

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole counsel of God

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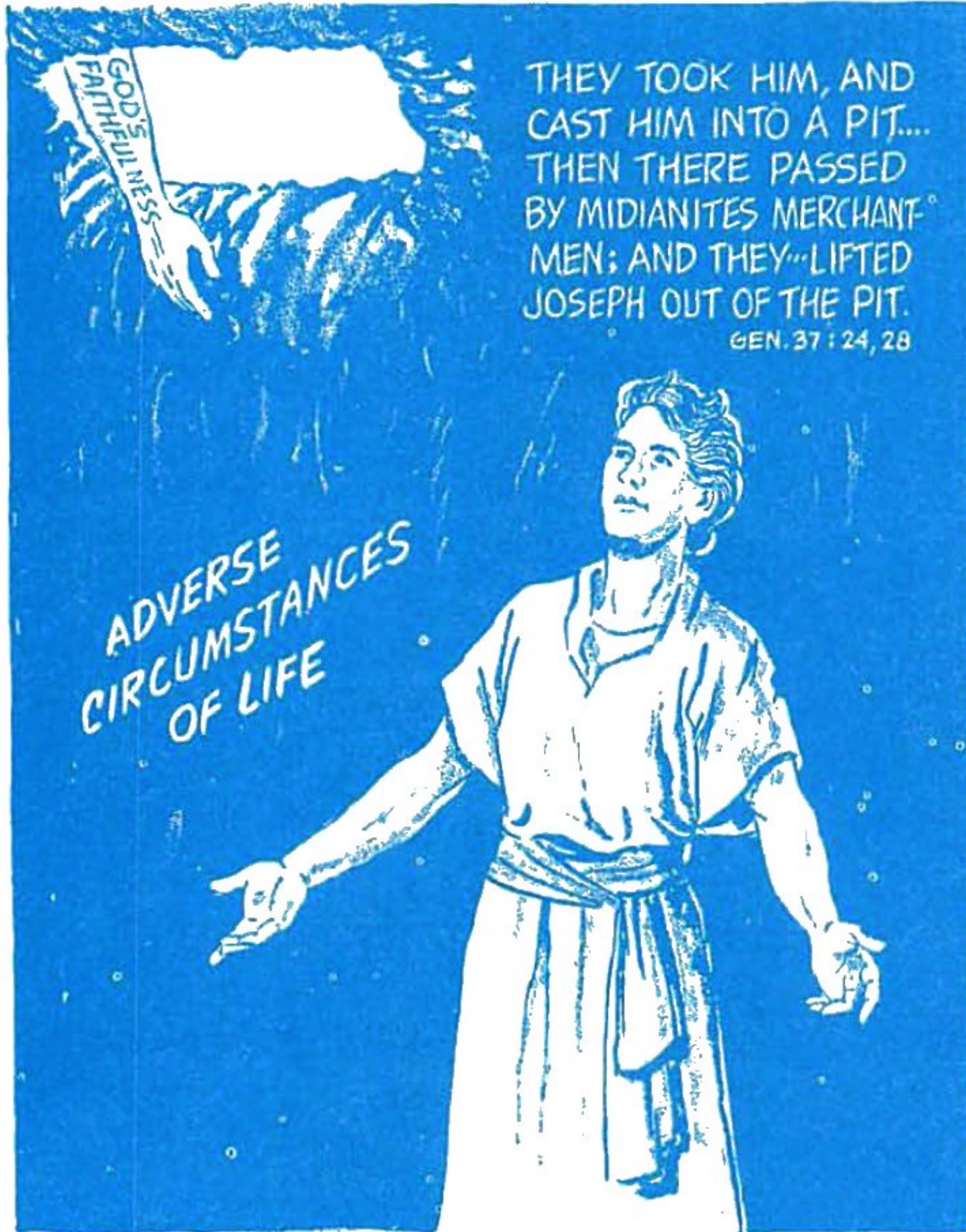
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THE UPWARD LOOK



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Editor: Gene Hawkins



Gene Hawkins

“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom **against** kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be **hated of all nations** for my name's sake.” Matt. 24:7-9

All the above “signs of the end times” are most assuredly manifest before our very eyes at this present time. Nations are indeed confronting one another, each desiring to achieve their own goal. “Famines, pestilences, earthquakes, etc., are also commonplace in our day, and designated as only “... the beginning of sorrows, meaning that much “sorrow” (birth pang) is yet to come. Today’s news continues to revolve around Israel, and rightfully so, for all God’s purposes regarding the nations depend on what happens to this chosen people. The aforementioned “sorrows” or “birth pangs” will eventually bring forth the birth this chosen nation of Israel as declared in Isaiah 66. “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” Isa. 66:8-13 Many have thought that this event happened in 1948 when some nations recognized Israel as a nation. However, that cannot be, for according to the remainder of these verses, these same nations are to “...suck, and

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be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” None of these things will take place between the nations and Israel until the Millennium AFTER Israel as a nation has accepted her Messiah. She is, at the present hour, still set aside. Paul said it well in Rom. 11. “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?” V. 12 Israel’s national rejection of Christ ushered in their “...fall...” and opened wide the door for the gospel to be spread among the Gentiles. Therefore, every Gentile is indebted to the Jew for his own salvation. Sadly, many today do not realize that fact and are in no wise giving thanks to Israel for this amazing benefit of redemption.

4 The difficulty following Israel in these last days is becoming more rampant by the hour. The conflict with Hamas shows no signs of diminishing, even though Israeli air strikes have surely caused great damage to their nuclear facilities. Hamas is no less than a terrorist state and they continue to be funded by Iran. They have also promised to release hostages in Gaza but have not honored that commitment. Contrariwise, despite all these things which are true of Hamas, much public opinion is directly leveled against Israel in this matter, such as reported from this account in the AP.

“More Americans say Israel has ‘gone too far’ in the Gaza conflict, according to new AP-NORC polling— At a moment of growing international alarm about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, more U.S. adults view Israel’s military action in the Palestinian territory as excessive than at the beginning of the war, according to a new poll.

About half of Americans say the military response from Israel in the Gaza Strip has “gone too far,”...That’s up from November 2023, when 40% said Israel’s military action had gone too far. That AP-NORC poll was conducted shortly after Hamas started the conflict by launching an Oct. 7, 2023, assault on Israel in which militants killed about 1,200 people and took 251 hostages. The shift in American attitudes about Israel’s actions comes as Israel begins an expanded ground offensive on Gaza City. Israel is facing increased international scrutiny over its conduct in Gaza, with a team of independent experts commissioned by the United Nations’ Human Rights Council this week announcing it has concluded that Israel is committing genocide. The European Union has also weighed in on this matter. EU lays out new tariffs and sanctions on Israel over war in Gaza BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union on Wednesday laid out

its toughest plan yet to pressure Israel to end the war in Gaza as Palestinians fled en masse from Israeli tanks, drones and troops pushing deeper into the coastal enclave ravaged by 23 months of war. Kaja Kallas, the EU's foreign policy chief, urged the 27 member nations to increase tariffs on some Israeli goods and impose sanctions on Israeli settlers, and two members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet — National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. She also proposed sanctioning 10 Hamas leaders. "We are proposing these measures not to punish Israel or Israel people, but to really try to pressure (the) Israeli government to change course and to end the human suffering in Gaza," Kallas said at a press conference in Brussels. "The war needs to end, the suffering must stop, and all hostages must be released." The sanctions would freeze any of the individuals' European assets and ban travel within the EU. The EU is Israel's largest trading partner, so the tariffs could have far-reaching effects on Israel's economy, which is already rattled by the cost of a long war. Roughly 32 million euros (\$37.5 million) in bilateral funds controlled by the European Commission would be immediately suspended. The commission also gives support to the Palestinian Authority.

Regardless of their so-called considerations for Israel, all these actions still reflect at least a great dislike for Israel and a push to legitimize and support the Palestinian Authority, which has not hidden their desire to completely destroy Israel and occupy their land. It must also be realized that none of these reports has given any regard whatsoever to Israel and her reasons for defending the land which God has given to her. Pres. Netanyahu insists that Israel must defend their own real estate which Hamas continues to try and take by force. Rest assured! God will in the end defend His Own. Jerusalem and the Nation of Israel belong to God, as was the promise to Solomon. "And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, **the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.**" I Kings 11:36 Therefore, anyone who arrays himself against Israel is in fact rebelling against God.

American News sources have also been obsessed of late with reports regarding Israel. The major focus in recent days has been the assassination of "Turning Point USA" leader, Charlie Kirk. This shooter cited various reasons for such an ungodly act, including Mr. Kirk's support for President Trump's "MAGA" policies along with his support for Israel. Charlie Kirk has met

previously with Pres. Netanyahu and was scheduled to meet again shortly. It must also be acknowledged that Pres. Trump's MAGA policies also include the "Abraham Accords," which are designed to bring Middle East Nations, including Israel to the peace table. There are many in this nation, including so-called college professors who have also voiced great hatred against Charlie Kirk due to his direct support for Israel and have actually applauded his assassination due to that fact.

Jesus reference to the fact that "...ye shall be hated OF all nations..." simply declares that there are certain national factions who harbor this hatred rather than the entire nation. This assessment is surely borne out by Jesus' evaluation of the nations in Matt. 25 wherein He separated the sheep from the goats. The goat nations are those which have not been supportive of Israel while sheep nations indicate those who "...gave them meat and drink and took them in..." Jesus concludes such a discourse declaring "...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25:40

6 The reward for these sheep nations is that they will continue to be a nation throughout the Millennium. Scripture is also very clear that it will be Israel who instructs them in God's Ways of righteousness during that Millennial Age. "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." Zec 8:23 This will happen AFTER Israel as a nation has accepted Christ as their Messiah, and have become the head and not the tail of the nations.

That time has not yet arrived, but it is so very important that we as individuals love this Chosen People and pray earnestly for them that they will accept Jesus as their Messiah. Israel will have not peace, contentment, or satisfaction until she does.

- * There is no dividing the saint from his Saviour.
- * All things need making new, for they are sadly battered and worn by sin.

DAVID THE ANOINTED

Paul N. Smith

“And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:”
Acts 13 :22,23.

David is a unique character in the Scriptures. No one person commands so much space for his history, except perhaps the Apostle Paul. There are several aspects to this man's life and ministry, and a study could be made of each phase. We could study David as the "anointed one," the "overcomer," the "warrior," the "king," and the "man." In this present article, we shall look at him as the anointed one.

Whatever we might think about David, we must always remember that he was the anointed of God. The private lives of God's people are not always the measuring lines of their attitude to God. We cannot judge the actions of these people by one set rigid rule, because many times their failures are recorded for examples to us at this time. God does not record all of His people's failures, but only those which picture some spiritual truth, or point out His workings of grace. We must keep in mind always in reading of David that he was a man after God's own heart, and that he did fulfill all of God's will for him. 7

God anointed David because of the attitude of his heart. And Samuel had to see as God saw. David was not chosen because of his personal beauty or physical ability. As Samuel watched the sons of Jesse pass by, he saw young men who had qualities to become a king, but in each case, the Lord said, “Not him.” The eldest son, Eliah, came first. Being the eldest and no doubt the strongest one; perhaps even reminiscent of Saul, Samuel thought surely this is the one, but God spoke to him the rule right at the first, which would determine which one was to be chosen. “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the

heart." 1 Sam. 16:7. Seven of Jesse's sons passed by, but the Lord did not put His approval on any. After enquiry, it was learned that the youngest one was out tending the sheep. So David was brought in, and he was found to be ruddy and have a beautiful countenance and have beautiful eyes, but this was not the reason God had chosen him. It was David's heart condition. He had been David's Companion on the hillside with the sheep. He had learned what kind of character David was, and there was something to David. The Lord had proved that David was the one who would consult Him and trust Him in every situation. David pleased God because he sought His will.

- When David was anointed to be king over Israel, he did not look like a king. He did not even seem to be a warrior. He was not old enough to go to battle like his brothers. Apparently all he could do was to tend sheep and play the harp and write songs. But God said, He did not look on men as others did, and so as God looked at David, He saw the finished product. He saw a mighty warrior, a good king, and a loyal servant of Jehovah.
- 8 Note David's credentials as told to King Saul, "Behold I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters (speech), and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." 1 Sam. 16 :18. This was said of David before he killed Goliath or had even won a battle for Israel. This testimony came from his experiences herding and tending sheep! He learned the principles of fighting, overcoming, trusting the Lord, and singing songs in the night, while with the "few sheep" of his father. God's training ground is not always the battlefield. Saints must be trained in little things before they can overcome greater things. If they do not prove themselves true to God in little ways, they can never do it with bigger things.

All of this is a wonderful type of the growth of the new creation. Samuel represents the new creation life. David, in following Samuel, would then speak of the new creation in development. He was the eighth son of Jesse. Eight is the new creation number. Note also that the new creation is never showy or boastful or proud. Saul represents the flesh trying to be spiritual.

At first he succeeded in looking like the spiritual man in his humility and otherwise pleasing ways, but when the real test came, he was unwilling to put the "good flesh" to death as pictured by Agag and the best of the flocks. He even ventured into the place of spiritual sacrifices and sought to go where only the spiritual priest can go. But David's weakness and littleness were real. He became humble and great by trusting the Lord.

The meaning of the names of the three oldest sons of Jesse are pertinent to our thought. These three had the same opportunity to have the place for which David was chosen, but evidently their hearts were not in the same condition as David's. Eliab meaning, "my father is God," represents a wonderful characteristic of a Christian. He has the knowledge of who is his Father. He knows that God is his Father, and that is a good beginning, but not enough. Next comes Abinadab, whose name means, "my father is a liberal giver." This is additional knowledge. Some saints know that all good gifts come from the Father --- salvation and other spiritual blessings; but this is not the requirement for reigning. The third son, Shammah, appears. His name means "hearing;" and this is a further step in a Christian's life. To hear the Word of God is wonderful; but that still not the only and first quality necessary for reigning. The other four sons' names are not given here, so evidently are not necessary to know. David's, name means a "beloved." Ah, there is the secret to all these other qualities. He was beloved of the Lord. How could the Lord love him in such a way if He did not know him intimately? God loves all His children, but some of them are beloved. This is love in experience. If a Christian loves the Lord with all his heart, all the other qualities of reigning will appear in due time.

Note another fact that at first the king to be is not named. He is only known as one of Jesse's sons. This is interesting because it brings forth the truth that now the new creation is not known as rulers. Those saints who are in training do not look like kings. Their time of reigning with Christ has not come; they are still in training. They are known only as members of the new creation. Their identity is still a part of the whole. But the true ruler will not be hidden forever. David gradually became the king of

Israel to the whole nation, but he was God's king while still on the hillside with the sheep. So, God sees the finished work of redemption, and more especially the special group who will reign with His Son on the throne for a thousand years. These saints are still learning to fight the bears and the lions and to trust the Lord with the sheep and their own lives. They are learning songs in the night and how to sing them. These songs are out of their experiences. David's songs were a source of blessing to Saul, but while David had learned thru actual contact with the Lord, Saul could only be soothed by the results that came to David.

This is true of Christians. Some learn first hand God's dealings with them, and they learn to sing instead of cry and mourn. Others only get the results of the victories of others-not the real victories. They are soothed by others' victories and songs. They go on with the Lord only if others are going on. They could never go on by themselves. This is the true test of one who will reign with Christ. He has his own experiences, and does not need the victories of others to take him on. This was David's experience.

10 We can easily see why God chose him!

David did not begin to reign on the throne as soon as he was anointed, but he was different. As soon as Samuel poured the horn of oil upon David. "...the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward."-V. 13. This set him apart from all others of that time. The Spirit of God was upon him and the Lord was with him. Similarly today, the ones who have caught the vision of Jesus and His throne are different. The Spirit of the Lord is upon them in a special way. They know that they are anointed for the throne and so they yield to the power of the Spirit that is upon them and in them. The anointing sets them apart. Those who are in training for the throne must go through many experiences that will equip them for reigning. David had plenty of training before he was acknowledged as king. He was in rejection for thirteen years before he took the throne over Judah. and it was not until seven and one half years later that he was acclaimed king over all Israel. Yet, he had been anointed 20 & 1/2 years before that. To be anointed is one act; to be crowned king is another.

Have you been anointed for the place of reigning with

Christ? Do you feel the heavenly pull? Have you experienced the power of the Spirit working in your inward parts, changing you from one glory to another? If this is so, you can be sure that you have been anointed. These are training days, and even as David, we cannot be expected to do everything perfectly, but we are learning to be perfect. We may fail, even as David, but we don't need to excuse ourselves and continue to fail. Our failures only point out how we need to be changed. But if, like David, we have a heart that desires God's will, we can be assured that we will come to the throne in due time. This is the beginning of a new year, calendar-wise, but it is a continuation for the anointed ones. Their "new year" will begin soon. The training of the last year is only an impetus to greater things. The only realities are the spiritual development in the new creation life. So, let us play our harps, write and sing our songs, trust the Lord for our victories over the flesh and the devil and before we know it, we may be reigning with Christ on His throne in the heavens!

(Reprint 1961)

11

Look Up

O, look not back at all the wasted years,
The fruitless hours, the failure and regrets.
Leave them with Him Who wipes the record clean
And lovingly forgives and then forgets.

Look not around; let not fears and doubts assail:
For storms and tempests rule upon life's sea,
So dark the night; so filled with sin and woe,
That vain's the hope of comfort there for thee.

Look not within; for wretched thou' shalt be.
There's naught in man wherein to put thy trust,
Tho' he perchance appears both great and wise,
He is a broken reed, creature of the dust.

Look up to Christ. He is the One to trust.
No one will fail who leans upon His breast.
He rules the sea; the wind is in His fist .
He'll comfort thee and give thee blessed rest.

Mary M. Bodie

The Shake Off Faith

Carl W. Romer

"And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand...And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm." Acts 28:3 and 5

No doubt Paul prayed. What did he say? Recently, at prayer meeting I was kneeling next to a brother with whom I have much fellowship. I heard him say: "Speak Lord." In the next moments it was evident he had communion with the Lord. He put his hand over my shoulder and said, "The Lord is coming soon brother Romer." But God has ways of speaking other than the way in which He spoke in this instance.

12 He has what seems to man very strange ways of speaking (Heb. 1 :2) else this printed message would never have been. In one of these strange ways, He opened my eyes to a greater vision of the above Scripture from Acts than I had ever seen. So easily could I have missed His voice. As I was mowing the lawn, a piece of grass or an insect hit my hand. By a simple reflexive action I shook my hand vigorously, The above Scripture flashed across my vision, and together with it the question --- What did Paul say to the Lord? The Scripture does not tell us, but Paul's own life as an example and his words in his epistles to the churches give us a clue to what he most likely said on all such occasions. Did he ask of the Lord his life and deliverance from physical harm? He may have done so, but if he did I am sure he asked for something much greater also. If he asked for his life and deliverance from physical harm, I am sure that it was in the will of God. But which will of God is the good, the acceptable or the perfect? I mean the will of God --- there is only one. A person or a thing is in the will of God or out of the will of God. There is no in-between ground! The will of God is good, it is acceptable to the spiritual man, and it is perfect.

Likewise, when I asked the elders of the Church to pray for my eye--- I wanted deliverance. I wanted to see well. I wanted visual comfort. Yes, I was in the will of God. Christ purchased that on Calvary. I, therefore, wanted it and it pleased God that I should want it in Jesus' Name. It honored God that I should lay hold of that which His Son provided. But I might also have had a greater purpose as I believe the Apostle Paul had in the shaking

of the viper.

The Jews had a zeal for God the Scripture tells us but it was not according to knowledge. Likewise in this day people have a zeal toward God in their prayers but it is not according to knowledge, therefore sometimes it is in the will of God and sometimes not. I have so often thought of a certain saint who was in a tuberculosis sanatorium. She really had a heart for God but her knowledge of His grace was so minute. One evening she looked out the west window and beheld the glory of one of God's finest sunsets. She opened up a heart of appreciation and thanksgiving and prayed somewhat on this fashion: "Oh Lord if it be not asking too much of thy grace then grant me..." and she named some very small request. That was surely in the will of God; but oh, had she known that she was bid to come boldly before the throne of grace and admonished to ask largely that her joy might be full---what a different story it could have been. Had she only known that God wanted to bless her largely, and that it was His good pleasure to do so.

We can be in God's will in our prayers, but still lack within ourselves a greater reason or purpose which pleases God. Paul, on one occasion, asked prayer for himself. It shows forth that greater purpose which we too may have. In II Thess. 3:1&2 we read: "... pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and. that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. We must remember that to Paul was committed the dispensing of God's grace and this primarily through the preaching of the Gospel of grace. Of course, that was only part of his responsibility; for once in speaking of his "load" he said, "and besides this the care of all the churches." So it was very important that the Word be so spoken by the apostle and his co-workers through their afflicted bodies that the Lord and the Gospel would be glorified and the Gospel accomplish its purpose. So there we have it:-Paul's highest motive was that the Lord and His Gospel of grace be glorified in his body and life. Thus it is the will of God that we ask largely and come boldly, and it is His "good pleasure ... to give to us; simply that we may enjoy what His Son has purchased; but how much more is it the will of God to ask that **He and His Gospel may be glorified in our bodies and lives.**

13

This fact is backed up by prayers of the apostle and

by other incidents of his life. Let us notice his prayer for the Ephesians as recorded in Eph. 1:15-19. He prayed that spiritual things might be worked out in their lives-such as the "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling." This is only part of the list. Then again in Eph. 3:14-21 he mentions above other things: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." It is noteworthy that no mention is made of things for the natural man, even though as we shall see later Paul did give attention to these things. But what was Paul's purpose in his prayers for the Ephesians? Exactly the same as prayer he requested of the Thessalonians for himself. Eph. 1:12 reads, "That we should be to the praise of His glory." This is strengthened by Eph. 4: 12 where we learn that the purpose is "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," Paul practiced so much what he preached that in Phil. 2:17 he shouted, "Yea, and if I be offered (poured out as a drink offering) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."

14 Life was so rough for the apostle, and his God-given ministry so great that he had no desire to further stay on earth. In Phil. 1:20 and verses following we see Paul's purpose not only of prayer, but of life. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope . . . CHRIST SHALL BE MAGNIFIED IN MY BODY, whether it be by life or by death." "For me to live is Christ (gain for Him) and to die is gain (for me) ... what I shall choose I wot (know) not ... having a desire to depart and be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

Yes, here was a very spiritual assembly, and the Apostle Paul was aware that it was MORE needful for that assembly that Christ be magnified FURTHER in his body than it was for the apostle to go home. Paul's course was simply not yet finished.

But the Ephesian assembly needed him more so. Before Paul went to Jerusalem, he passed near Ephesus and sent for the elders of that Church to meet him. Yes, he sent for the very elect of the church. They loved him and wept that they would see his face no more-but oh how unstable and unsettled, for not one tear was shed when the Apostle Paul told them, that of their number grievous wolves would arise. That is continually happening in

assemblies today; so it is so needful that Christ be magnified in the bodies of men and women today. But the day came to the Apostle Paul when God Was ready to magnify His Son in some one else and Paul was let go home. That day will come to each of the saints today. Will each one have finished his course? Will his fight have been a good one? Will he have kept the faith? If not, Christ has not been sufficiently magnified.

Coming again to our text verse, we may well remember that Paul had as a result of ship wreck just landed on Melita. He was a prisoner. In the storm, the apostle went to the throne of grace. He got his answer. Paul said, "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve." He preached Christ. The Lord told Paul he must appear before Caesar. Paul said, "I believe God." Paul, being a prisoner, escaped death before ship wreck, because God's instructions were that all or none must live, and Paul was faithful to give that message. Paul then escaped death in ship wreck. Was now Satan to be allowed by this viper to cheat Paul out of preaching the Gospel to Caesar? Oh no! Paul knew that he had said, "I believe God,..." and he did. So he shook the viper off in faith, and so you see, I believe he prayed as on all other occasions, "Lord get glory to thyself through this thing which has happened to my body." Verse 2 of this chapter informs us that the people of Melita were barbarous. They were superstitious. They believed justice would follow a criminal. Here Paul escaped death in ship wreck and now the viper. Paul must die, they reasoned. He didn't! Marvelous --- this man must have a message for them. He did. They accepted it and God blessed by healing Publius' father, and many others on that island. So God cares for the welfare of the natural man in whom His Son is to be magnified. Can we, in desiring God's grace, desire the magnification of Christ and His Gospel of grace in our tabernacles? The tabernacles we now inhabit will be some day glorified and will be the mansions the Lord has prepared for us. Amen!

15

(Reprint 1961)

- * Darkness cannot put the Light out. It makes it shine the brighter.
- * Some one has said, "It is not the workman that we have hired with whom we love to talk, but the Workman whose work we are."

Freedom In Christ

"But now being made free from sin and become servants to God; ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.... For the law of the Spirit of life In Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."-Rom. 6:22 and 8:2.

Aside from several suggestive additions, we quote verbatim the following comments on Paul's freedom In Christ. Let us read it.

An earthly life of humble, holy, loving, happy obedience to God is the proper end of the gospel truly preached. (That is its end for this present life.) Let no man dream that God sets His saints free to sin, or to self-Will. He is holy, and could not do this: He is loving and would not do it. Yet, He does set them free, and He employs **"the gospel of His Son to do it."**

16 No one in all the Roman Empire had more liberty than the writer of the letter to the Romans. His conscience was freed from guilt, though "the chief of sinners" (that is, before he trusted Jesus.) He was free from sin in which he had been born. He was free from the law, which had been especially given by God to his nation. He was free in his apostleship to use all manner of good earthly things --- so free before his Lord that a special reward is to be given him for foregoing his freedom, as often he did --- I Cor. 9: 15, 18. And he was **"free from all men"** --- even from the apostles that followed our Lord on earth; so free from all men, that he could bring himself under bondage to all to win the more.

Whence This Freedom?

It is idle to ask for the secret of the wonderful life of Paul in the man himself. If he, in the Spirit, writes; **"By the grace of God I am what I am,"** why do you point to his education, at Tarsus or Gamaliel's feet? If he says: **"I am nothing,"** why do you call him "a great logician?" If he declares that **"the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God,...but we have the mind of Christ, ... and speak not the words which man's wisdom teacheth"** why not believe just that?

In both Moses and Paul, the two great revelators of the oracles of God --- one law, the other of grace. God outpoured utterly upon the world --- wisdom, self sufficiency and self confidence of each. Moses became the meekest of men and Paul less than the least of all saints. Moses ministered before God in outward things while God wrought before him: Paul ministered

in inward things while Christ wrought in him. Union with Christ in glory find, Christ indwelling by the Spirit-this was Paul's open secret.

And if this apostle declareth that **"THE GOSPEL is the power of God unto salvation"** why not find out just what this "Gospel" is for sinner and saint **and hearken** to It? for "faith cometh by hearing the Word of God. Rom. 10:17

We do not know whether the writer of the above words has chosen Paul's freedom to be his own or not, for men often speak and write quite beyond their own experience. But beloved, Paul taught doctrine and wrote his experience, not for our admiration but "for our admonition." God made him to know and enjoy Christ, not for himself alone, but that we may know and enjoy Him. He learned the way of victory for us. He was free that we might be free. He became "...all things to all men" that we too by the same indwelling Christ may become all things to all men that we may gain the more. We **"may be thus minded"** even as he. Let us gaze on the dear Son of God as revealed to Paul and unfolded to us by his pen, and be **"filled with all the fulness of God."** Let us take freely and abundantly all that our eye sees in Christ. Who ever heard of a fine dinner prepared simply to be eulogized for its display of meats, sweetmeats and wines and banquet utensils? Nay, it is prepared to be enjoyed by eating and drinking and making merry. Likewise our adorable Redeemer and Friend, Jesus Christ, has come to be known and loved and enjoyed forever. Oh, let us feed on Him by eating the Truth about Him and then we will gladly feed others with Him as **"the Living Bread."** 17

"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day!"

- * God had His people Israel in training and paid all their expenses. (Deut. 8) Likewise with those that trust His grace.
- * Alas! How many wait for health and warm weather to believe God and do His will, instead of turning things around. Believe and the health and warm weather will follow.

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Col 3:1

This text beautifully displays another example regarding the practicality of the gospel. The fact of the matter here is that all believers are “...risen with Christ. Paul insists that if that be so, then **prove it** by actively seeking “...those things which are above.

18 This message is not unique to the Colossians. The chief apostle to the Church also instructed the saints at Ephesus that “...God hath...blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Eph 1:3 He then proceeds to enumerate those blessings which are indeed “above” for they are said to be “...in heavenly places in Christ.” Paul then lists no less than 18 items beginning with being “...chosen in him....” V. 4 and ending with the “...redemption of the purchased possession...” (the body) V. 14 It would be profitable for all believers to “search out” those glorious spiritual blessings. One that is so very applicable to our lives today is found in V. 13-14 “In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel... in whom also **after that ye believed**, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. A great spiritual blessing is that these saints were filled with the Holy Ghost following the pattern set forth in Acts 2 “...after they had believed unto salvation.” Those who have been filled following this same pattern know what a great joy it produced in their lives at the time. However, Paul now informs us that such an experience is only a “foretaste” of that which is to come when this mortal body is glorified.

Paul also exhorted the Colossians to “...Set your affection (mind) on things above, not on things on the earth.” The Philippians were also given this same counsel as Paul admonished them to “...think on these things.” Those “things”

are also listed: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true,... honest.... just. ...pure, ...lovely,...of good report; if there be any virtue,... any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do:...” Phil. 4:8-9 These saints were especially privileged because they had seen all of them manifest in Paul’s life. Such must be the example set by every minister of the gospel today. His actions must be in total compliance and harmony with God’s Word.

Higher Ground

Born in this world, by the old Adam line,
Living for myself, for that I could shine.
No care for others, I did not see,
Only what really, mattered to me.

Trudging along, with no future bright,
Hopelessly struggling, to do what was right.
Depending upon myself, to get the job done,
At the expense of others, just to have fun.

But God in His mercy, reached out to me,
I was blind but now I see.
Only by His grace, can I go on,
That old Adam line is finally gone.

For Jesus has called me to that higher ground,
Putting my faith in Jesus alone, is certainly sound.
Looking for my redemption that drawth nigh,
To see my beautiful bridegroom in the sky.

In the midst of the throne room, I want to be.
Not a palm waver, others can see.
Ruling and reigning for a thousand years,
But now living by grace, before the Lord’s day appears.

Others say that the whole church will go,
But I know in my heart, that isn’t so.
To every man in his own order is the way it will be,
If they were filled with the Spirit how could they not see.

I now have a calling to be married to Jesus above,
To worship at His feet and to fall in love.
No more living for myself or worldly renown,
But ever looking for that higher ground.

Alvin Goodall

WHO ARE SONS OF GOD?

Albert Harding

"BEHOLD what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." I John 3:1.

20 There are many wonderful things in God's Word that very few people know. We will speak of one at present. Nearly all saved people are TRYING to be what God has already MADE them. They are TRYING to do what God has already DONE for them. When the Jews talked with Jesus on earth, they said, "We have one Father, even God." Jesus said to them, "If God WERE your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God." What did He mean? He was talking to Abraham's seed, whom God had chosen to be His earth-dwelling people. Why did He tell them that God was not their Father? Because being Abraham's seed in the natural did not make them God's children. In the natural, children partake of the nature of their fathers. So in the spiritual. Those Jews were "of the earth, earthy;" they were "born of the flesh." But "God is a Spirit;" therefore, God's children are spirits; that is, they have a spiritual nature, "partakers of His Divine Nature." Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." John 3. As it was with Jesus, God's children proceed forth and come from Him, by a supernatural birth.

The natural, earthly, fleshly human can NEVER become a child of God, no matter how hard he tries. All of man's good deeds, kindnesses, honesty, etc. will NEVER make him a child of God. Nicodemus was of the seed of Abraham. He lived a good, clean, moral, religious life; nevertheless, Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born AGAIN, born of water and of the Spirit." As to the flesh, ALL have inherited the sinful nature of our forefather Adam. And "ALL have sinned," which proves that "the children of the flesh are not the children of God." God cannot sin; neither can the children of a sinless God sin. "For whosoever (or that which) is born of God, doth not commit sin: for His seed remaineth in him, and he CANNOT sin (lit. it is impossible for him to sin) because he is born of God." I John 8:9 As it is

impossible for God to commit sin, so it is impossible for that Divine Nature which is begotten of Him to sin. This is positive and convincing proof that the flesh of a Christian is not a child of God. The fleshly body is simply the house in which the Divine Deposit spends its earthly pilgrimage. We have this heavenly treasure in earthen vessels. This explains I John 2:1. "If any man (any saved person) sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One."

When a sinner gets saved, he is "born again, born from above, born of God." Therefore, he is a child of God and God is his Father. He is not born of blood, a corruptible birth. It is not an earthly heritage. He is not born of the will of the flesh, a natural birth. "No flesh shall glory in the Lord's presence." Not of the will of man, a human birth. "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." God brings the repentant, believing sinner into His kingdom by His own power. That is to him the beginning of real life, more real and lasting than his natural life. The latter has an allotted span, a limit; but the life received from God has no limit. It is as endless as its Author. It is as eternal as the Father of it---EVERLASTING. It can never die-John 6 :51. **21**

By studying these facts closely and trusting the Holy Spirit to lead us into all the Truth, we will see clearly that the moment a person is saved, he has two natures. One is of the flesh, which is sinful, and was therefore subject to the dominion of sin and death before he was saved. The other nature is from God, sinless, pure and holy, and under the dominion of righteousness and divine life. The former, the old nature, is brought under the control of the Holy Spirit in the saved person, as he yields himself to the Lord. Rom. 6. These two natures are opposed to each other; "for the flesh lusteth against the spirit (the new spirit), and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye may not do the things that Ye would; but if ye be led of the Spirit," you will count the natural man dead (Rom. 6:11) and have the victory over it. "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Self-effort to obtain victory in this struggle will not make the flesh any better. It will only stir the sin, which is in the flesh,

into greater activity. Neither will self-effort build up, or make the INNER man grow. Hence, we call out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" From this struggle, there is a blessed release. "Thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Our old man, the natural self-life, was crucified with Christ when He died for us. When we agree with the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit takes up the fight and wins the victory for us in our bodies. Thus "we reign in this life through the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness (which is imputed and imparted to us in the new birth) through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 5:17 and 6:1-11

WELLS

Many wells are made by man,
But often they go dry.
The water is hard to lift
And it cannot satisfy.

Some are "broken cisterns,"
With water unfit to drink.
They fail when greatly needed,
Tho thirsty ones crowd the brink.

Some wells are just like fountains
Fed by a deep hidden spring.
They flow at all times and seasons
And real satisfaction bring.

O come to the LIVING WATERS,
That Jesus alone can give.
Drink deeply, and give to others
That they may eternally live.

Julia E. Martin

PHOEBE Woman's Official Place

A. S. Copley

"THE SCRIPTURE SAITH, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and the laborer is worthy of his hire"-1 Tim. 5: 18. An earnest brother has asked me to answer eight questions on woman's sphere in the Church. Seven of these are concerning Phoebe; therefore, we will use her biography as containing the solution to the brother's problems.

What is woman's official position in the New Testament Church if she is an official? The questioner remarks that scholars say, The New Testament ministry is masculine, and Paul says, "But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man." 1 Tim. 2:12 I trust this first query will be clearly and satisfactorily explained by considering the questions about Phoebe.

What was Phoebe's work which Paul advised the saints to "assist her in whatever business she hath need of you?" Rom. 16:2. First, the word "business" (pragmati, Gr.) does not mean material, or financial business alone; but any affair, or matter, or interest that might enlist her concern. The word business (chreias) in Acts 6:3 is a different word. Second, the word "servant" in this verse is "diakonon" (Gr.), that is, "deacon." It has the masculine ending only; but is used also in the feminine gender. This is unusual, agreeing with Paul's words "there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28 We shall see, therefore, that whatever is the sphere of a deacon. The word applies to women as well as to men.

The verb "diakoneo" means to serve, to wait on, to furnish, to supply. "Diakonia" means service, business, ministry, attendance upon a duty; office of a deacon. "Diakonos," the exact word used in the text we are studying, means a messenger, a deacon, a minister of the Church. Other Greek words are translated servant and minister in the New Testament; hence, by our common version, we cannot know when the word deacon is used, except in five instances where it is so expressed. Phil. 1:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8,10,12 and 13. The word "deacon," as a verb or noun, is translated servant, or minister about 36 times in the New Testament.

Generally it is supposed that a deacon is a man, not a woman; a man who serves in material things only. It has this latter use in Matt. 8:15; John 2:5,9; Lu, 8:3. But it is not limited to

material service by any means. In Acts 1:17 and 6:4 and 20 :24, it has a spiritual use only. This is what we wish the reader to see clearly, that the word “deacon” is used more often with reference to spiritual matters than to material affairs. It is surprising in how many connections the word deacon is employed. For example, it is used in reference to Jesus-”The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto (deaconed), but to minister (deacon) and give His life a ransom for many”-Matt. 20:28. “Jesus Christ was a minister (deacon) of the Circumcision.” Rom. 15:8 See also Gal. 2:17 It is used twice of Satan’s servants.” His ministers (deacons) are transformed as the ministers (deacons) of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” II Cor. 11:15 It is used twice of the angels. Angels came and ministered (deaconed) unto Him.” Matt. 4:11 “Are they not all ministering (deaconing) spirits, sent forth to minister (deacon) for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Heb. 1:14 It is used of the Holy Spirit. “How shall not the ministration (deaconship) of the Spirit be rather glorious?” II Cor. 3:8. Note verse 9 also. Observe its use concerning the prophets-”Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister (deaconed)” I Pet. 1:12. Study the frequent uses of the word with reference to Paul and the other apostles; for example, “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (deacons) by whom ye believed?” I Cor. 3:5. “Who also hath made us competent ministers (deacons) of Jesus Christ; ... in 8111 things approving ourselves as the ministers (deacons) of God.” II Cor. 3:6 and 6:4. Finally, note that the word deacon is used with reference to all the saints. “For the perfecting of the saints unto a work of ministering (deaconing) unto the building up of the body of Christ.” Eph. 4:12.

In all the aforementioned citations, the word deacon has a spiritual use. It is evident therefore that its chief and highest employment is spiritual, of which its material use was only a figure. Believing that we now have the answer, we again ask, What was Phoebe’s work? Was it material, or spiritual? Was her chief duty to mend men’s socks, as one fellow put it? Was that the way she served, or deaconed the Church? The phrase “whatsoever business” (affairs) implies that she rendered a variety of service. It is not at all reasonable to suppose that the Holy Spirit would make such prominent and important mention of Phoebe if she did nothing more than mend socks for “many and for Paul.” And can anyone honestly dodge the fact that she was an official?

The Assembly In Cenchrea

Let us study Phoebe and her career more closely. Cenchrea was a seaport town nine miles east from Corinth, where was one of the most noted assemblies under Paul's ministry. But for this commendation of this elect lady, we would not have known that there was a church in Cenchrea. Whether that Church had a bishop or elder as Phil. 1:1, is not stated. Certain it is, that it had a "deacon," and that deacon as a woman. Her name was Phoebe, which means "radiant, shining," a spiritual illuminary of a seaport, or "lighthouse" assembly. It is no small item that the Apostle commends this woman to the Church at Ephesus; for they were supposed to be the highest grade of saints. (The first twenty verses of Rom. 16, belong properly with the Ephesian letter). She was indeed an Ephesian saint in spirit and in truth. Furthermore, he calls her "our sister;" not simply a sister, but literally, "the sister of us," the sister of Paul and of all who were with him in Rome when he wrote the letter to the Ephesians.

For some reason, Phoebe was about to visit the Church in Ephesus, or was already there; and it was a joy to Paul to write in her behalf a word of commendation. We repeat that this lady must have been an important character, and her deaconship an important service, else the Holy Spirit would not have moved the Apostle to record this biography of her to be read for two thousand years. Study the two-fold exhortation in his recommendation; "Receive her in the Lord worthily of the holy ones and assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you." To receive her "in the Lord," was to receive her "as the Lord;" for bear in mind that she went to Ephesus as "a deacon," in full fellowship at Cenchrea. Though there may have been other deacons there, Phoebe received the chief commendation. This implies also that she was going to Ephesus on the Lord's business, rather than on any financial speculation trip. She was going to the Church, not to the city. Her spiritual deaconship was to be exercised in the Church in Ephesus, and that by Paul's direct authorization in the closing days of his ministry. Her mission to Ephesus was not to buy, or sell, or mend clothes, but "to wash the saint's feet" in the "laver of the Word," so that their work and walk might be "unto all pleasing, fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." Col. 1:10 Truly, hers was "the work of a deacon unto the building up of the body of Christ" -Eph. 4: 12.

Then consider the other entreaty; "assist her in

whatever affair.” Could the chief Apostle have admonished the chief (Ephesian) assembly to grant such unbounded aid to any but a chief woman? Could he dare to say, “Whatever matter,” if he did not have the utmost confidence in her wisdom, spirituality and competency as a minister of God?

“For she hath been a succourer of many and of myself also. Was Phoebe a “succourer,” materially or spiritually? The foregoing reflection suggests that it was spiritual, ministering God’s Word. Nevertheless, let us study the word “succor.” It is from the Greek word “prostates,” which means, “one who stands in front, a front-rank man, a protector, a front-rank protector, a chief, a ruler, a leader.” Hence, this elect lady was a front-rank protectress, a lady chief, or leader. In writing to Timothy (1 Tim. 3:1-12) about bishops and deacons, the Apostle uses this very word three times: but there it is translated “ruler” instead of “succourer.” A real bishop ruleth (succours) well his own house. If anyone knows not how to rule (succour) (or lead as a front-rank protector) his own house; how shall he take care of (or manage) the Church of God? See also verse 11. Do you mean to say that Phoebe ruled, or led Paul? By no means; but by ruling
26 well her spiritual house, she became a front-rank protectress of the Apostle’s spiritual interests.

These words of Paul indicate that the office of a deacon was no small office, and that it was closely associated with the Office of a bishop. Almost the identical qualifications are required for either. I Tim. 3 Adds to this, the fact noted before, that Jesus and the apostles filled this office, and we are overwhelmed with the magnitude of the place. And since Phoebe was called a “deacon,” it follows that her ministry was of no small weight. Neither was she a “novice” or a newly planted one; because Paul forbids such being made an officer.

A Problem To Solve

Here arises a difficulty. Our beloved brother Paul exhorts his son Timothy saying, “Let the women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” I Tim. 2:11,12. Apparently, we are up against it. Nevertheless, Phoebe was not silent. She did teach; not only women, but men also. She did exercise some authority, not simply by Paul’s consent nor because he could not get rid of her, but by his positive authorization. Men who like to do all the talking themselves and thereby compel

women to fold their God-given talents in a napkin, imagine that by the above words, they have all women by the throat. However, note how easily the Word loosens their iron grip.

In the first place, the word "silence" (esuchia, Gr.) is rendered "quiet" in verse two. In Luke 23 :56, the same word is translated "rested," and in Luke 14:4 and Acts 11:18, "peace;" and in Acts 21:4, "ceased." Therefore, the word "silence" here does not mean absolute cessation of speech, but cessation of anxiety, of carnal activity, of unwise or untimely activity, of officiousness, as in I Cor. 14:33." He is not the God of confusion, but of peace." The word "silence" here means to be at rest, to be gentle and yielding, and not officious. Again, note the phrase "usurp authority." That does not rob woman of all authority, or deprive her of holding some spiritual office. But she is forbidden to "usurp." I wonder if some men had not better take this home to themselves. Authority is here granted her scripturally, as truly and emphatically as if she were a man. And a man who "usurps authority" is in just as bad a case as if he were a woman. Indeed male usurpers are doing more harm today than the women; for a "legion" of fellows, because they speak in tongues, or have license from some sect and are glib talkers, assume authority which God never gave them, nor intended that they should have. On the other hand, some modest women have proved by their siritual prowess that they were authorized from lheaven to minister (deacon) the gospel to others.

27

Paul's words are plain. The kingdom apostles were the divinely ordained channels for the giving forth of kingdom truth. No woman was to arise and introduce some doctrine different from theirs; nor to assume rulership not endorsed by them. Neither should any man. The women as well as the men who went everywhere preaching the Word, were in full harmony with the apostles (Acts 8). Likewise, no woman nor man either, should teach in the Church any doctrine different from Paul's Gospel; for the whole range of Church truth was revealed sovereignly to Paul. Neither should any woman style herself an officer, nor an authority on doctrine. If God called her, it would become evident. "A man's gift (a woman's) maketh room for him." Such a woman, like Phoebe, would gladly move in full fellowship with Paul and his associates, indeed she would be regarded as one with them. Present day examples of "usurping authority" are the Fox Sisters, founders of Spiritism, and Mrs. Eddy of Christian Science (ill) fame.

Observe also a deeply spiritual truth here. Woman as subject to man is the most fitting symbol of the Church's relation to Jesus as her Head. John writes of the same officious "woman Jezebel," who poses as "a prophetess" and "teacher." Ritualistic Rome and apostatized Protestantism answer to Jezebel today. They assume, or usurp the authority in doctrine and practice which belongs to Christ alone. Hence, their adherents say repeatedly, "My Church does not teach that; my Church believes this; our Church does not stand for that." Such are the women whom Paul forbids "to teach or usurp authority over man." No true saintly woman will yield to that spirit in any assembly, but will let her "moderation or yieldedness be known to all," knowing that the Lord is at hand," looking on, to sustain and comfort the faithful witness and reprove the usurper. This is exactly what the Apostle teaches in following verses which he gives as the argument for the preceding instruction. "For Adam (figure of Christ) first was formed; then Eve (figure of the Bride of Christ): and Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, has become in transgression." Eve should have heeded the voice of God and turned to her husband when the tempter appeared. Likewise, the Church should always turn to Christ, accept Him as her Head and Teacher, and not usurp the teachership or headship, as apostatizing Christendom is doing. As far as we have any record, men only were appointed apostles and bishops, because the man represents Christ as the Head of the Church, which is represented by the woman. Christ Jesus is termed "the Apostle of our profession" (Heb. 3:1) and "the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." I Pet. 2:25

Now The Seven Questions

1. What is woman's official position in the New Testament Church if she is an official? Certainly according to the preceding facts, woman has official position in the Church. She is never called an apostle, or bishop, or shepherd. However she may have the office of "deacon."

2. Phoebe's work, in which the Ephesian saints were to assist her, was a spiritual ministry. She fed and taught the word of grace with such fervor and depth that she became a chief protector of Paul and others and of their message. She was a "deacon" indeed.

3. What is a corresponding service today? The service of a woman who knows Paul's message and believes it with all

the heart, who sees a need and is moved by the Spirit to give out the Word to saint and sinner, and seizes the opportunity. By the providences of God --- the unqualifiedness, or indifference, or shrinking of men, such a woman may be pushed to the front, as was Phoebe in Cenchrea. Note also that her usefulness is not limited to one place but she becomes "a succourer of many."

4. How did Phoebe become "a servant (deacon) of the Church at Cenchrea? By the Church's call? Or by divine appointment? This is no small query. The answer is nowhere stated explicitly. Jesus chose the twelve apostles. Paul 'became "an apostle by Jesus Christ and God the Father." (Gal. 1:1) After it was evident that Paul was "a prophet and teacher," divinely so appointed (Acts 9:15 and II Tim. 1:11), the Holy Spirit separated him for a specific work and sent him forth by means of four other workers in Antioch (Acts 13:1-4). Later on, he authorized Titus to "ordain (place down) elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). Timothy was anointed with the Spirit by the laying on of the hands of Paul and certain elders (I Tim. 4:14 and II Tim. 1:16) but nothing is recorded as to how or when either he, or Apollos, or any of Paul's co-workers were called or commissioned to their various offices and ministries. The inference is sufficient that the call was invariably from God. When the Spirit made the Church to recognize that call, a door of utterance was opened to them, which no man could close. The simplicity of the divine call and commission to spiritual ministries has been corrupted and the offices warped by organized, carnal authority, which is not real authority. Hence, unqualified and often unsaved men have been installed in the sacred place of ministering God's Word; while God's choice was shoved aside. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, again and again, has moved unexpected men and women to stand forth, amidst great opposition from Christendom, and publish the pure Gospel of divine grace. Of course Phoebe's call was from Jehovah. Her "gift made room for her, and brought her before great men," even Paul and others.

(To Be Concluded)

- * Oh, the wonderful security of the heaven-born and heaven-bound pilgrim.
- * The great of the kingdom have been those who loved God more than others did.

A.W. Tozer

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness Parts 1-2

Dr. Vicky Moots

In Ex. 24:12 we read that God called Moses to go up into the top of Mt Sinai. He was there for 40 days and 40 nights communing with God. Then in Ex. 25:2-7, God tells Moses to take up a special offering: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take up an offering. And this is the offering that ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim [acacia] wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil, and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate." This seems like a strange assortment of materials to be needed in the wilderness. But God had a special plan for them, which He revealed to Moses in v. 8: "And let them build me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among: them."

30 The children of Israel had just come out of bondage in Egypt, so where would they even get such materials to build a sanctuary? Well, God had already provided for them ahead of time on the same night that they left Egypt, as we read in Ex. 12:33, 35-36: "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, we be all dead men. .. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed [asked] of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent [gave] unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians. "

God continued on in Ex. 25:9 to instruct Moses that the sanctuary must be built a certain way, according to the blueprints that he was going to give him: "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" The Tabernacle and all of its vessels and furniture have a spiritual meaning for us. They were a spiritual picture, or type, of Christ Himself and also of us, which you will discover as we study this.

This sanctuary was to be God's first dwelling place among men. He desires to have fellowship and communion with us. The Tabernacle in the wilderness was not only a dwelling place for God, but it was also a tent of meeting where man could approach a holy God through blood of a sacrifice.

The Tabernacle building itself was like a tent. It was a sturdy framework covered with animal skins. John 1:14 declares, regarding Jesus, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." The word "dwell" means "tabernacled." Jesus took upon Himself an earthly body, covered with skin just like the Tabernacle.

Paul also referred to our fleshly body as a tabernacle in II Cor. 5:1. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

A body, an earthly tabernacle, was prepared for Jesus so that God could dwell among men, and now He is preparing us, His body, the Church to be His temple, as we find in Eph. 2:21-22. "In whom [Jesus] all the building fitly framed together growth in an holy temple in the Lord In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit"

Paul also alluded to this in II Cor. 6: 16, "...for ye are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Our individual bodies are also His temple, as we find in I Cor. 3: 16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" God's dwelling place on earth is no longer a building made with hands, for He now lives in us in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Now let us consider the general plan of the Tabernacle. All of the measurements are given in cubits. One cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet. It was a portable building, or tent, ten cubits high, ten cubits wide and thirty cubits long, which was divided by a veil into two rooms: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, (twenty cubits and ten cubits long, respectively) This was surrounded by a courtyard that was 100 cubits long and 50 cubits

wide, enclosed by a fence that was five cubits high with fine twined linen hangings. The only entrance was through a gate that was on the East side. If you will notice, all these numbers are divisible by five. The number five in scripture always speaks of grace. Even in the dispensation of the law, God's grace surrounded them and went with them throughout their journey in the wilderness. God's grace always accompanies us also in our times of testing. No matter how hard our own wilderness journey may seem, His grace is sufficient to carry us through.

Just inside the gate was the Altar of Burnt Offerings, or Brazen Altar. Between the Altar and the Tabernacle door was the Laver of Brass. Inside the first room in the Tabernacle, the Holy Place, was the Golden Candlestick, the Table of Shewbread and the Altar of Incense, or Golden Altar. The second room was the Holy of Holies, or most Holy Place, which contained the Ark of the Covenant with its Mercy Seat. We are going to study each item separately and its spiritual meaning as they refer to Christ and to us as Christians in our spiritual journey from the outside of the courtyard into the Holy of Holies within the veil.

32

The gate is described in Ex. 27:16: "And for the gate of the court shall be a hanging of twenty cubits of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework ... " The gate represents Christ, who declared in John 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." There is no other door, for we read in Acts 4:12, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The blue color indicates Christ's heavenly character, for He is God in the flesh; the purple speaks of royalty, Christ as king; and the scarlet refers to His sacrificial work of atonement, the blood of His cross. Fine twined linen speaks of Christ's righteousness, as opposed to our self righteousness which is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). All who enter through the gate must come in with an offering, a sacrifice. We cannot enter into God's presence apart from the sacrifice of Calvary.

Now, let us turn our attention to the furniture of the Tabernacle and the Court and study them in the order in which we would encounter them as we travel from the Outer Court into the

Holy of Holies. The first article of furniture which is encountered inside the Court after entering through the gate is the Brazen Altar, or Altar of Burnt Offering. This is described in Exodus 27: 1-8. The word "altar" in v. 1 means "to slay or slaughter" or "a killing place." This altar represents the cross of Calvary where the Lamb of God was slain. This altar was the basis of all of the priestly ministry which took place in the Tabernacle, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (Heb. 9:22). Also, we read in Lev. 17:11 "... for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

The altar was constructed of shittim (acacia) wood. This wood is a hard, almost indestructible wood that grows in the Sinai Desert. It is symbolic of the humanity of Christ, who is called "a root out of dry ground" in Isa. 53:2.

The wooden altar was then covered inside and outside with brass. Brass in the Scripture speaks of judgment, as we see in the description of Christ as Judge in Rev. I:15: "And his feet, like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." Christ bore our judgment on the cross by becoming sin for us. Our sins were laid upon Him. **33**

The Altar measured five cubits by five cubits, four square, and was three cubits tall. Five is the biblical number for grace. By grace we are saved through faith. Horns were present on all four corners. Horns speak of power, but also of weakness. They were used to tie down the sacrifices. Christ overcame through weakness, through choosing to die. He laid down his life for us. The altar was three cubits high, representing resurrection. There was a brass grate in the middle of the altar on which the animals were laid, which made it 1 1/2 cubits high. This meant that it was the same height as the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies on which the blood was applied on the Day of Atonement. Christ bore our judgment for us because of His grace and mercy.

Leviticus 6.: 13 informs us that the fire on the altar never went out: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." The fire is a picture of the wrath of God against sin that fell on Christ on the cross. The sacrifice of the burnt offering was completely burned up, indicating that God's wrath

was satisfied, and the offering was accepted by God. Jesus death is an eternal sacrifice.

The offeror brought his sacrifice inside the court and laid his hands upon the head of the animal indicating that he was transferring his sins to the animal who was to be his substitute and die in his place. He then killed the animal while the priest caught the blood in a basin to be sprinkled upon the altar. The animal was then offered by the priest and burned on the altar. The smoke rose up to God as a sweet-smelling savor, just as the life of Christ on the cross, who was our substitute, was a sweet-smelling savor in God's nostrils.

(to be continued)



On A Bank Note

34

This piece of paper in your hand
Declares to you that on demand
Twenty shillings you shall receive
This simple promise you believe.
It sets you mind as much at rest
As if the silver you possessed.

So Christ Who died, now doth live,
Doth unto you this promise give.
That if you on Him believe
You shall Eternal Life receive.

Upon the verse you calmly rest,
Which is the surest and the best.
The Bank may break, Heaven never can;
"Tis safer trusting God than man."

Selected



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"Buy The Truth, and Sell It Not"

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Five Much Mores	Not Legislation, Revelation	Wheat and Tares
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