold.” This reminds us of the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream. The image had a head of gold, and other metals made of the body. When Daniel gave the interpretation of this dream, he told Nebuchadnezzar, “Thou art this head of gold” 2:38. In a measure, that was a little hint also of Christ and the different ranks of the Church. Christ is the Head of His Body. Those different materials seem to represent different spheres that will be in the heavens. We read in Amos 9: - “It is He that buildeth His stories (rooms - stairs in the Septuagint; and chambers - R.V.) and hath founded His troop in the earth” When Satan is cast out, the saints will be in their various realms of authority in their respective places in heaven. But, Christ is the Head of gold. He is Chief of all.

“His locks are bushy, and black as a raven.” This speaks of His death on the Cross in our behalf. His bushy locks symbolize weakness - “He was crucified through weakness - II Corinthians 13:4. “Black as a raven” implies that He was made sin for us. 5:12. “His eyes are as the eyes of doves.” Doves’ eyes always speak of the Holy Spirit. In 1:15, the Shulamite was said to have doves’ eyes. Jesus Christ did not judge by the seeing of “His eyes, nor by the hearing of His ears; but He judged by the Holy Spirit.” That is why He could judge righteously. We learn to wait on the Lord and not make hasty judgments. “But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man” - I Corinthians 2:15. “The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” and He reveals the things of Christ unto us. - I Corinthians 2:10.

“By the rivers of waters.” This symbolizes the abundance of the anointing of the Spirit which Jesus received. “For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.” - John 4:34. “God, even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows” - Hebrews 1:9. Jesus said to the disciples concerning the Spirit which was not yet given: “He that believeth on Me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” - John 7:38-39. He did no miracles, nor preach a sermon until He was anointed with the Spirit. He was born of the Spirit, anointed with the Spirit, led by the Spirit and taught by the Spirit.

“Washed with milk.” Milk speaks of the Word of God, especially for babes. Everything that He learned and everything that He understood of spiritual things, came from the Word of God. Though Christ was in the form of God, yet He gave up that place and the wisdom, and knowledge that He had as God, he knew the end from the beginning, but when He took upon Himself the form of flesh, He was dependent upon His Father from His mother’s womb. All that He learned of God Himself was from the Word by the Holy Spirit. The Word of God was sufficient for Christ. We, too, can learn all that God wants us to know from the Word and by the Holy Spirit as He reveals that Word to us. His eyes are “fitly set.” We all have hindsight, our eyes in the back of our head, so to speak. But His eyes were in the front of His head: that is, they were fitly set.

5:13. “His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers.” The cheeks indicate a person’s character, whether he is courageous, fearful, or ashamed. The character of a person is actually stamped on his face. Christ has a sweet odor of a “bed of spices, as sweet flowers.” When He was on earth, only God could appreciate the sweet odor of His wonderful Person. When we smell flowers, we should think of Christ: evidently they were made for that very purpose -- to symbolize the sweetness of Christ and His people.

“His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.” That seems to speak of the words which came from His mouth. In Revelation ten, John was told to take the book out of the hand of the Angel, and eat it. It was in his mouth “sweet as honey,” but in his belly it was “bitter.” That is the way with the Words of the Lord. The Word of God is pure, and it is as sweet as honey in our mouth, but it is bitter when it begins to work in our lives. It brings trials and suffering. Nevertheless, we know that it is working good, so we gladly accept the sweet smelling myrrh, which speaks of bitterness and suffering.

5:14. “His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl.” The hand speaks of authority. In the Old Testament when God says, “My hand,” He actually is speaking of Christ to whom the Father has given authority.

“As gold rings set with the beryl.” The beryl was the eighth stone mentioned in the foundation of the Holy City - Revelation 21. Eight is the new creation number. So it was in resurrection, as Head of the new creation, Christ was given all power and authority in heaven and earth. As a Man, He has been appointed Head of all principalities and powers - I Peter 3:22. In Isaiah 9:6, it is prophesied of Him, “His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” For a thousand years He will reign as “The Mighty God.” He will exercise that Divine authority which is symbolized by this golden ring.

“His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.” His “belly” or His “body” was like ivory encrusted with precious gems. Solomon had made a throne of ivory for himself. Ivory signifies endurance. For a thousand years Christ will sit on a throne of ivory. This description refers to His glorified body. “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen” - I Timothy 6:16. The sapphire is a blue stone, and speaks of His heavenly character as a new creation -- the glorified Man.

5:15. “His legs are as pillars of marble.” Marble is a stone which is very durable. This also speaks of his eternal existence as

a Man. When God joined Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh” - Genesis 2:23-24. Christ, the last Adam, left His place in glory to be joined to humanity. In Ephesians 5:30-31, the same statement which Adam made is applied to Christ. Christ shall forever be joined to His people as one flesh - glorified flesh.

His legs are “set upon sockets of fine gold.” This means that Divinity is underneath His humanity. He was the holy Son of God before He became a Man. The Scripture says that he “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” - Hebrews 4:15. He was perfect God and perfect Man, otherwise He could not have been made son for us. All of His glorified humanity rests upon the fact that He was the eternal Word of God before He became a Man.

“His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.” Lebanon was a majestic snow-capped mountain in the northern part of Palestine. Nothing seems to portray the greatness and the majesty of God as do the lofty and awe-inspiring mountains. The countenance of this holy Man portrays the majesty and grandeur of God. The whiteness of the snow figures the purity and holiness and righteousness of His character. Cedars speak of the great ones of the earth. They symbolize strength and longevity. Christ is the greatest of all men. In strength and majesty He will be supreme forever.

5:16. “His mouth is most sweet.” This speaks of the tenderness and compassion of the Son of Man. And wasn’t He compassionate when He was on earth! He always spoke kindly to the poor and needy. The only time He spoke harshly was to the Pharisees and Sadducees, because they were hypocrites. I am sure that His eyes flashed fire when He spoke to them. He called them, “serpents, ye generation of vipers” - Matthew 23:33. One time He said, “Ye are of your father the devil” - John 8:55. But to the poor, needy and weak, He was always tender and compassionate. To us, whose heart He has won, He is most tender and loving.

“Yea, He is altogether lovely.” When the Shulamite began to speak of her Beloved, she completely forgot herself in describing His excellency. In 4:9, He had said to her, “Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.” In 6:5, He says, “Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.” She fixed both her eyes on Him, and that is how she could give such a wonderful and perfect picture of Him. This is love’s description of her Beloved. It is most precious and intimate. “This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend.”

### **“Christ in you, the Hope of Glory”** (6:1-13)

This chapter corresponds with the truth given in Colossians. It is in contrast with Ephesians which gives the provisional truth of our position in Christ. In that epistle, all the spiritual riches of Christ have been given to us -- the new creation. In Colossians the practical side is stressed, “which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” - 1:27. The word “Colosse” means “correction.” The Bridal saints accept the correction of the Word of God, by which they are brought to a perfect spiritual state and prepared to be a helpmeet for Christ.

6:1. “Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy Beloved turned aside? That we may seek Him with thee.” In 5:8, the Shulamite was not aware of the whereabouts of her Beloved, but sought contact with Him through the daughters of Jerusalem. In the present chapter, the same daughters were aroused to question her concerning his whereabouts, because of her perfectly wonderful and beautiful eulogy of Him. She knows now where He is. She has become completely engrossed in the wonders of His Person, as she testifies of Him to others. Never again is her fellowship with Him broken.

In Colossians 1:9-11, Paul prayed for the Colossian saints thus; “That ye might be filled with the (exact) knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with

all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” In this prayer, Paul asks that they might know, not only the full provision which God has made for us in Christ, but that they may have an experimental knowledge of God in a practical way. When this prayer is answered to the fullest extent, our state will have come to perfection. This is expressed in the words, “Unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” Consider the word “all” and the number of times it is used in the book of Colossians. It implies completeness, perfection, entirety. A perfect knowledge of His will induces the knowledge of His whereabouts and of His activities. This she expresses in verse two.

6:2. “My Beloved is gone down into His garden to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.” Wherever the saints of God meet together in the Name of the Lord, He is in the midst of them, feeding on their fellowship and worship. The saints themselves are likened to lilies - 2:1-2. The Bridal saints are likened to lilies among thorns.

6:3. “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine; He feedeth among the lilies.” This verse expresses complete surrender to Him. In 2:16 she had laid claim to Him, but here she surrenders all to Him. This makes their fellowship complete. He feeds on her love.

6:4. “Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem.” Tirzah and Jerusalem were royal cities in Canaan. Tirzah was a city of the ancient kings of Canaan, and Jerusalem was the capital of Judah, the place where the Lord chose to dwell in Israel. “Tirzah” means “my delight is in her.” This expresses the pleasure which the Lord has in His people when the throne of their heart is fully surrendered to Him. After Israel is restored to fellowship with the Lord, the name of the city of Jerusalem will be called, “The Lord is There” - Ezekiel 48:35. Jerusalem on earth will be a figure of the New Jerusalem which will be the eternal habitation of God. Christ dwells in His people now. He becomes the King of the throne in our hearts.

“Terrible as an army with banners.” Such saints “reign in life by one, Jesus Christ” - Romans 5:17. They are victorious over all the power of the enemy that is arrayed against them, for Christ

is their life. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” - Ephesians 6:13. “An army with banners” signifies a victorious army as they come marching home -- perhaps bedraggled, nevertheless, with banners waving.

(To Be Continued)

## THE VISIT

David Alberecht

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. . . . And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also” (I John 4:11& 21).

I became a Christian when I was just a young child. I felt the condemnation that unresolved sin brings into a person’s life, at an early age. I also felt the release from that guilt and condemnation that only the peace of God provides, when I knelt and prayed the sinner’s prayer. It was in the summer, during Vacation Bible School. I had heard the “Good News” that Jesus died for my sins, and since we were all sinners from birth, I needed to accept Him as my savior. That guilt seemed to build more each day, so by the end of the week I made a commitment to go forward. I was finally forgiven. What a relief! It was a very real experience that I remember well to this day. But in spite of my new birth and the big change inside of me, being just a kid, I continued on for years pursuing the idea that the world must surely revolve around me, evidence, that even though we are forgiven, we are still human. I lived for a long time hugely unaware of others needs, desires or concerns. I was pretty well self-absorbed and self-serving. . . Just looking out for number one. I was just plain SELFISH! And then one day something happened -- we had a visitor.

When I was around twenty years old, a visiting missionary came to our church. Myrtle Huff stood behind the pulpit that evening barely tall enough to be seen over top of the podium up there in the front of the church. I would guess she was well into her sixties and barely five feet tall. There was really nothing special about the woman in appearance. Her credentials, that caused me to pay any attention to her at all, were the years she had spent in Ghana, West Africa as a missionary. She had been there for years faithfully serving the Lord. She was ministering to people from a different continent, a different culture, and (some would say) a different race. I was impressed with that even though I didn't understand it. This visit and this visitor would prove to have a profound impact on me.

It's hard for me, even now, to describe exactly what happened to me on that visit. She began reporting on her work in Africa. Then she talked about the people. She really went on and on about the people; the people learned English, they were good with crafts, they knew how to do this and learned how to do that; they could sing in four-part harmony. . . On and on she went. Looking back, it was not so much what she said but the passion that she had for the work and the deep love God had given her for the people. I was honestly baffled by all of this, and as I began to ponder how God must have done something special in this woman He began to turn the light on for me. I can only say that, by the time she was done speaking, something had happened to me, which would cause a permanent change in my attitude. Something she had brought with her was left with me that night. She had captured me with her vision and inspired me with her passion. Call it an epiphany, a revelation, or whatever you like, God simply used this unlikely vessel to enlighten me on how He feels about people. I would never feel the same about people again. He touched the strings of my heart and began to play some new chords in my life. Although I understood the need to turn to God and to rely on Him as my Source. Prior to that visit, I had no idea what a resource God considered people to be to Him. I did not truly understand His love for mankind or His plan for them to serve Him by serving and loving each other.

I am reminded of something Jesus spoke about in regard to sheep (Matt 10:6). In fact, someone posed the question, “Who are the lost sheep of the house of Israel?” The question was asked to provoke some thought and could also foster some polarizing opinions for debate. However, if the truth be told, I seriously doubt that Jesus cares where the sheep are from. He might say, “Don’t worry about where the sheep are from...just be concerned that they are lost!” I don’t think that the Great Shepherd would care if they were from Jerusalem, Juneau, Jamaica or Northern Siberia. I do not think it matters to Him if they live in houses with black roofs, red roofs, yellow ones or green. Could it possibly matter to Him, if they bleat in English, Spanish, or fluent Hebrew? No. He only cares that they are lost. Somehow they need to find Him!

So who are these lost sheep of the house of Israel? In my mind there can only be one true answer. I think I know who they are. Even though their identity may have been concealed -- I think I have the answer. Others might disagree, but I am quite certain now exactly who they are. After spending a great deal of time comparing scripture with scripture I feel that their true identity has now been disclosed. The only possible answer could be...“the lost sheep of the house of Israel” are not sheep at all -- they are people, people just like you and I. No, God was not talking about sheep; He was talking about people and He desperately loves them. All of that to say: I had the wrong attitude toward people. I thought of them more as sheep (just so many creatures that happened to be on the same planet with me), not as spiritual beings for whom God sacrificed His only Son for whom He has an eternal purpose.

We have the unique distinction as human beings of being created in the image of God, after His likeness. I have come to understand over the years that we are more valuable to God than anything. Nothing is more important to Him. . . . No currency, no creature, no element or product are of more value to God in this universe than people -- nothing!

Since that one visit years ago, I have gradually stepped down from my throne of the universe and have tried to leave my selfish ways behind. Now, people are at the center of my life and

not me. In my opinion, God, Who is my Source, has made me merely a steward of all the resources with which He has supplied me. I need to be sharing everything I have with those around me. So in going forward, I want my focus to be on helping others. Whatever pathway of purpose or artery of influence God would lead me down, I want to be an ambassador for Him... To exemplify His kindness in some way every day, and to demonstrate His love to people. My prayer is this:

*Lord, may my hands always open to the poor,  
My arms reach out to embrace the broken in heart,  
And may my heart never cease to cry out with compassion for  
those who are lost.*

GOD, our greatest source -- PEOPLE, God's greatest resource!

Anonymous



## GOD'S PROMISES

As the deep blue of heaven brightens into stars,  
So God's great love shines forth in promises.  
Which, falling softly through our prison bars,  
Daze not our eyes, but with their sweet light bless.  
Ladders of light, God sets against the skies,  
Upon whose golden rungs we step by step arise.

-- Author Unknown