

Glorious Gospel Publication



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SHORTAGES AND CRISES



“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke. 14:28-33

‘Count the cost,’ Jesus advises. Check your resources, whether it is building a tower or in reference to the course of your life or your testimony that you have to finish. It is important that we consider our resources, and make sure that we are associated with a dependable supplier. The Apostle Paul said, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” - Phil. 4:19. God has a complete supply for us to finish whatever is in His will. The provision of God’s grace is unlimited. People make resolutions. Yet in all the resolutions they make, for the most part, they do not have the ‘wherewith’ to get ‘therewith.’ But praise God, the Lord has provided the ‘wherewith’ for us to get to that throne beside the Lamb of God.

Whatever we want to build into our lives, we should inspect the materials that we intend to use and consider their worth and

durability. We want to find material that will not rust nor corrupt. We want incombustible material - that which will stand the fire test. We have to check the quality as well as the quantity, or we will come up short.

In Elijah, we have an illustration of how God supplies in times of shortages. “And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord...And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook” - I Kings 17:2-6. It is wonderful the way God takes care of those who wholeheartedly walk by faith. Walking by faith is acting upon God’s Word. This is what Elijah did. As we walk by faith, the Lord may take us through steps of humiliation. This was so with Elijah, because God had given Israel certain dietary laws; and one was that they were not to eat of the raven which was classed as an unclean bird. Elijah had to go through this humiliating experience of being fed by a ‘dirty bird.’

“And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land” -1 Kings 17:7. God gave Elijah this brook for his refreshing, a place for him to be nourished. Now we read of another shortage. If you have gone on very far with the Lord, you have found that this happens to you. The thing that God gives us for our refreshment will dry up. He does not want us to get our eyes upon the gift. He wants our eyes upon Him. The brook dried up, this brings a crisis in Elijah’s experience. When we walk by faith, there will never be a shortage of crises.

The Lord takes care of the shortages. At the wedding feast in Cana, He turned the water into wine. At another time, He fed the hungry multitude with five loaves and two fishes. He made the blind to see, and the lame to walk, and the deaf to hear. He of whom it is said - "He hath done all things well" - will see us through every crisis. Glory to God! I thank God again for His faithfulness, even though the brook dries up. We then think of how mighty God is. He holds the sea in His hand. He, that measures water in His palm, can keep the brook from drying up. It would have been no problem to God to have kept that brook flowing; but God had a step further for Elijah to go. Elijah must have a deeper experience, another step in humiliation. It was not enough that he had to be fed by an unclean bird, he was sustained by a poor widow. This is yet another opportunity for Elijah to exercise his faith.

"And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went...And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die" - 1 Kings 17:8-12. The woman was going to fix a last meal for her son and herself. Elijah could have questioned - 'Is this living by faith? Should I have to prey upon this poor widow for nourishment?' This was humiliating for Elijah, but

another proof of God's faithfulness. How was she going to feed Elijah when she had just enough for herself and her son?

“And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.” 1 Kings 17:13-16. God has a way of making the handful last and last and last. Glory to God! He is able and faithful, and He wants us to be completely dependent upon Him. For God's own purpose, He will make it last. Elijah may have thought that he had a very meager existence, but God made sure that that which the woman had did not fail. She and her household ate many days.

We read further of Elijah and his faith, in I Kings nineteen. He boldly put God to the test when he poured water upon the altar and sacrificed, after the priests of Baal had made offerings. They could not get an answer from their god. Elijah proved before this great multitude that God was alive. Then he destroyed those false prophets. When Jezebel learned of the death of four hundred of her prophets, she became angry and vowed to kill the prophet Elijah. “And when he (Elijah) saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD,

take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers” -1 Kings 19:3,4.

Now, Elijah was in a place where God wanted him. He was not so forceful and strong in himself. He had been perfectly obedient in doing God’s will. As James writes, “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are” - James 5:17. He became discouraged. He seems to have lost his ‘go power.’ ‘I cannot go any further. I cannot take any more.’ He did not realize then, that he was being prepared for translation. Think of that!

“And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee” -1 Kings 19:5-7. This is what the Lord wants us to realize. We think, as we begin our journey, that we have enough gas to get there. But, as it was with Elijah, it may be with us. The journey is too great for us. We need to realize that our own resources are limited, then God must supply His own. Praise God, for His faithfulness!

“And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.” 1 Kings 19:8. He surely was strengthened to finish his course - to make the trip that God had planned for him. “forty” is the number of testing. Moses was forty years old when he attempted to deliver the Children of Israel out of bondage. God had forty more years to training for him on the backside of the desert. Jesus went into the

wilderness to be tempted of Satan forty days and nights. We read how, after Jesus arose from the grave, He walked upon the earth for forty days as proof that He had come forth triumphant from the grave. Elijah went forty days and nights on the strength of this one meal. He was provided with Divine ‘go power.’

In Matthew twenty-five, we have another illustration. This concerns a fuel shortage. It behooves us to be sure that we have enough of this kind of fuel needed for His soon return. His purposes are being fulfilled moment by moment, and it seems there is not much left to be fulfilled. We can be alert and ready for His coming. “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” - Matthew 25:1-13.

The virgins had lamps, a custom in the East at that time, and in some parts it still is, to have a wedding in this way, at night. The

bridegroom with his companions would lead the procession to the house of the bride, and bring her back to the place of the wedding. Thus, there was the need for the lamps and the oil. Jesus is using this to illustrate the importance of the lamps. Every believer has a lamp. The lamp is the Word of God illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “Ye are the light of the world” - Matthew 5:14. Paul tells us that we are luminaries “holding forth the Word of life” - Philippians 2:16. This parable illustrates a condition that will be true of believers at the time of the marriage feast when the Tribulation begins. Rough times will also begin. Those who do not have membership with the one world church will be outsiders, and it will cause great persecution. We see that the groundwork of this has already been laid. We can see how all religion is finally going to merge under one head. There are going to be some virgins around after the Lord has claimed His Bride. Those virgins are going to be offered the opportunity of going to the marriage supper. Some will be wise and some unwise. This virgin characteristic that will be evident means that there will be some who are not joined to the one world church, but belong only to the Lord. they have reused to be a part of the evil system. But we read of a sad condition - all these virgins “slumbered and slept” while the bridegroom tarried. He had claimed his bride, but she was waiting to be taken into the marriage supper. Here is a shortage of preparation - they took no oil in their lamps.

There is also a shortage of appreciation - “they all slumbered and slept.” In I Thessalonians five we read, “Let us not sleep, as do others” - we who are of the day and not of the night. They knew when the cry went out that the bridegroom was ready, and trimmed their lamps. Some had a testimony, but some had not taken the God-provided fuel oil that they needed. Each individual may have

the power of God manifested in his daily life, and his lamp will be shining only as he partakes of that oil. That oil, of course, is the Holy Spirit and He has been poured out on the church to drink; but it is up to each individual to partake. It is our birthright, as Children of God, to drink of the Spirit that the Lord has provided. We are dependent upon the Holy Spirit to get us ready for the Bridegroom.

We also read of virgins in the book of the Song of Solomon. There are also their companions and virgins without number. Just so, there are believers without number. There is going to be an innumerable company that will be taken to Heaven out of the Tribulation. The unwise virgins were shut out of the things of God, not out of salvation. They are not shut out of spiritual benefits altogether, but they are shut out of the greatest occasion of the ages. God's culminating purpose, in His dealings with man is the marriage of His Son and His Bride. They who have not taken of that God-given oil will not enter in with Him to that marriage feast. Praise God, for this happy rejoicing time and the joy we are going to have with the Lord there. What a festive occasion! There will be no fuel shortage there. There will be no shortages at all. Glory to God!

“The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace” - Psalm 45:13-15. Thank God, for the wise virgins. Thank God, for those who are going to be ready when Jesus comes to claim His Bride. This is our privilege as children of God.

The Lord has made full provision.

by J. D.

THE LAST DAYS

Anita Clark



“For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness is part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles become in.” Romans 11:25

We are living in “the times of the Gentiles.” This time began with Judah being carried away captive into Babylon, and continued with the realm of the Medes and Persians, the empire of Greece, and the horrendous kingdom of Rome. We are living very close to the time that God will put a halt to these Gentile Times and re-instate Israel as the lead nation of the whole world. (Note: Luke 21:24.) The “fulness of the Gentiles” is not the same thing as the “Times of the Gentiles.”

This verse in Romans 11:25 refers to the allotted time during this present Grace age, where God is dealing primarily with Gentiles. Thousands of Gentiles have received the Lord Jesus Christ and many more will receive Him. God knows the exact time, when He will say, “It is enough,” and the Grace Age (also called The Church Age) will come to an end. At that time God will begin again to deal with Israel, as His chosen nation. Many Scripture references, such as Ezekiel 37, speak of Israel’s restoration. Israel although “very dry” and completely “dead bones” will rise up and glorify God once again. This will take place at the end of the tribulation of seven years, when Christ will come back from heaven in power and great glory (Matthew 24:27&30). Revelation 1:7 says, “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him; they also which pierced Him; and all the kindreds of the earth will wail because of Him.”

We are living right at the close of this present age. Everyday the news is full of prophetic signs of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture teaches that He will come down to the lower heavens and call His Bride to come up to be with Him. (I Thess 4:13-18.) We believe that this time is very near. This coming will happen just before the tribulation, and will be a secret coming, “as a thief in the night” to those who are not ready and watching, but to us who are, it will be rapture. Signs appear in earth and air that make us to know that things are changing. We must keep our eyes open to see these signs that are proclaiming that the time is near.

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER SHUNNED IN U.S. – Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the U.S. and was shabbily treated by the U.S. leadership. Usually there is a photo made of visiting dignitaries, this time it didn’t happen. The U.S. is putting pressure on Israel to give up land to get the peace deal restarted again with the Palestinians. Ever since Israel announced recently that it will build 1,600 new housing units in East Jerusalem, the U.S. has been upset with Israel.

The UN Human Rights Council recently called on Israel to pay reparations to Palestinians in Gaza for damages inflicted during “Operation Cast Lead” in late 2008. Remember this was the action taken by Israel after the Palestinians had shot off more than 6,000 Hamas rockets into population centers of Israel, and after sanctions made by Israel against the Palestinians were ineffective. Somehow, it is expected that Israel should allow the rockets to continue to terrorize the Israeli settlements, but it is not acceptable for Israel to retaliate in order to stop them.

God’s Word declares, “I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 12:30). Woe to the nation that curses Israel.

World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder states in a letter to the U.S. president published in the Washington Post, “Our great

country and the tiny state of Israel have long shared the core values of freedom and democracy. It is a bond much treasured by the Jewish people. In the spirit I submit, most respectfully, that it is time to end our public feud with Israel and to confront the real challenges that we face together.”

COMING ISRAELI-EU CRISIS – Haaretz, a news paper in Israel, recently stated, “Israeli government sources say it is likely that after the current diplomatic crisis and pressure by the United States regarding the Palestinian issue, Israel will soon face an even more serious row with the European Union.” We know that the Scripture teaches that Israel will make a treaty (covenant) with the nations, no doubt for a guaranteed security for a period of seven years. (Dan. 9:27). It seems this will come about after Israel is put into a helpless, no win position by the nations of the world. Of course Satan is in back of these actions. He hates Israel, and is arrayed against her. But God will bring Israel out, after the tribulation of seven years, when those who are left of Israel will receive their Messiah as He comes in the clouds of glory. He will rescue them and punish those who stand against them. Zechariah 12: 9 says, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

Why are we concerned with what happens to Israel? The answer is that Israel is a sign to all the world. The Lord Jesus Christ will sit upon the throne of His father David, and rule from Jerusalem with a thousand year reign of peace.

REBUILDING OF THE HURVA – The Hurva Synagogue was built in the early 1700’s about 800 yards from the Temple Mount, but it was destroyed the first time in 1721. An ancient Jewish sage, Eliajah Zalman, prophesied that the synagogue would be destroyed and rebuilt twice, and that when the Hurva was rebuilt for the third time, construction on the Temple would begin. After it’s destruction in 1721, it lay in ruins for 140 years. It was named the “Hurva,” which means “the ruin.”

The Hurva was rebuilt in 1864, and was Jerusalem's main Ashkenazi synagogue until it was destroyed in 1948 by the armies of the Arab League during Israel's war of Independence. In 2000, Israeli officials granted permission to rebuild the Hurva and on March 15, 2010, it was officially rededicated. The Palestinians began a riot 2 days after the dedication, called, "a day of rage." They declare that Israel is guilty of "falsification of history and Jerusalem's religious monuments." They refuse to believe that Israel has any history in the land previous to their being allowed to come there in the later 1940's.

We know that prophecy declares that Israel will come to the place of wanting peace so badly and will be willing to sign the "covenant with hell and death." The Antichrist will fool them and will promise protection and peace. It is probable that he will help them build a temple, that is mentioned by Jesus Christ in Matt 24:15 and also by Apostle Paul in II Thess. 2:4, where Paul calls it "the temple of God."

Other events in the last week or so have drawn our attention to the eminent coming of Christ and the coming judgment.

ICELAND VOLCANO ERUPTION – With the original eruption happening on April 12, 2010, Eyjafjallajokull volcano sent ash clouds over Britain and then Europe. The eruptions started after a 3.5 earthquake hit the region. This has disrupted air travel, stranding people and halting 17,000 flights and closing airports in Britain and Europe. The total closure of British airspace is unprecedented. It has also halted flights from the U.S.

This will have a big economic impact on all of Europe and African states, that depend on the commerce between these nations affected. The effects of ash cloud and the airspace close-down has disrupted flights to deliver produce from Kenya, and Tulip bulbs from Holland. These items are rotting, while waiting to be transported. The damage to the infrastructure of Iceland is massive,

destroying highways and bridges and farm land. Jesus said, "...there shall be famines and pestilences (diseases) and earthquakes in divers places" (Matthew 24:7) With the world's economy struggling to recover from the worldwide recession, earthquakes and volcano eruptions cause further damage to the overloaded world systems. All these happenings are warnings from God. During the seven years of tribulation, there will be much more horrific disasters. People are blaming this volcanic eruption on "global warming," but we know that it is advance warning from God. Jesus said, "All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Vs. 8).

LOCUST SWARMS IN QUEENLAND, AUSTRALIA –

Swarms of locusts have infested a huge area of eastern Australia (about 190,000 square miles) roughly the size of Spain. There has been recent flooding in this region, which is believed to have caused the locusts to hatch out in such prolific numbers. The news media says, "The insects have wiped out thousands of acres of crops and were also damaging grazing area and gardens in the key agricultural area."

Because of heat hampering efforts to control the locusts, they are continuing to ravage the landscape, and because they are sure to multiply in coming months, there is expected to be a large infestation again in September and October.

This plague sounds Biblical in proportions. Many people doubt and make fun of Christians who warn others about the coming judgment of the tribulation, wherein plagues will be hundreds of times worse, but the Word of God is true and will come to pass. Peter says, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (II Peter 3:11). Press on beloved saints. Christ is coming at any moment.

A Pattern Proclamation

I Thessalonians - Chapter 3

Debra Isenbletter

Vs 2: “And sent Timothy, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith.” We see the first two of the seven facts concerning the Pattern Message: It **establishes** and it **comforts**. Timothy had a special place in his heart. He called him “my own son in the faith” (1 Tim 1:2) and “my dearly beloved son” (2 Tim 1:2). He gives a three-fold commendation concerning Timothy.

Timothy “our brother”: Paul begins with this universal relationship that Timothy had to Paul and to them. He calls him “our brother” and the word means “from the womb; persons united by common interest; or a common calling.” In a spiritual sense, Timothy was “from the same womb” as Paul and these saints because both were born of the Spirit (Jn 3:6) and both were born of God (1 Jn 5:1) and both were in Christ and a New Creation (2 Cor 5:17). The relationship cannot get any closer than that. Paul says “*our*” brother – their brother and Paul’s brother, all “*from the same womb*”, united by Blood – Christ’s Blood. They were all part of the same Body – Christ’s Body, they were all family. They were also “*united by a common interest*”. Timothy and Paul were interested in the growth of the saints. Timothy, Paul and the Thessalonians were interested in the Lord’s Coming. They also had “*a common calling*”. Both Timothy and Paul had a calling to serve and a calling to preach, and all had a calling to holiness to sanctification. This is

a reminder of our relationship, no matter what our ministry; all of God's people are bound together as brothers and sisters. The Lord binds us, the Spirit binds us, and the Word binds us.

Timothy a “minister (servant) of God”: Timothy was a “minister” or “servant”. There are two words for servant one is “doulos” which can be translated “bond-slave” and the other is “diakonos” which can be translated “a servant” or “a waiter (at tables or other duties)”, it can also be translated “deacon”. The word for “minister” here is “diakonos” and I like how Kenneth Wuest sums up the difference in the two words. He says “diakonos” views a servant in relation to his work and “doulos” views the servant in relation to his master. Timothy is a “minister” or “servant” in the truest sense of the word. In his relationship with Paul he was a servant “in relation to his work” (diakonos), in his relationship with Christ he was a servant “in relation to his master” (doulos). Remember how Paul on his first missionary journey took Mark with him but Mark left them early in their ministry (Acts 13:13). Paul refused to take him with him on his second missionary journey saying that he “departed from them” and “went not with them to the work” (Acts 15:37-38). We don't know the reasons why Mark left, but he failed in that calling as a servant and Paul found someone to take his place. He took Timothy with him and found him faithful. I was thinking about how important it is to be willing to serve, even in little things. Maybe Mark didn't like the little things or practical things he had to do or the dangerous things he had to face. Timothy was willing to do whatever Paul asked of him, the little things and later he would continue to serve in bigger things.

I truly believe we learn to be servants by serving and we have to have a yielded attitude to the work and our master. I was thinking of Sister Kathryn Devers who “ministered” to Brother Copley in practical things and later she “ministered” to her brother, Kenneth

Devers as he served the Lord. It wasn't until later that she began to minister in a more public way as she preached the Word. Stephen began to "minister" by waiting on tables (Acts 6:2-3) but he went on to "minister" in a more public way, with preaching and wonders and miracles (Acts 6:8).

When Timothy served Paul, he served the saints and the Lord. Paul says he was a "*minister of God*". He served not just because he was asked to but because he wanted to. Yes, he ran errands and went when Paul said go, and suffered hardships but none of that seemed to bother him, he was faithful as a "servant in relation to his work" and as a "servant in relation to his master".

Timothy "our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ": This is the third commendation and it is a more personal description of the "minister" or "servant". Here we see Timothy's association with Paul never changed, never wavered over the years, no matter how hard the service. Paul called Timothy "*our fellow laborer*" or "*a companion in labor*". Paul does not say this often, only a few bear this title and have served in this way. Philemon was called a "*fellow laborer*" (Philemon 1); Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas and Lucas are called "*fellow laborers*" (Philemon 24); and Titus was called a "*fellow helper*" (2 Cor 8:23). What is it that he labored in? It is "*in the gospel of Christ*", Timothy shared in the labors of the gospel. It is not just the labor seen but the goal of that labor: "the gospel of Christ". Here is seen the full identification of Timothy with Paul and the full focus of the ministry. He labored with Paul in preaching Jesus Christ, the Son of God (2 Cor 1:19). He labored side by side with Paul and others and is called a "workfellow" (Ro 16:21), and he labored "without fear" and "worketh the work of the Lord" (1 Cor 16:10). He labored in carrying out Paul's instructions, to find out the condition of the saints and return with news to comfort Paul

(Phil 2:19). The emphasis is not just on the labor but what they labored in and the emphasis is not just on the labor but who he labored with. Timothy was a “*companion*” in all the ways that counted, the labor is seen but also the companionship and the sharing. He labored with Paul not against him. It’s good to be reminded that though sometimes it looks like we are alone, we are not; there are always others who are preaching the same grace message.

to be continued

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Life and the Weaver

*Life is a woven fabric;
The pattern and web are wrought
By the dark threads and the golden
That into the loom are shot.*

*You cannot judge God’s purpose
By the thrust of a single thread,
What to you may be dark, mysterious,
May be gloriously bright instead.*

*For He holds in mind a pattern
As fair as His love is strong,
Which grows each day in the weaving;
Not a single thread goes wrong.*

*So trust in the weaver’s wisdom,
In His love and unfailing care,
And the fabric of life, completed,
Some day will be wondrous fair.*

—A. W. D.

Sign of the Infilling

Part 2 of 3 - by Vicki Dorshorn

The fact that salvation and the infilling are two distinctly different experiences is clear in Acts 8:14-17. Peter and John went down to Samaria to people who “had received the word of God.” These were saved by believing the word about Jesus. But they had not yet been filled with the Holy Spirit. So Peter and John “prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.” And, with the laying on of hands, these Samaritan believers “received the Holy Ghost.” In this account no mention is made about tongues. But something happened that was definitely noticeable; otherwise, Simon would not have been able to see that they had received anything, and, thus, he would not have offered money for that ability to transmit whatever it was he saw or heard (vs. 18-19). Of course, he was rebuked. But the important thing to see is that he observed something more than just people *feeling good* or getting a *happy glow* on their faces. Something remarkable happened—something out of the ordinary. And remember that on the day of Pentecost when God sent the Holy Spirit, the people at first thought the disciples were drunk—not because they saw a *happy glow*, but because they heard the disciples speak in different languages than they naturally had learned.

This same phenomenon happened in Cornelius’ household when the Holy Spirit was poured out to Gentile believers. (See Acts 10:34-48.) Verses 44-46 make plain that they spoke in tongues (languages they had not naturally learned). While Peter was speaking, “the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word,” and all the Jewish believers who had come with Peter were astonished because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on these Gentiles. And they knew the Holy Spirit was poured out on them because “they heard them speak with tongues and magnify

God.” There was no sound of wind or appearance of fire, but there was the sign of speaking in tongues. And this sign proved that these Gentiles were saved by faith in Jesus Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit. The fact that they lastly were baptized shows that baptism is not a pre-requisite of salvation or the infilling, nor is it necessary for salvation. We are not saved by getting baptized; we get baptized because we are saved, as a sign that we are saved. Similarly, we don’t get filled by independently speaking in tongues; we speak in tongues when we get filled, as the sign that we are filled.

Thus, here in Cornelius’ house, if a *happy glow* or evidence of *feeling good* would have been enough of a sign, then that is what would have been recorded, because God always makes plain his work. But the recorded sign was speaking in tongues. Sure, they magnified God; they obviously felt good and probably did have a glow on their faces—a Holy Spirit glow. However, if such a glow was all the sign necessary, God would have recorded it to be the evidence. But He does not record it; merely having a glow on one’s face is not even mentioned. It is important for us to understand why such things (having that *special glow* or simply *feeling good*) were not given as the sign of being filled and are not sufficient evidence today of being filled. Let’s consider the possibilities.

Can other things give us a sense of excitement, euphoria, or *feeling good*? Yes, we can be very happy (and have a *happy glow*) at many different times in our lives. Winning an athletic contest or other award that we have worked very hard for can give us a sense of joy and satisfaction. When we help someone in need, we can get a special feeling of joy. Being “in love” with the right person can make our faces glow and make us feel wonderful inside. There are even some tools that Satan may use against us (such as alcohol or drugs) to produce a false sense of *feeling good*, though there are harmful, destructive, and deadly consequences to such use of those substances.

But the point is that, whether from a good thing (accomplishment, doing well, or love) or a bad thing (falling into a trap of the enemy), a *happy glow* or a *good feeling* can be evident. These two “signs” can have many sources. Thus, IF they were the sign of being filled, there would be confusion: How would we know for sure that being filled with the Holy Spirit was the source of a *happy glow*? We need a sign that cannot be counterfeited and that has no other natural source, so that we have an absolute guarantee that we are filled, not simply experiencing something else. So, tongues is that sign, because speaking in a language we have not learned cannot be counterfeited or faked. Sure, people could pretend by making sounds, but it would be obvious that they were not speaking words in sentences; and those who were faking it would know that they were just making sounds, not truly speaking in a language as the Spirit gave utterance. I know of a lady who later admitted that she faked it at first so people would leave her alone about being filled. But when she was thirsty for the Holy Spirit, she sought the infilling and received the sign of tongues truly. And she recognized the difference. A person knows without a doubt when the Spirit uses his or her tongue, lips, and mouth to form the words and sentences that the Spirit wants to speak. God planned it this way for a reason.

Why can't the sign be visions or knowledge or healing or miracles? First of all, because those things were not mentioned as the sign on the day of Pentecost and throughout the book of Acts. Secondly, because those things come after we are filled and come to us from and through the Holy Spirit. They are gifts the Holy Spirit gives us for the profit of the church, the body of Christ, specifically in the local assemblies. (See 1 Corinthians 12.) On the other hand, tongues are the sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit that Jesus gives us, just as He promised in John 16:7, when He said, “I will send him [the Comforter, the Holy Spirit] unto you.” He said also that the Father would send the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name (John 14:26), so

we could say that the gift of the Holy Spirit is from the Father and from Jesus, and the sign of our receiving that gift is that we speak in another language, specifically one we have not naturally learned. *Our tongues, lips, and mouths speak words we don't understand or know how to form, and those words flow in sentences we don't naturally comprehend.* Why would God choose this for a sign?

The tongue, which is necessary for speech, is an unruly part of our bodies and is the hardest part of our bodies to control. James discusses the tongue in his letter, in chapter three, verses 2-11. He says that if a person can control his tongue, he can control his whole body. He likens the tongue to the helm that controls a ship. He says, “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasts great things”; it is “a fire, a world of iniquity,” and “defiles the whole body” (James 3:5-6). Certainly we know how this can be, if we have ever exploded and let our tongue say hurtful things to people we love, or if people we love have said hurtful things to us. That is what James means when he says, “the tongue can no man tame: it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison” (v. 8). Lying, also, is a misuse of the tongue and creates much trouble, as does gossiping and speaking ill of others. James says, “Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Does a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?” (vs. 10-11). This means, of course, that we should not use our mouth to speak kind words part of the time and hateful words the rest of the time. Our mouth should always speak kind words and be yielded to the Lord so that we always speak truth and truthfully. The tongue is used to symbolize the working of our mouth. Therefore, the hardest thing for us to control is our tongue. That is why God wants us to yield it to the Holy Spirit when we get filled—to produce a total submission to Christ.

to be continued

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 2:1-7

Chapters 2 and 3 contain the letters from our Lord to the seven churches. They are very important and teach us many personal lessons and we learn that there will be different rewards. Also the seven churches give us a view of the dispensation of the Church Age, from its beginning to the end. Of course when John wrote this book on the isle of Patmos this was prophecy of the future, but the vision view point is from the Lord's day, as though they were already past. We believe we are almost to the end of the Church Age. We are at least living in the last phase of it.

V. 1: *“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write;”* Each letter is addressed to the angel of that church. This word “*angel*” is ‘messenger’ in the original Greek text and refers to the pastor or ruling elder. The word pastor means ‘shepherd.’ The pastor is not only the ruling elder, but cares for and feeds the flock by giving forth God’s Word. He is the responsible head of the local assembly under Christ.

These churches actually existed and are named for the city in which they were located. Most of these cities began in the time of the Medo-Persia empire or in the Grecian Empire and finally came under the control of the Roman government. Some of these cities are only ruins today, but Philadelphia, Smyrna and Pergamos still exist though their names have been changed.

Ephesus the first church addressed has a double meaning, ‘full purpose’ and ‘city of the moon’ which tells us something of its character. The Apostle Paul had a Bible school in Ephesus for over

two years (Acts 19:10). The saints in that church were well founded in the truth. They had purposed in their hearts to take their place in the heavenlies where the church is provisionally seated - Eph. 2:4-7.

To each church, Christ as Judge appears in one of His official guises that we read of in Chapter 1:13-16. To Ephesus He comes as *“He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh **in the midst** of the seven golden candlesticks.*” Christ walks as Judge among His people and He has authority over the ministers.

In Acts 20:29 the Apostle Paul called the elders of Ephesus unto him. He warned them saying, after my departing grievous wolves shall come in not sparing the flock. If they had heeded these warnings, they never would have failed. Some did heed Paul’s words and held fast to the truth. For we read in each of these churches there were overcomers (they were not all defeated).

Vs. 2-3: Each letter also starts with the Lord saying, *“**I know thy works.**”* As Judge He sees and knows the works of everyone and whether they are standing for the truth. The Lord gives nine things in which the church at Ephesus is commended, but one thing is said against them.

V. 4: They had abandoned their first or preeminent love for Christ. The word “first” is the same word Jesus used when He said, *“**I am the first and the last**”* - oh. 1:11 (the chief One or Preeminent One). How do we nurture that love? By studying His Word and yielding to Him. That love grows and deepens, we come to love Him as our Bridegroom. Ephesus had left that first love. This is the first step to failing the Lord, not giving Him the first place in our lives. May we love Him above all.

V. 5: Three words stand out to me in this verse, “*remember*,” “*repent*” and “*do*.” *Remember* (be mindful) that you have fallen from your place in the heavenlies. This is not speaking of our standing in Christ for that is fixed by God and never changes. But our state can change. Their state had deteriorated, they began to mind earthly things. The result of *remembering* should be to *repent* and *do* the first works (the chief works **out of love for Him**). If they do not repent, He would remove their candlestick out of his place. A candlestick speaks of light. He would remove the overcomers (those who did love Jesus preeminently) from that place. There is ***separation*** as a result of judgment.

V. 6: He commends them again, “*thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes*.” Nicolaitanes means ‘prevail over people.’ It is clergy over laity, lording it over the people (not ruling in love). This is how the church began to go. The Lord says of the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, “*Which I also hate*.”

V. 7: Every letter ends with, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*.” We have a responsibility to listen to what He has to say. Let us hear with the ear of our heart.

A reward is promised to the overcomers of each church or the condition described there. The promised reward to the overcomes of Ephesus - “*I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*.” Satan destroyed the first paradise that man had in the beginning. But Christ has triumphed over that and by His death and resurrection has brought man into a relationship where man will be in God’s paradise and feed on Christ for ever (He is the tree of life).

We will consider the dispensational view of the Church Age and the difference in rewards at a later time.

to be continued

E. J. D.



Signs Are Everywhere

*The King is coming in glory,
To catch His bride away,
It may be in the morning,
It may be at midday;
At the even or mid-night;
The trump will sound so clear,
The dead in Christ, and we that live,
His voice shall hear.*

*Behold! He cometh, and leaping
And skipping o'er the hills;
Like the young roe, like the young hart,
My soul with rapture thrills;
Thru the window He's looking,
Thru the lattice-work is seen,
The winter's past, the rain is o'er,
The figs are green.*

*The King is coming, "Be ready,"
To meet Him on that day;
With your heart right, with your robes white,
And in this holy way;
Like the lightning that flashes
In the twinkling of an eye,
Our Lord shall come to claim His own,
He's drawing nigh.*