

# ***SPEAK TO HIM IN DREAMS***

**R. F. H. Pope**

This book is dedicated to  
Barbara Durden  
for her countless hours spent in  
reading, correcting and preparing  
the manuscript for the publisher.

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## FOREWORD

The publishing of this book came about in this manner. For many years I have received dreams that the Lord used to edify and encourage me in my Christian walk. Then during a period of prayer and intercession I felt moved by the Holy Spirit to place many of these revelations into manuscript form to prepare for writing a book.

Since it was contrary to my nature and will to do so the Lord was gracious to confirm and reaffirm His will and purpose to me. Through several dreams I was given His guidance in organizing the manuscript. In one dream I stood before a man who I recognized to have a prophetic ministry. As I related my instructions from the Lord concerning the book he quietly spoke to me in what I perceived to be an anointed word: "You are going to publish a book". I instantly understood that he knew and foresaw this as an established fact.

Thus I have done my upmost to comply with God's will and instruction to me in this matter. The sole purpose from my standpoint was to be obedient to my Lord.

R. F. H. POPE

## INTRODUCTION

In order for the reader to have a clearer understanding of the purpose and intent of this book, certain explanations and definitions of terms are needed. As the title SPEAK TO HIM IN DREAMS implies, God's communications with a man through dreams are the basis for these writings. Over a period of twenty-plus years I have received many dreams from the Lord as I slept. I hope my readers will find herein encouragement and enlightenment for their spiritual walk to which all true believers are called.

I wish to state from the beginning that I believe in the written Word of God as found in the Old and New Testaments. It is the foundation by which all spiritual matters are judged. II Timothy 3:16 states:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” (KJV).

The book will follow this general order. A dream will be shared and its interpretation as I understand it. I will then expound and share some thoughts and teachings on these revelations. We will enter into some practical understanding by way of encouragement, teaching, admonishment, warning, comforting, exhortation and any other means needed to cause us to look more closely at our spiritual walk.

Now I would like to explain what I mean by the terms “dream” and “vision.” When the word dream is used it is just that, no more, no less. These dreams and revelations were mostly received while I was asleep. When the term vision is used it is to be understood as a seeing into the spirit realm while awake. I want the reader to understand that dreams and visions are **NOT** to be understood as impressions, daydreams or mental reflections.

Today in this world of many voices from the spirit world, we as Christians must be able to discern and distinguish the sources that produce them. Many spiritual revelations, dreams, visions, voices and signs are not from God. For every true revelation there are many counterfeit and false revelations. All true supernatural or spiritual revelations will pass the test of the Bible's revealed written truths.

In these last days there is and will be an onslaught of the occult and demonic forces. The Christian is faced with two dangers in dealing with these facts. One is to be fearful of spiritual revelations, thereby rejecting them all. The other is to believe everything we receive and open ourselves to error. The first state reminds me of the expression declared by many, “I do not go to church for there are too many hypocrites there!” My friends, we work and live around many hypocrites, so why should some in the church bother us? Just because some have betrayed our trust or friendship is no reason to never make friends again, now is it? Let us not throw out a good steak because of the bones. Instead, learn to discern what is of God and reject that which is not.

Therefore, when it comes to dreams and visions and special revelations, let us not resist and become fearful. For, my friends, God still can and does use many methods to give us spiritual insight. In the Old and New Testaments of the Bible He often used dreams, visions, voices and angels to reveal His ways. A good portion of the Bible was written and revealed by these methods. If we read carefully the New Testament (especially the book of Revelation) we find an increase in such methods used by God and the enemy as well. If we deny these methods we will also have to deny all other methods God

uses to help us in our spiritual walk. Like preachers, teachers and the other ministries named in the epistles, God chooses the method and means to speak to us.

We do well not to box in the Holy Spirit with our limited thinking. We must let God be God and let Him use whatever means and ways He chooses to help us in our spiritual pilgrimage. Methods will vary but the source must be God. Let us not stay on milk but try meat for a change. Yet let us be cautious not to believe everything, but do as the apostle John commanded us in I John 4:1:

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

As a receiver of dreams I do not believe every dream, vision or revelation. Most of our dreams occur because we naturally spend much of our sleep dreaming. Many dreams come because our minds are agitated before retiring or we have eaten an assortment of strange and spicy foods. Let us remember all that comes through our minds is from three sources: Godly, demonic or human. We as Christians must learn to look behind the methods unto the sources. For example, some television and radio preachers may be of God, truly proclaiming His Word, while others may be wolves in sheep’s clothing using the Word for fame and gain. Some may even mix the two much to their own destruction and shame. If we would study our Bibles more carefully we would not be so easily taken in by such smooth talkers and deceivers. In all things let us sort out the true from the false, the nuggets from the ore, the gems from the rocks.

Finally, this book may be used as a devotional---a devotional, however, that may goad us more often than soothe us! Most of the dreams shared are in no particular order, and you will find different levels of understanding and thought. These dreams will be shared as God’s revelations to me, a method by which the Lord taught and added to my spiritual insight. May the reader consider that God still uses imperfect human vessels who often see only in part. At times some dreams will be placed together if they are very much alike. If so, as we would with scriptural verses, I will seek to come at them from different angles to make the best use of their applications. If the reader wishes to skip around from dream to dream, he will find it easy to do so in most cases. These cover many years of my life; some you may find as milk and some as meat.

May the Holy Spirit give you insight and understanding into all spiritual truth whether found in this book or the Bible or by any means He so desires to use. I hope you have, as I have, put your trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and for grace to serve Him as Lord of your life in this present age. In all of our weaknesses, faults and imperfections let us hold to this truth as found in Romans 5:8:

“But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

## #1 THE DREAM.....

I came to the Lord at the age of sixteen and was baptized with the Holy Spirit two years later. My first spiritual dream occurred soon thereafter and proved to be foundational with regard to the many dreams that would follow. The meaning of this dream was not clear to me for several years.

*In front of me stands the Lord Jesus, dressed in pure white from neck to feet, His clothing very bright in appearance. As He speaks to me I am aware His lips are moving but what He is saying I cannot hear. While still speaking this darkness is around Him, not in a negative or evil sense, just darkness.*

I soon find myself awake pondering this dream, but it was not until several years later when I was in prayer and Bible study that the Lord impressed me to turn to a portion of Scripture found in Numbers 12:6-8 with special attention to these words:

“...I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream” (KJV).

As I read, the Spirit impressed me with the words “speaking in dreams” and “dark speeches” (verse 8). He began to show me that He would reveal some matters to me through dreams. Then I clearly understood that first dream and its symbolism. The Lord was speaking and speaking in dark speeches or dark sayings. A dark speech or saying is a puzzle, conundrum, maxim, hard question, proverb or riddle. I knew the Lord’s speaking to me and my inability to hear symbolized that He would speak to me in dreams of which some would have meanings not at first plain. Thus I saw Jesus speaking in dark sayings in this dream. It was not what He was saying that was the key to this dream, but that He would speak in dreams in dark sayings. Though Jesus on occasion did speak plainly in dreams to me, some of what He spoke took prayer and waiting on Him to get the interpretation.

As in old times God still uses symbols to reveal His plans and ways. Often we remember more clearly details seen in symbols, which are another form of language or communication. The written Word is filled with many symbols and indirect means of revelation. God uses signs, miracles and wonders when He chooses and when necessary. He will use these at times to confirm His words and promises to us. Now to seek signs for the wrong motive is considered a sin by our Lord. We must let God answer our prayers in His way and not attempt to dictate the method to Him. The unbelieving and rebellious soul will not find God granting signs or wonders. Look at this Scripture in Acts 10:40-41:

“Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God...”

Yes, even Christ taught in parables for this very reason: to conceal truth from people who were not open to spiritual matters but only curious and wanting mere knowledge of His teachings without any intention of following or obeying Him. Yet Jesus did explain to His disciples the hidden meanings behind His parables. God still hides truth from hearts who do not seek after Him with right attitudes or who seek with proud spirits. Jesus went so far as to tell His own disciples not to cast their pearls before swine. This applies today. Its meaning is very simple: swine symbolize those who are impure and have no desire for spiritual truth. These truths would be counted worthless by them. Yet when the swine---

the unclean---are convicted by God's Spirit, they may be open to these truths and so find the true bread from heaven and turn from their slop.

So you see, my friends, proud, demanding and rebellious people will never find much of a positive response from God. He does not seek to reveal Himself to such persons and, until they submit to His terms, God may appear dead to them. Yes, to many God appears dead. Though God is everywhere and sees all, many do not perceive Him. Consider this example: at any given moment we have many radio waves passing through our bodies, yet we hear none of them. Nevertheless, is it not true? We could hear if we had a radio receiver tuned to a proper frequency. Thus God may appear dead to many for they are not tuned into Him. They refuse to tune into His channel. Does it change God if we tune Him out? Most certainly not! God is ever alive, ever speaking through many channels. He speaks through nature, through the Bible, by His Spirit to our spirits, and by His servants, ministers, preachers and teachers. He can not be heard by the proud and wicked. Many Christians at times will not hear His voice because of sin in their lives or their lack of seeking after Him.

It is not that God desires to hide Himself from us, but He has stated certain principles by which He operates. We must conform to them; He will not conform to us. Why, I used to be amazed by the many professing Christians who say that they do not ever hear from God. Not surprising though, these same individuals can spend hours in front of their television sets, reading their papers or doing what pleases them, yet find no time to read God's Word or to seek Him. If we do not put God first, do not think that God will be so ready to share Himself and His concerns with us. God is more willing to reveal Himself than many believe but, again, it will be on His terms and not ours. Therefore, if we never hear from God, know it is not because He is not willing to speak. No, it's because we do not give Him lordship and first place in our everyday lives. To know a person we must spend time with that person. It is no different with God.

## #2 THE DREAM.....

The following dream came to me in the middle of a seven-day fast (drinking water only), as I shut myself away to pray and wait and seek the Lord's will for my life. I was especially seeking Him concerning my function in the body of Christ and His ministry for me therein. The apostle Paul states in I Corinthians that we are placed in the body as He wills. This dream has some symbolism in it which I will explain.

*I observe a person standing on a large balcony. As I approach, I see that this person is the Lord Jesus, dressed in glowing white and holding in His hand a banner or sign on which words are written. The Lord is looking down on a multitude of people who walk past Him below the balcony. He lowers the sign for them to read, but they continue to walk on, not interested in what He is showing them. On the banner are warnings, and the Lord's expression is one of deep concern and care as He tries to get their attention.*

*In that moment I feel a strong desire to move toward the Lord to offer myself for His service. I appear to fly toward Him and, as I approach, an awesome fear and reverence sweep over me. Jesus turns His head to look directly in my face, and His eyes search intently. My desire to serve Him and His searching of my heart seem to last some period of time. Then, He extends His hand to me and I receive the banner from it. I proceed on, looking back at Jesus once more and finding myself saying to Him, "The Holy Spirit bless You."*

*Soon I am flying over many waters in which are more multitudes of people. I have the word-banner and am giving it to the people. Suddenly I notice a large serpent-like creature in the waters and begin to warn many to avoid the beast. Some would listen, but those who would not are destroyed by the serpent. I fly on until I approach the shore of a large body of water on which I see a beautiful, stately woman. She is in battle with the serpent and, as she wrestles the creature, I fly to her aid. The banner which I am carrying causes the serpent's head to be broken at the neck.*

The understanding of this dream began the moment I awakened. I had asked the Lord about my place in the body of Christ, and He had informed me that one of my ministries would be to impart the word of warning to others. This charge I would always have to some degree and would also include admonishing, rebuking and exhorting. Later He would reveal more. My response in the dream, "The Holy Spirit bless You", was a form of thanksgiving and praise offered to Him. The Holy Spirit always blesses and magnifies Christ. In the dream the total feeling of not being worthy to approach Him, yet wanting to serve Him, reveals the necessity of the Lord's coming down to meet us at a level where we can interact. It is through Him we are appointed and graced (empowered and made able) to accomplish that which we could not do otherwise.

The large body of water symbolizes the masses of mankind. My flying to the Lord to offer my service and my flying over the waters speaks of my being the Lord's messenger to the people. Most are headed for everlasting separation from God for not heeding His offer of grace and kindness to them. Yet He still sends us forth to warn of the consequences of sin and the judgment that shall follow one day. We must proclaim the whole Gospel--the love and the judgment. We must warn that sin and the devil are paths to death, everlasting spiritual death. Yes, we must be faithful to all of God's Word, not just that which we find pleasant. God does so love the world that He did give His Son, yet those who reject Him will find themselves His permanent enemies in the end.

We must not be discouraged because many do not respond to our witness of the Gospel. The masses as a whole may not do so. Why, if the masses at times rejected even the Son of God's words,

should we be so surprised if they hear us not? He gave the most perfect witness, yet many did not receive. Ours is to proclaim the Word and learn to live that Word. Leave all else with God. In the dream the woman is a symbol of the church, stately and beautiful to God. She wars with the great enemy of God and man, Satan. My approaching with the word and its breaking the serpent's power or head is the symbol of God's Word being the power that defeats that foe.

Satan hates the true believer, for the true believer has the power to overcome him. Mankind as a whole is no threat to Satan's power, but the true spiritual church is a real threat to his kingdom. We are given great weapons and powers from our Lord to pull down and subdue Satan's kingdom here on earth. Why, the gates of hell can not prevail against the spiritual church that is submitted to the Lord and empowered by Him. I do not mean any denominational church, but the real church, the body of true believers that submits to the lordship of Jesus Christ and keeps His words. Yes, that church is promised power over the devil. We can break the power of that foe as stated we shall do---by Christ's power. Look at Matthew 16:18:

“...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”  
(KJV).

### #3 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am standing in the daylight when two persons approach me, dressed in the attire of men of biblical times. As they come near, one of them extends his hand and clasps mine. He speaks to me these words, "You will pioneer." I am aware these two persons are angelic beings.*

As I pondered this dream, I understood that the two angels symbolize witness. In the Scriptures God often confirms His truths through the witness of two or three. In later dreams in which I see angels, they are usually dressed in white. In this dream, however, I was made aware that the words they were speaking were more important, and that I was not to have carnal curiosity as to their appearance. Thus most of their faces were covered except for their mouths.

Now concerning angels, God often uses them throughout the Word for His various purposes. In the Bible we mainly find them performing three types of missions: delivering messages from God, encouraging or strengthening those in hard-pressed situations (liberating if necessary), and carrying out the judgments of God on nations and individuals. They appear only to perform their given functions and not to engage in casual and familiar conversations (as some falsely teach). Angels are higher beings than humans and perfectly carry out their appointed tasks as God instructs. Their spiritual counterparts are known as demons or devils.

Now the word "pioneer" means to open up a new way or to go ahead preparing the way for others in their endeavors. Pioneers are forerunners such as John the Baptist and the apostles years later. The Lord then revealed to me that I would pioneer in the receiving of many dreams which I would share with others. Because much of my ministry is in intercessory prayer, I believe God speaks frequently to me through dreams so that I can pray with clearer insight and direction.

Before the final age ends we are told that God will pour out His Spirit, and men shall dream dreams and see visions (read Joel 2:28-32). When God begins a new work or starts another phase of His plans He usually sends forerunners to prepare the people. Whether it be revival, restoration or judgment, He likes His people informed. In these last days He will begin to prepare His church for the events that will come upon this world. With the pouring out of His Spirit will come an abundance of fresh revelation to stir up believers and equip them for battle and victory. This ministry of intercession and prophetic insight is just one of many ministries He is raising up to build His kingdom now.

#### #4 THE DREAM.....

*I am sleeping yet am able to see myself lying on my bed looking about my room. I hear the shuffling of feet behind the head of my bed. Two spirits or demons are standing there, speaking to me repeatedly, "God is a liar and will not give you what He has promised you." I am so annoyed at their blasphemy but seem helpless to stop their piercing chatter. Suddenly I hear footsteps on the staircase and see a bright light coming up the stairs. As the presence arrives at the top of the steps the demons begin to panic and run away. I see no form but have an awareness of an angelic presence that produces a deep sense of peace. I then awaken to find my room filled with a very pleasant tranquility.*

Demons will often tempt us to discouragement and unbelief. When we have resisted and withstood them with God's Word and promises they soon will be forced to flee. It also appears that we as believers have angels assigned to protect and help us in our earthly walk.

We must remember that whatever channel God uses to bless us, the devil can use to deceive or hinder us. It can be through dreams, visions, revelations, impressions, circumstances or through messages by preachers or teachers. It matters not the methods, the enemy will attempt to counterfeit them by adding to or subtracting from what we have received. Remember in the time of Christ's great testing by the devil, the adversary tried using the Word of God to cause our Lord to sin.

Why, my friends, even today our pulpits are filled with messengers inspired by the devil. When ministers spend more time proclaiming everything under the sun instead of teaching the Word and will of God they act as Satan's servants. I dare say most of our pulpits in America are infiltrated by wolves in sheep's clothing, men and women preaching anything but the true unadulterated Word of God. Many times the words proclaimed are not evil in themselves (like social action and such), but as ministers they are first and foremost called to serve the Lord and His kingdom and not their own interests or even the personal interests of the flock. A true minister of God speaks God's Word and does not compromise it for gain, fame or self-interest. Yes, I am forced to say Satan has his own in pulpits and on television to do his works. We must remember our spiritual enemy is a real person with a real army of earthly followers who do his bidding often with or without their knowledge. Let us not be shocked at this. Read II Corinthians 11:14-15:

"And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works."

Let us read God's Word often and seek Him to grace us in believing and obeying it. Otherwise, we will fall into the same deceptions as many have, being led astray by these cunning and deceitful wolves.

## #5 AN AUDIBLE WORD.....

After a time of fasting and intercession I awoke one morning to hear a voice speaking. It was audible to me, whether anyone else would have heard it I know not. At times God opens our ears to hear more clearly what He is saying. It was and is rare for God to speak to me in an audible voice outside of dreams. Sometimes we are seeking God for one thing, and He is desiring to tell us what is on His mind.

*That morning as I am lying in bed pondering several matters, these words are spoken to me, "Take up your cross and follow Me." Without thinking I answer the voice and say, "Lord! I know that!"*

We often think we know much more than we do. This command---to take up the cross---is a basic foundational truth of our faith. I proceeded to inform the Lord that I had read the Word for at least two hours a day for the last several years and was well acquainted with that elementary statement. Little do we realize that we still often know only in part and sometimes at much lower levels than we think. He was soon to cause me to go deeper into that cross-life, and then I would understand what death and dying to self really meant.

Now let me state here so there will be no misunderstanding as to what our cross is. Notice that Jesus said to take up your cross, not His. I used to think our crosses were problems or burdens which we had to carry because we were unable to be free of them. Let us be very clear, your cross or crosses are not just your burdens. You may think your cross is your mother-in-law, your infirmities or your sickness. They may enter in at times to try you, but your cross and my cross are really very simple. It is this: when your will crosses God's will then you have your cross! What a revelation that was to me. When my desires and plans conflict with what God's will and Word say then I have a choice: to die to my will and take up His, or to refuse His will and lay down my cross and do as I please.

Romans 8:28 is an often used but misunderstood Scripture given as a pacifier for our problems:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (KJV).

We do not dare claim and use that verse for ourselves if we are not following the revealed will of God. That Scripture does not apply if you and I live as we please and do not submit to the daily lordship of Christ. Notice it says “called according to his purpose”, not ours! So much in our lives will not work for our good nor will it advance our spiritual walk. We must confess and repent of known sins and trust in His grace to remove them; then He can and will cause all things to work for our good and for His purposes. Our cross may be anything that hinders our putting God and His will first in our lives. It could be even good things like family, job, everyday cares that in themselves are neither good nor evil. If we put these things before God's will, however, they become idols and evil!

Jesus had to take up His cross and so will we. Remember in the garden, when He was sorely tried by the prince of darkness, He asked God to find a way other than the cross if it were possible. The Father informed Him that there was no other way to redeem mankind, and Jesus replied with these great and noble words, “Nevertheless, Thy will be done.” We may have desires and opinions that are not wrong, but we must submit them to God. If they are in conflict with His revealed Word or will, then we too must say, “Nevertheless, Thy will be done.”

## #6 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I find myself hanging on a cross. I am dying and feel the blood and life leaving my body. I see in front of me a beautiful purple-red flower that is budding and opening up before my eyes.*

*Before I awake I hear these words gently whispered to me, "As you die to yourself, my life shall come forth."*

Pondering this dream, I became aware of how much of me was still alive and wanted to live its own way and be in control of my life. The degree of our spirituality is not measured in itself by our biblical knowledge, by how many Scriptures we can quote, or by how much we serve and work for the Lord. It is more readily gauged by how much we are dead to our own wills and how much of our lives are controlled by Christ. It is measured by His Spirit's control over us, and not by our natural and fleshly labors for Him. God demands our faith and yielding above all else. That's very important in this spiritual walk.

We will find, if we look around, a multitude of Christians who are well versed in Scripture and busy in all sort of works for the Lord, but who never seem to go deeper with God. Most of their service and worship is just the natural man trying to please God. Great knowledge of God's Word and great emotional experiences are no signs of spirituality. They are and should be mere channels for God to use when needed, but in themselves are no measure of spiritual growth.

It is better to know less and to submit, than to know much and not obey. Knowledge does puff up the human ego and that, my friends, is not good. Usually before God can trust us with more we must be humbled and brought low so it does not go to our heads. To those whom God may gift more in certain ministries, you can be sure that they have or will have been humbled and dealt with by the Lord. Why, the apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was given for that very reason.

My hanging on the cross speaks of our taking up our cross daily and following Him. We are not told to crucify ourselves! We can only yield by taking the cross to the place of death. The Lord Himself will crucify our flesh in a practical way.

The flower in the dream is of two colors---purple for suffering and red for our earthly human nature. Thus the budding blossom symbolizes life coming forth from suffering and dying to our fleshly nature. The seed of the flower must be buried and experience death in order to be changed. The cross-life for us is not the personality being destroyed. It is Christ taking over our lives by union with our spirits, our spirits being quickened and made alive toward God. The flower begins as a closed bud, then slowly opens. Though we are born again by the Holy Spirit, this work of change continues on throughout our earthly life. The flower opens because life is in it and because the sunlight gives it energy and growth. So it is with us as believers. The Holy Spirit living in us produces spiritual life, and Christ as our light changes us as we behold His presence and dwell in His glory.

In closing, let us remember this: we can only put on the new man in Christ to the degree we put off the old man who is not at peace with God. Often our yielding will determine the growth rate at which we proceed. Let us look at the cross-life not with death as its final end, but as a means to new spiritual life and growth.

## #7 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*As I sleep, a voice gently speaks to me, saying, "My people suffer from lack of prophesying."*

When we speak of "prophesying" we must define it somewhat. Many Christians do not understand what prophecy is. First of all, it is not fortune-telling which is of the demonic realm. It is not in itself preaching, exhorting or teaching, though these may at times include prophecy. In simple layman's terms it is speaking the word of God for the moment, or speaking God's word under direct inspiration by His Spirit. It may or may not include prediction.

The prophetic word is usually of a nature which encourages, prepares, warns or comforts others for some work or state of spirit that requires an extra measure of God's grace. The apostle Paul highly valued the gift of prophecy! He states in I Corinthians 14:1, 3:

"Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation."

We still need pastors, teachers and preachers. We also need apostles and prophets! Now present day apostles and prophets do not add new doctrines to the Word, but they are still part of the ministries needed to pioneer and speak forth God's will to our generation. Prophetic utterances are usually not learned words that are spoken as such. They are usually supernaturally revealed bits of knowledge given to help a certain person or church. Yet a teacher or preacher may give a prophetic word that convicts of sin and reveals the state of an individual's heart. Prophets may still receive their revelations by dreams, visions and angels as they did in biblical times. What is said and revealed, however, must be judged by the Word of God and the Spirit as well as by its delivery and timing. One does not prophesy at will as one might teach or preach. God gives revelation for prophecy as He wills, not as we will; they come at His timing and by His chosen methods.

The book of Jeremiah has much to say about true and false prophets. Jeremiah accused the false prophets of speaking out of their own spirits, and said they had seen nothing. We still have false prophets around today who speak lies in the name of the Lord. Some will say that we have no prophets or apostles today, that they are not needed. Well, if so, the same must acknowledge we do not need the gifts of teachers, preachers and evangelists for they are all grouped together. Some say that we have the written Word and need no more. The same deny the Spirit's moving today and have head knowledge only of God's Word with no spiritual walk and real fellowship with God.

Mind religion alone is not of God. The mind is a mere channel that can be used for good or evil. Many have the letter of the Word without the spirit of the Word. Jesus dealt with the same sort in His time. The written Word of God is our foundation for testing all spiritual things; however, it never was intended to take the place of God and His Spirit. What would you think if your husband or wife honored your written letters to them above you? You say how stupid! Yes! Yet many Christians do the same with God. Even the Bible can become an idol if we let it hold a greater part of us than God Himself. We must not be afraid of prophets and revelations; let us instead test all things and keep what is good and reject that which is not.

## #8 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*In my sleep this word is spoken to me, "You must determine in your heart to serve Me."*

The key word here is "determine"! It means to make up your mind or settle it. Yes, in following God we need a heart or spirit that is steadfast and determined for we will have many a trial that will test our determination. God will, when He finds it necessary, speak very plainly to us and we need no great revelation as to what He is saying. It is often falsely assumed that God will do all, and we can sit down and do nothing. Far from the truth. We are often given commands such as "put on", "put off", "seek" and "resist." Yes, there is the divine side of spiritual things and there is the required human response. We are also told to "repent", "trust", "submit", "obey", "pray" and "fear not." God will not do these things alone for us. He will grace us but we must unite with Him in these matters. It is our yielding to His Spirit that brings about spiritual fruit---not God without us, but God in and through us. It is not our mere human labor, but His laboring in us to do His will and accomplish His plans.

Let us determine, settle and fix our wills to submit to the Spirit of Christ. We must stand for Him and His will even when it means suffering and conflict. Let us put real steadfastness into our profession of faith and give it some substance. Our spirits, if born from above, are empowered to subdue our fleshly wills and desires and to obey God. Our minds and wills are neutral objects that can be channels of the Lord, of ourselves or of the devil. We determine such by our yielding. In temptation, we must remember that the tempting in itself is not evil, it is the yielding that is evil. Until we cross over into heaven above we will still have to contend with our lower nature which will rule if we do not by the spirit keep it in the grave. We here are referring to our practical duty.

Our lower nature wants one thing; our higher, born-again nature wants something else. We have the choice as to which one will rule. It is the will that makes the decision. You and I can say "no" to our own desires, emotions and bodily wants when they are in conflict with God's desires and commands. You and I make that choice, not God. We have the power to choose as we please. Temptations yielded to will produce downward spiritual decline. Temptations resisted and overcome will produce strong Christian character and upward spiritual progress.

## #9 THE VISION AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following vision came after a time of spiritual refreshing at a Christian retreat. It occurred as I traveled home and stopped at a hotel for the night.

*In the very early morning while it is still quite dark I am awakened by a noise outside my bay window. I lie quietly for awhile to listen for further noise. To my surprise, I seem to be able to see through the darkness and discern a black form scrambling back and forth trying to get my window open with its arm. In this state I become aware that this is a spiritual experience not of the natural realm, for the arm of this creature is moving inside the window, a type of window that can not be opened. I now see more clearly that the dark form is a short, somewhat large-headed person still scrambling about trying to enter my room. I find myself more curious than anything else. I discern the spirit is of the demonic order, yet I am not afraid. Then the Lord speaks to me, "Yes, this is an evil spirit that has come to you as a thief, but can not get in this room unless you allow it."*

*As this is spoken I have an awareness of an angelic presence standing behind me, but do not look back as I am still quite occupied with this demon who is attempting entrance. A boldness comes over me and I have the strangest desire to chase this spirit away. I slowly slide my right leg off the bed and begin to brace myself to pursue the intruder. Suddenly, as if the demon perceives my thoughts, it stands still, looks intently at me, and scampers quickly away---I can hear its shuffling feet. I arise and open the door, searching outside but seeing nothing.*

Now as to whether this spirit was real in that room or was but a vision, I know not; its real significance for me was the lesson to be learned. I proceeded to look up this Scripture found in John 10:10:

“The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”

Yes, our enemy the devil and his host of spirits come for these reasons. Their natures are evil and full of malice toward mankind, but especially toward true believers. As they tempt and urge us to sin and rebel against God, they also will try to rob us of the blessings which God has given us. In our spiritual pilgrimage we not only battle to gain higher ground and deeper levels, but we must also maintain that which has been won. As in an earthly war the same ground may be taken and retaken several times before one side finally holds it well. We all at times seem to experience this fact, do we not? Whether we overcome and hold any spiritual victory given by the Lord will be determined to the extent that we abide in it.

Maintaining spiritual victory is often similar to maintaining victory in the earthly realm. Consider dieting as an example. When we first begin it seems so hard and occupies so much of our thinking. It is such an effort to get started and, once we do, the difficult battle begins. All we can think about is food! Yet if we determine to persevere, it is easier to maintain each day. If we begin to see pounds drop off, then it gives us the needed encouragement to continue. One good slip, however, and it is back to square one or, worse, we put it off again till next Monday! So with our spiritual progress. As we win battles and press on it not only gets easier to maintain that level but it encourages us to go on to higher levels and to take more ground from the enemy. If we are constantly defeated by our spiritual enemies, we will sink lower and lower until one day we will find ourselves robbed of our spiritual progress.

The enemies of our souls will steal from us and destroy our progress by getting us to yield to their lies, seductions and temptations. No devil or human can ever make us sin. They can win over us, however, by tempting, deceiving and luring us away from God. Yes, we think it would be nice if once we won a victory we never would have to deal with it again, but this is not true! Once I went out into the yard to cut the grass with the mower. To my great surprise, I discovered a few weeks later it needed cutting again! I also found that if I was faithful to keep it cut and maintained, it was not a difficult project. Yet if I neglected it for months and then tried to use the mower, the mower would not be sufficient for the job. Then I would have to rent a tractor. Our spiritual lesson here is this: keep the grass cut and maintained regularly with a lesser output of labor, for if you do not, it will cost you a major output of labor later!

## #10 THE DREAM.....

The enemy comes again.....

*I find myself on the shore of an ocean. As I look out over the waters I see a large object rising up from the surface. It is a giant, fierce-looking creature that appears much like a serpent. I move back up the beach keeping my eyes fixed on this beast now moving inland. As its body emerges from the water I see its length to be about two-hundred feet and its width about ten feet. I retreat quickly backwards and the beast rapidly begins to surround and encircle me, cutting off all avenues of escape. The creature glares at me, and I find to my surprise that I have a sword in my hand. Swiftly it advances, lifting its large head up in the air until its mouth is poised over my body. I look straight up into this large circular mouth lined with sharp teeth. The head and moving teeth lunge down to devour me. Suddenly, without fear and somewhat boldly I reach up with my free hand and grab this open mouth by one of its large sharp teeth. Using the sword in my other hand, I strike the serpent in the head as I violently shake the beast by its tooth. It soon lies quite dead at my feet.*

The enemy of our souls often tries to present himself as being more powerful and fierce than he really is. Yet without God's grace and empowering we are no match for him. With the weapons that God has provided for us we can and must do battle with our spiritual foe, and we must fight to win. In the dream I found in my hand a sword. We know that in the Bible this object is symbolized as the Word of God. This is often the offensive weapon in our battles. I appeared to have a boldness in facing the enemy. Proverbs speaks of the righteous being bold as a lion. The New Testament reveals that Spirit-filled Christians are to have boldness in their lives. If we do not use the weapons provided us and do not walk in the Spirit, we have real reason to be fearful. Our enemies will destroy us when and if they can. Yet we have this assurance as Christians, that if God allows the enemy to attack us, then He has provided for our defense and victory. It says thus in Isaiah 59:19:

“...When the enemy shall come in like a flood (army), the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (KJV).

## #11 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following dream was given to me after prayer and intercession concerning a short prayer-mission to Israel. The purpose was to pray for certain Christian ministries beginning there at that time. My spiritual state was one of great conflict during this period.

*I find myself standing on a snowy embankment near a body of water. I begin walking in the deep snow which covers the slope. I am carrying a heavy burden like a knapsack on my back. It is difficult walking with this burden and I fall down in the snow very tired and worn out. An angel dressed in white approaches and reaches down to help me back to my feet. He gently leads me to the sloping shoreline where I lie down on my chest and look out over the icy waters. Much of the surface of this body of water is frozen solid and thick with ice.*

*Suddenly, I notice a flock of birds hovering over the surface, flying together as if in one unit. I seem to know in this dream that the birds are waiting for the ice to melt so they can feed on the fish beneath. A voice speaks to me in the dream and says, "Wait and you shall be fed."*

This dream was given to reveal that my present spiritual state and the problems I was experiencing would be solved in due time. The obstacles facing my Israeli trip were securing needed monies and travel documents and God's timing for departure. Often when the Lord gives us a mission or work to do we busy ourselves into a worried and hurried condition that puts more of a burden on us than He intends. The burdens of the Lord are light in the sense that He gives grace to carry them. Yes, we will have conflicts and problems, but His grace will strengthen and help us to do that which He calls us to do. Frequently, however, we or the devil add unnecessary burdens that will eventually wear us down.

The snow symbolizes the difficult paths which we must tread at times. The falling under the burden speaks of our natural strength not being enough to accomplish God's work. Yet, if we are headed in the right direction in His will and make mistakes and fail, He is faithful to lift us up and help us back to our spiritual feet. The angel's leading me to the slope reveals to us that we need to rest at times because of spiritual exhaustion; we need to be refreshed and encouraged before we can proceed. The birds' hovering and waiting for the ice to melt symbolizes Christians' needing to learn how to wait on and for the Lord.

The birds' unity and oneness is a sign of how God expects us as different members of His body, the church, to function together to build one another up instead of competing against one another. This waiting on the Lord is a waiting, not only for further insight into His purposes, but also a waiting on His timing and providential moving. God often reveals things to us that may not be for the immediate present but for weeks, months or even years ahead. To jump the gun or to lag behind can hinder the work which God intends to do in or through us. He will surely feed us with what we need at the right moment. We must learn to rest and feed when He gives us that time, for when He is ready to move we may not have time to prepare.

We love being active and busy, but if we are to move into the deeper things of God we must learn to wait before Him and give Him the time He requires. Waiting is often much harder than working. Much busyness, however, is no true sign of spirituality; much activity is often a sign of a restless self-seeking spirit. It may impress people and seem to accomplish much, but often it is merely wood, hay and stubble. Even good works and service for the Lord have no spiritual value if done for any reason outside God's leading. We must be led of the Holy Spirit and make no attempts to lead Him. He will

not anoint even good fleshly intentions, for they are still of the flesh and can never produce spiritual results. Let Him be lord and leader. God is not our servant; we are His.

Much that is done in the name of Christ is mere flesh trying to secure God's approval. God will provide for what God commands and initiates. He will not respond to our attempts to force His hand or hasten His timing for us. Some seem to think if they claim a thing and quote enough Scripture to God that He will be forced to honor the request. Far from the truth. The name of Jesus is not a magic charm to use as we please, nor is quoting the Bible to God a means of obtaining His response. If we walk in obedience and faith, then we will clearly see His will and be able to speak those words in the right spirit and for the right reason.

Often I have heard the statement: "Let your request be made known unto God." How true it is, but it does not say let your demands be made known unto God. Did you ever read in the Bible of a person who was in the Spirit who talked to God in a demanding, disrespectful manner? Boldness is not arrogance, nor is faith a shouting and commanding of God. No amount of confessing, quoting Scripture, claiming and much emotional hyperventilating will produce true faith, nor will it move God. We may confess and quote Scripture for our own benefit but not to force God's hand. Furthermore, if we do not walk in the light that He gives us and do not obey as He convicts us, we will not see His promises and words to us come true.

To use the name of Jesus implies we are submitting to Jesus and asking in accordance with His will and character. Much praying and claiming in Jesus' name is no more than a form of witchcraft. Witchcraft is an attempt to get someone to do for you that which is against their will. This is a control spirit with its root found in a selfish, self-seeking person. God will always resist this spirit in anyone, whether Christian or not. Much prayer of the believer can be wasted! Be careful for you may get what you seek, but its source may not be God. If we examine our hearts and are humble before Him, He will show us what to pray for and how to go about it in the right spirit.

## #12 THE DREAM.....

*I am in a large school-type workshop with many persons present. Each person sits at a desk and labors over a different project. My project is to put together a large picture puzzle. Before I finish the puzzle I am aware of the final outcome of the picture. It is of Christ, dressed in white, standing with His right arm and hand extended upward. On that hand is a large white dove. I become distracted for a moment and, returning to continue my puzzle, I notice two of the last pieces are gone. The missing pieces are the head of Christ and the white dove on His right hand. Somehow I know that the woman sitting behind me has stolen these pieces. I also know her name is Jezebel.*

The Spirit begins to impress me with these facts. The puzzle is of Christ symbolizing Him and His body, the church. The white dove on the hand symbolizes the Holy Spirit's resting on the church. Jezebel in the Scriptures usually symbolizes religion that is perverted, false or evil. Thus today we still have the spirit of Jezebel working in our organized, institutional and man-made Christianity. Not that organization is evil, but we must examine the controlling spirit behind the organization. The true church of God and Christ is a spiritual body, not a denominational body. The true church is headed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and is controlled by His Holy Spirit.

Now many of the religious systems of the organized churches do not recognize Christ as Lord nor do they recognize the Holy Spirit. The Jezebel spirit which is of Satan seeks to remove Christ and the Holy Spirit from the church. Without them you have a man-made religious system that dishonors God and magnifies humanism and political-social systems. Why, this system is very acceptable today, for most people desire religion and God on their terms. Yet they will leave this world being deceived and lost without the true God.

Many lukewarm and carnal, nominal Christian churches will also find themselves in this same rejected state. If we claim to be Christian, then let us take all God's Word and not just that which pleases us. For example, we love to hear about God's so loving the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but many do not like to hear in nearby Scriptures that those who do not submit to the Son of God will find themselves under God's wrath and headed for hell. Now the whole Word of God is true or it is a lie. Let us go one way or the other!

As believers we must be careful to examine the Scriptures and prove to ourselves if we are of the Lord's church or of that Jezebel system. In the name of unity, which proves to be false according to the Bible, man has watered down the Word of God and compromised the foundational truths until they are no longer genuine. They deny Christ as Lord in a practical way and they deny the power of the Holy Spirit to give the believer victory over this sinful world. They merely profess a form of godliness but truly reject the Christ of the Bible. Yes, surely many shall come in Christ's name but He will deny them in the end for making lies of His truth. If you reject Christ and the Holy Spirit you have no true church.

### #13 #14 A VISION FOLLOWED BY A DREAM.....

*I awake in the dark hours of the night and sit up. I look out a large window and can see the street lights and the star-filled sky. Then to my amazement someone or something walks past the window and covers it completely in darkness. Still awake, I look closely as the presence walks past and stands outside the front door. A voice calls my name and I assume a human person is at my door. Yet when I try to rise from my seated position a hand which feels very physical presses down gently on my shoulder to restrain me. Then I perceive that I am in a vision-state. As I lie back resting, I sense the presence at the door has entered the house. It stands in the dark and, though I see no form, I feel its evil presence. I am not the least fearful, and actually am more curious than usual. I am peaceful knowing the Lord has restrained me and that He is in control.*

*After awhile I fall asleep and immediately begin to dream. In my dream I find myself walking among large trees in a forest. The sun is coming up, and its light beams through the trees. Suddenly I hear and see a light falling swiftly from the sky. It is a strange presence indeed. As the light touches the ground I see an angelic-type person. To my surprise he speaks to me, "I am Lucifer, son of the morning." I respond quickly and inform him that he has fallen.*

*Now let me say that this being is not of the usual demonic sort. Demons can often be discerned by their unclean and evil presence, but here the devil comes in a form that really causes me to wonder. His being is attractive, alluring and almost irresistible. It would be easy to worship such a presence. Yet during all the temptation to do so, I knew him for who and what he was---still the devil, the arch-enemy of God and man. If he can not inspire fear in us then he may try the opposite tactic. Perceiving I want no part of him, he begins to walk parallel with me as I walk away from him. Almost with a tone of sarcasm, he speaks again to me, "Regardless of what Jesus Christ has said to you, you will have to fight alone." Just before I awake, I sense an evil presence of strife and confusion.*

Often in our darkest hours and when we are in difficult straits our enemy will attack us. Yet I have learned it is usually a good sign that we are in God's will. Satan can reveal his hand too quickly. If he did nothing, at times we would give in more easily because of feeling we are accomplishing nothing. Now many Christians are not much of a threat to Satan's kingdom. Babies, novices and Christians who are out of God's will are no threat to the devil. He goes after the ones who will obey and follow the Lord at any cost. If the devil can't lie to you and cause you to fail, he may attempt to flatter and puff you up, knowing that God will have to bring you down. If these methods don't work, then he may try to bargain with you or, even in some cases, buy you outright. Many a saint started out on the right path, but along the way the devil found out his or her price and they bartered their birthrights away.

Look around, my friends, how many preachers and ministers do you know who have lost God's presence and anointing for fame, money and earthly power? Why, Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world to serve him. While Christ rejected his offer, one day a person called the antichrist will accept his offer and agree to his terms. Yet, sad to say, most Christians will never have the enemy really bargain with them for they will live and die entering the kingdom as if by fire. They will never have known what it means to move deeply with God and to take ground for Him. The deeper we go the more the devil will attempt to barter with us. Therefore we must be very careful to stay close to Christ and let Him rule in us, or someday we will find that Satan has discovered the price that will cause us to sell out to him.

The devil spoke to me of having to fight alone. That statement, like most of what he says, is a lie for he will quote truth out of context. We may stand alone at times in this mortal flesh, but if we walk with Christ He will always walk with us. He will not forsake us; we dare not forsake Him. Remember

the enemies of our souls do not always come as such! They may come in forms of friends, family members and even other Christians. These persons are usually not aware of being used by Satan to prevent us from walking closely and deeply with our God. Why, they do not want us to become fanatical and super spiritual, do they? Friends, let us press on and bear their reproaches and contemptuous labels for Christ's sake. Let us be hot for Christ, not cold or lukewarm! Better to be forsaken by friends and family, if need be, than to compromise our walk with the Lord!

As to my sensing strife and confusion before awakening read these verses:

"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.  
For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work"  
(James 3:15-16 KJV).

## #15 THE DREAM.....

*I find myself in a large room, and notice a man at the front who is teaching and holding a Bible in His hand. I perceive this person is the Lord Jesus. I appear to be hovering up in the air just behind the Lord. I can see the Bible open in His hands as He is teaching the people. I watch for awhile and then proceed to fly past the Lord to leave the room. Suddenly, the Bible seems to lift up of its own accord from His hands and hovers just in front of me preventing my departure.*

*The scene changes and I am now standing at an ocean's edge with a large pitcher in my hands. I begin to pour from the container what appears to be red wine into the waters. As I do this I speak three times the same word, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." I sense a great peace around me.*

The symbolism of my hovering behind the Lord and watching Him teach is this: I was to listen to Him and be guided by Him, for I must be His messenger. He knows the lessons we need to learn and there is a set time often for us to learn certain truths. Then we are ready to be sent out by Him. In the dream the Bible prevents me from leaving for the time is not right. We must study and absorb God's Word into our minds and spirits if it is going to do a true spiritual work in us. Head knowledge is not enough, we must let the Word become a part of our lives. Zeal without wisdom is of little value in our spiritual walk. In school as we learn certain truths and their applications we are then ready to move to higher levels. The same is true in the spiritual realm---we are then ready for more useful service in God's kingdom or vineyard.

The wine being poured forth from the pitcher into the water symbolizes this: the waters being mankind and the red wine representing the blood of Christ or the foundation of the true gospel message. The statement spoken three times symbolizes:

“...in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established”  
(Matthew 18:16 KJV).

Yes, God confirms truth this way.

In the Old and New Testaments much is spoken of the blood as Hebrews 9:22 reveals:

“...I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.”

As Christians we believe in the atonement of the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the blood which has purchased for us the gospel of peace. That is the gospel we must proclaim to the world. From the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation, the blood is spoken of in word or symbolism. It all points to the cross of Jesus Christ and the pouring out of His blood and life for us. All we preach or teach of the Word must be built on that foundation---the blood and cross of Jesus Christ. It is simple but it is the rock of Christianity! Let us never separate Christ from the blood, the cross and the Word of God.

## #16 THE DREAM.....

*I am flying in the upper regions of the sky where there appears a large host of demonic forces. I find a sword in my hand which is shaped and colored as a rainbow, and I am using it to attack and combat these flying spirits.*

A short but informative dream! The sword again symbolizes the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17) and the rainbow in Scripture symbolizes God's promise to us. The spirits in the upper sky remind us of what the apostle Paul called "wickedness in heavenly places." He states in Ephesians 6:12:

"For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

We are at war as Christians, but not against people. Our real war is against the demonic forces of Satan that blind and deceive the masses of mankind. We must put to use the weapons given us to bring down the power of the enemy that holds such control over the minds of men. We must also prevail against this enemy to progress upward into higher spiritual planes in the Lord. It is one thing to be told we have all things in Christ; it is quite another to go and possess that land. We have many mountains to climb in our spiritual pilgrimage, and there are many adversaries and usurpers to drive out of those hills.

In the dream the sword and rainbow are one. Yes, God's Word and His promises are one. By whatever means His inspired word comes to us, we can be certain it is sure. We have the promise that His word will put to flight our enemies and will overcome them in His name and power. We must submit to Him and have faith in Him and in His word to us.

Let us be careful to fulfill our part of the word or promise given. Much depends on our obedience and meeting His conditions. Otherwise, we are not on a solid foundation, and those words and promises will not be fulfilled for and through us. There is no problem on God's part, so if things do not turn out as revealed, we need to reexamine the word and the conditions. When we have faith and obey what we are given by the Lord He will make the word and promise a prophecy to us. He will give life to the letter of the word and make it real in our experience. This is the word that produces and possesses real power.

## #17 THE VISITATION AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

This experience occurred during a time of great inner testing and a time in which I had a sense of heavy despair and worthlessness. I had been a Christian for several years, and the Lord had placed me in a state of total inactivity and apparent uselessness. I questioned my worth in God's kingdom and felt a complete failure. I had fasted and prayed and waited but it seemed to no avail. This is the dark hour of the soul! Several months had passed in this state of mind. Then one morning I awakened and lay in bed not wanting to rise and face another day of sameness and grief.

*I awaken one Sunday morning and, as I lie in bed and ponder in a somewhat discouraged state, a presence walks into my room. Because I am a house guest at the time, I think perhaps one of my hosts has entered. I lie awake but with eyes closed and this person walks over to my bed and kneels down beside me. I, being of the analytical sort, assume one of my hosts feels led to pray for me, so I will not open my eyes and cause possible embarrassment. This person then reaches over and takes one of my hands and holds it gently. He begins to stroke my forehead with his other hand. At this moment I discern that this is a spiritual experience, and a great awe and peace seem to envelop me. This person then speaks these words to me, "How often must I prove to you your value to Me? You are of intrinsic value to Me." Well, my friends, I do not know what the word "intrinsic" means, and my curious mind thinks, "I will open my eyes for just a glimpse of this person." I did so quickly and shut them just as quickly as I see this man dressed in white looking down at me with a very pleasant smile on his face. Awe-struck, my heart pounding, I lie quite still. This man now bends over and kisses me on the forehead and instantly disappears.*

I calmly pondered this supernatural encounter. It seems as long as the visit lasted that the revelation of the Lord Jesus' presence was hidden from me. Only later, when I considered the reality of what had transpired, did I fully understand this experience. I thought of the Scripture found in Luke 24:16 that relates how the Lord, after His rising from the dead, appeared to two of His disciples and they did not know Him. Their eyes were restrained so that they did not know Him. So were mine! If I had fully understood I most likely would not have remembered His words because of His awesome presence.

This is what was revealed to me about this visitation from the Lord. You and I often equate our value to the Lord by how useful we are to Him. We often assume He loves us because we obey and serve Him well. Yes, He is pleased when we obey and serve Him faithfully, but He loves us for another reason. It is God's nature to love; He loves for God is love. He really has no "because" in it. In speaking to me, He used an unfamiliar phrase, "intrinsic value", whose meaning I looked up in a dictionary. It simply means something or someone has value just because they are. God loves us simply because He is love and He loves mankind. He loves us not more or not less for what we do or do not do. However, it is important to remember here that although God will always love the wicked sinner and will love that person to the very gates of hell, He will not or may not reveal that manifestation of His love to those who do not receive Him or His Son.

God loves all His children with perfect love. Yet some seem to receive, understand and experience that love more than others. It is not that God is different toward His saints, but that some have learned quicker that faith and obedience are a sure means for knowing God in a more personal and intimate way. Those who walk closer to the Lord and who are more faithful to His will often will know Him and His love in a deeper way. Yet, God has not changed; it is we who put ourselves into a place where He can reveal more of Himself to us.

Let the reader understand that some revelations are necessary for the believer to confirm ministry and calling. Extraordinary revelations are sometimes God's extra grace being bestowed to meet a believer's needs at that time or for a future time of hard trial or warfare. Often those who may not have come from well-balanced, loving homes may need additional grace to compensate for their extra insecurities, rejections and weaknesses. Those who are multi-talented and gifted may not need as much direct encouragement and uplifting as others. Those who are called to more difficult ministries (requiring greater suffering for the Lord's sake) will often be granted, as was Paul the apostle, added grace for the need.

We do not live by our out-of-the-ordinary experiences; we live by faith and trust in God and His Word. Lastly, some get more revelation than others for they have been proven faithful in little and so He gives more. If we are not faithful to what He gives us, it is highly unlikely He will reveal deeper things.

There is another point I would like to clarify concerning God's love. People often misunderstand the love of God as a love that forgives and forgets all and demands no proper response from man. This is a sadly mistaken idea! God's love will never cause Him to lay aside His other attributes of holiness, justice and righteousness. People associate God's love as being like theirs, a mere human sentimentality. So is their so-called love for God. It moves God not in the least if our love is not shown by our turning away from sin and obeying His commandments. Many say they love God, yet they serve their own selfish natures. Let us not think we can believe what we will about God. He is a father and loves mankind, but He is not like an earthly father who may excuse our sins and allow us to live as we please. That concept is not scriptural. Remember and meditate on these words in I John 2:4-5:

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected.”

### **On Fasting.....**

Because it is closely connected with the above experience, I would like to share here on the important subject of fasting. It was the Lord's visit that prepared me to complete a long fast. The Holy Spirit led me to abstain from food for forty days and nights, and to diligently seek His will. I finished this by His grace without bodily harm and lost over 45 pounds. Now I do not recommend long fasts for everyone! I have been in fasting often over a period of many years, so I am aware of all the precautions and physical pitfalls.

Many Christians are afraid of this word “fasting” and it is true that the practice has been frequently abused and misunderstood. However, any serious reader of the Bible will eventually be confronted with the subject of fasting. To discover God's thoughts on this matter, read Matthew 6:16-18:

“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou be not seen of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in the secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.”

The Scripture reads “when we fast”, so we can rightly assume we should be fasting at certain times. No legal times and means need to be mentioned. God will give us instructions, or we will get desperate and seek God for His guidance. Let it be understood that fasting in itself is not spiritual! It is a tool like prayer and Bible study, and has its place in the Christian’s life. Fasting is simply abstaining from food for spiritual reasons. It is a great form of self-denial to which Christ commands us as faithful disciples. It is not an option!

Prayer and giving are also mentioned in the same chapter of the above quoted Scripture. All three were spoken of by our Lord as to be mainly done in secret before Him, often to keep us from pride and feeding our egos. Fasting has a way of humbling our minds and emotions so as to be more in tune to our spirits that are to be controlled by God. Fasting is neutral. I mean that it is not good or evil in itself. Great saints have fasted; so have people in the occult and in demon worship. It’s simply a tool to help us subdue our fleshly and natural appetites and to make us more open to the spiritual realm (which realm is the choice of the faster). Now some say we need not fast. Well, my friends, if the perfect Son of God needed to fast to prepare for ministry, how much more do you think we need to do so? If we can not master our own bodies and desires, how can we learn to master spiritual matters?

Fasting is also a weapon to use in our warfare against our adversary. When Jesus was baptized with the Spirit He was immediately driven into the wilderness to be tested by Satan. Only after He fasted and stood firm did He descend from the mount of temptation in the power of the Holy Spirit. Just because many have perverted and abused fasting in the past is no reason to reject the practice. Satan loves it when we do such things. He robs us of useful tools that can be used against him. Fasting, if done properly, will open us more to the many methods used by the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself. We may or may not have visions, dreams and deep revelations, but we will receive greater and fresher insight into His Word, will and purposes for us and for the body of Christ.

Yet on the other hand no amount of fasting and self-denial will cause God to hear our prayers if we are being rebellious and close-minded to what He has already given us. It is like reading the Bible several hundred times and feeling we are super spiritual. It will profit us nothing if we are readers and hearers of the Word only; we must be doers as well and apply the Word. Better to read and heed the Word than to continue to read and never obey. To move up further in spiritual matters we must die deeper to fleshly allures. To know Christ and His ways more deeply we must be brought to death and the cross more often.

## #18 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN AND AUDIBLE WORD.....

*I first hear these words, "Don't be as a mule or an ostrich which have no understanding."*

*Next I see a large metal ring turned on its side, a ring like a wedding band but very large. As I watch, I see the word "stubbornness" spelled out clearly and its letters seem to pass or march through the ring.*

*At the moment I awaken I hear spoken to me in a soft voice, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten."*

The letters marching through the ring symbolize "stubbornness" being the ringleader of many downward leading sins that will cause us to cease walking in the Spirit. At this time in my life I was in a state of stubbornness and procrastination with the Lord. The references to the mule and the ostrich are mentioned in these two Scriptures:

"Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee" (Psalm 32:9 KJV).

"Because God hath deprived her (the ostrich) of wisdom, Neither hath he imparted to her understanding" (Job 39:17).

We are more enlightened than the beasts of the earth that do much by simple instinct. As the apostle Paul was goaded by the Lord so may we be goaded if we resist and fight against His plans for us. God has His ways of bringing us into submission, and the sooner we comply the less we will have to suffer needlessly. God has given us His Spirit and His Word so that we can know what He requires. To stubbornly resist His will is to invite trouble and to hinder greatly what God desires to do in us and for us. Stubbornness is a ringleader of many evil companions such as pride, bitterness, resentment and hardness of heart. These sins will surely lead us ever downward when we willfully refuse the known will of God or procrastinate in our obedience.

The second message given to me concerning rebuking and chastening is a scriptural verse found in Revelation 3:19. The Lord who comforts is the One who also rebukes, and when He chastens, He requires immediate repentance. God has no bastards. He will surely correct and discipline His children when needed. This is a proof that we are His and that He does love and care for us.

We must repent as well as confess our sins. Godly sorrow works repentance. Confession without repentance is empty and dead, the same as faith without works, grace without fruit, lordship without submission! A mere mouthing of something is no proof of it. Why, even demons believe in God but it is not saving faith, is it? Yes, some need to examine and prove themselves to see if they really are in the faith. Confession, church membership or even water baptism is in vain if there is no change of life. God's righteousness received in us must come out of us in practical holiness.

## #19 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following dream was given to reveal a future call to a particular phase of ministry. This dream later proved to be of a prophetic nature.

*I am directing four groups similar to four choral sections in a choir. I notice that one of the groups is colored yellow. Someone in the dream speaks, "It is amazing that he understands the three-and-a-half timing."*

Within six weeks I begin teaching several Bible studies and soon afterwards have four groups. The most important group is composed of high school students who are all of oriental descent. After a period of time I am led to stop teaching and to prepare for a move to a new location. Shortly thereafter, as I was reviewing some of my previous dreams, I remembered this one with the "three-and-a-half timing." I realized that it was exactly three-and-a-half years that I had been leading these four groups! When the Lord lets us know we are doing what we are supposed to be doing, it is a great confirmation to us.

God knows where and when He wants us in certain places doing certain works. If we are out witnessing when we should be studying the Word, much of the labor will be of no true value to us. God places us in His church as He wills, not as we will. You can be the most successful evangelist in town but, my friends, if God has called you to be doing something else, you have missed His best. In the long run the body of Christ will suffer more for your not fulfilling what He has called you to do. The trouble with many of the Lord's servants is they are serving God on their own terms, in their own might and power, rather than by God's Spirit.

## #20 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am driving a car up to the entrance of a tunnel. It is getting dark and, as I attempt to drop my thirty cents in the toll basket, the coins fall to the ground. I leave my car quickly to retrieve the money, for I do not want to hold up traffic. Suddenly it is very dark and the tunnel entrance is blocked. All the vehicles are at a standstill, so I just sit in my car and wait. Then a word is spoken to me, "Do not be discouraged, for faith looks at things not seen."*

This dream came to me as I was considering a move in location and ministry. Had I heeded the message more closely I could have saved myself needless worry! The tunnel symbolizes an opening into some other service. The toll fee of thirty cents speaks of "the appointed time"---the number thirty in Scripture sometimes implies this. We are given vision and direction but often do not know the exact timing. Until we do we are to prepare and wait. We must not move unless we have been given the go-ahead from God. We can not pick the fruit before it is ripe. Otherwise, it will be sour to us! Delays and waiting are often trying times for us, but we must learn their lessons.

Satan will frequently tempt us to rush God or to act prematurely. He will attack with doubt, discouragement and fear! God will show us many things, but much may be for the near or far future. Only as we stay before him in trust and obedience will we be able to discern His timings. Moses was called to deliver Israel but He did not know he would spend forty years in the wilderness in preparation. Christ knew He was to die on the cross but He did not hasten the timing. Between vision and fulfillment is often a great period of waiting and preparing that only the strong in spirit can endure. Faith comes with vision, the answer comes at the right time, and we must wait it out.

Much happens on the road between vision and faith and the final outcome. This is the trying of our faith, the waiting with expectation, steadfastness and perseverance. These trials are to mature and make us ready to receive what He is purposing for us. The enemy will attempt to hinder our answers and to cause disappointment, discouragement and despair. Yes, some saints have missed God's best for they were not able to endure the process of waiting out God's timing.

In the statement, "Do not be discouraged, faith looks at things not seen," to be discouraged means to faint or grow weary. In that condition we are more likely to throw all away and miss God's best. Our faith must hold to God's promises and word no matter what the natural world does or reveals to make the promise seem impossible. Faith deals with the unseen realm. If we saw in the natural we would need no faith. Faith is real. Faith comes from God, and trust is our reaction to that faith. His word and His promises are true, but we must fulfill their conditions to see what faith will do.

## #21 A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following message came during a time of discouragement over my present lot in life and of sensing that my life was just too rough.

*These words are spoken during my sleep, "If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with the horses (horsemen)?"*

This question comes from the first part of verse found in Jeremiah 12:5. The second half of the same verse reads:

“...and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how wilt thou do in the pride (swelling) of the Jordan?”

Sometimes we complain about our lot in life and allow it to weaken us. We know we are aided by the Lord to serve and work for Him at certain levels and places, but we become dissatisfied for various reasons and slow down or stop in our zeal for service. We murmur as children and inform the Lord of our assessment of the circumstances. However, if we do not learn to function and overcome where He places us, we will not be able to overcome at higher levels of service. Jeremiah was asked a question which could be paraphrased in our language: “If you can not overcome minor problems and perform tasks you are well able to do, how will you be able to overcome major problems when they arise?”

As we enter spiritual warfare we are all foot-soldiers. As we progress in our spiritual walk and learn to deal with our enemies God will grace us to move up to higher ranks. He desires horsemen in His army to array against the adversary’s horsemen. Advancement in spiritual ranks is determined by God’s call and our overcoming at the lower levels of service. Jesus spoke of a demonic strongman over the house and said if we are to spoil that house, we must first bind that man.

At this point we need to make a statement of practical application. If we cannot stand for the Lord now and deal with the verbal reproaches and rebuttals of non-Christians, how will we be able to stand under real persecution and bodily harm if we ever are called to do so? Remember Peter in the garden. He really thought he would die with his Lord, but because he did not watch and pray as the Lord commanded, he succumbed to a spirit of fear at the dark hour of Satan’s power. Shall we do less if we do not heed God’s warnings to prepare ourselves? I find it a marvel that so many people claim to be Christians yet their lifestyles declare otherwise. At the work-place they live secret worldly lives yet in church act so spiritual and godly. Now if we lack boldness to live what we believe before the world, surely we will not stand when all hell breaks loose.

A sad fact must be stated here: most professing Christians will not make it to heaven for they fear too much the thoughts of men. If we deny Christ in our daily walk we shall find ourselves denied by Him later. Fear of man is a sure trap. My friends, men’s opinions will not mean much when we all stand before the Lord one day. It is far better to live in the fear of the Lord than of men. Christ warns that we should fear our God who can destroy a body and send a soul to hell more than a man who can only destroy the body. God never warns unless there is a danger to be heeded, or unless He is ready to carry out the threat at a given time. Yes, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Therefore, when the Lord calls us to a certain lot in our walk let us receive His grace and help to accomplish His expectations of us. In so doing He will lead us up higher in spiritual service and rank.

## #22 A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following word was spoken to me in a dream during a time of financial needs in carrying out the Lord's will.

*As I sleep this Scripture from Proverbs 11:25 is spoken to me: "The soul of blessing shall be made fat; and he that waters shall be watered also himself!"*

During the day following this dream I pondered my need for five hundred dollars to finance a trip I sensed the Lord was leading me to make. I had informed no one but prayed secretly for the funds. Much of my day was spent counselling and ministering to others (a form of watering), and late in the afternoon someone slipped a folded piece of paper in my pocket. To my delight I discovered it was a check for five hundred dollars!

We learn faith often by need, but we are to let our needs be known unto the Lord. So many of the television faith ministries know nothing of real faith. It does not take much faith to beg, hint and use gimmickry to see that our needs are met. Let us not call it faith if we have to resort to such methods to support our ministry. Appeals to people's sentimental natures and pressure letters constantly asking for money are not the ways of faith. Scripture says to let your needs be known to God; it does not say unto man. This does not imply that ministries can not reveal their needs if asked, but if these same ministries spent more time before the Lord, the Lord would move others to give.

Promises of blessing and personal gain from giving to the Lord's work is a subtle form of deceit and nothing more than human manipulation. We give in the right spirit not because we are promised blessings (though God keeps good accounts), but because the Spirit of God moves us to do so. Any other reason, even legitimate need, is not the spiritual way. Our faith is supposed to be in the Source who is God, not in the methods or persons He uses to meet our needs. He is the object of our faith. Now, I grant you that most so-called faith ministries would not last on the air- waves if they chose God's way.

God have mercy on those ministers and ministries that become fat off the monies of the people. Is it not interesting that most of these well-known television ministers have become very affluent from the offerings of their viewers? Something is very wrong in this. It is one thing to take large sums of money for a work initiated by God but, if the individuals who run these ministries are becoming personally wealthy from their donations, they are nothing more than covetous charlatans who are fleecing their people. Much of what we see presented as Christian ministry is of this sort, and the leaders of these ministries as well as their supporters are deceived.

We are to water because we are called to be blessings to the church and the world. Yes, God shall bless the work of our hands and water us as we are busy about His will and works. He makes our souls fat or full as we keep the waters flowing through us.

## #23 THE DREAM.....

*I am being chased in a house by two wolves! As they pursue to devour me I begin to rise up from the ground and fly in circles around the house. I can look down and see the wolves still running. I begin to speak in another tongue and when I point to the wolves they are destroyed.*

The house symbolizes my spiritual walk and the two wolves symbolize the lust of the flesh that attempts to destroy my spiritual house. As I run from these wolves I am able to rise above them and prevail. Now this speaking in tongues signifies praying in the spirit and being built up. Romans 8:13 reads:

“...for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

Notice two things: first, we must put to death the lusts of the flesh and second, it can only be done with the Spirit’s aid. Now look at these two verses:

“He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth (builds up) himself...” (I Corinthians 14:4).

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 20).

Speaking in tongues is a form of praying and, like dreams and parables, often has hidden purposes and meanings that are not always clear. Paul also says that speaking in tongues is speaking to God, and that it is a speaking of mysteries or secret things that are not readily apparent on the surface. I personally believe in speaking in tongues and do so in some of my intercessions. I believe prayer is the main time and place for tongues, and prayer is usually done in secret. There is an appropriate time for tongues in public, but that gives no license for the uncontrolled frenzy of emotionalism that is far from being of God. Sadly, most ministers have no discernment in this matter so they either forbid speaking in tongues altogether, or they permit every wild display to the shame and reproach of the true gifts. Neither is pleasing to the Lord.

Again, most speaking in tongues is for private times of prayer and for use in intercession. Yet if a person is not disciplined in his or her prayer life in English, why on earth would God give that person the gift of tongues? Its end is for God’s purposes and not to lift us up in pride. It is to lift us up in the spirit to pray for secret things that God desires to have prayed. Most of the speaking in tongues we hear is nothing but human emotional display! There is the real gift, however, and it has its place.

## #24 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*The Lord Jesus Christ stands in front of me dressed in a glowing white robe. I find myself drawn to Him and walk in His direction as He smiles at me. I embrace Jesus and He returns my embrace. Never before or since have I been aware of such love as at this moment. I step back several feet from Him, and observe His smiling countenance. Again, I feel this overwhelming love pass through my being as I behold Him. This love comes not only from His seen presence but is experienced everywhere.*

*Just before I awake I hear the words, "Christ is all."*

Christ lived a human life, and still has a glorified human body in heaven. While He dwelt on earth He was limited to His human body. He thus spoke to the apostles telling them that He was with them but would soon be in them. Because we are human, we often think only in human terms concerning God's presence. In the dream I saw a form and touched a body that was human-like to me. Yet as I stood back from the Lord I felt again that same presence and love. God's Holy Spirit fills the very universe! He can relate to us on higher spiritual planes if we will only move up to meet Him there.

Christ could not enter the innermost being of a person while He dwelt in human flesh, yet now He can by the person of the Holy Spirit. Christ even said it would be more advantageous to us when the Holy Spirit came to take His place. The apostle Paul may have understood this, for we know it is most likely he never met Jesus in the flesh. Yet when he was saved and transformed, He appears to have been given insights and revelations that may have superseded those of the twelve apostles.

Christ was revealing to me in this dream that His love and presence are not limited to our earthly feelings, emotions and concepts of Him. For example, a little child often needs the physical affection and touching of his parents to feel secure and loved, but that same child when he becomes a young man does not require as much reassurance. He will, however, be secure in their relationship as he knows his parents' love through their words and actions. Yes, many babes in Christ may need physical excitements and emotional experiences, but these must not direct and rule their lives.

Concerning the word "Christ is all", it is a scriptural phrase found in Colossians 3:17 where Christ is said to be all and in all. In the dream Christ's love and presence are local and universal. He is the sum total of all spiritual fulfillment. All that we do and are is for and from Him. He is our God, our Lord and our head in all things. He is the author and finisher of everything that is perfect and spiritual. Christ is to become our all in all in our practical experiences and lives. He is our first in all. No ministry, gift, person or object must ever take His place. Yet He can only be all to us as we give Him that position in our hearts.

## #25 THE DREAM.....

*I am in the midst of a battle with gun shots being fired at my head! The scene changes and I am now looking at a training bicycle. It is ordinary in appearance but has the ability to collapse and bounce back resuming its original shape.*

The first part of the dream concerns warfare. The shots fired at my head symbolize that as Christians we are in a state of war. Spiritual war is our lot until we cross over into heaven by way of death or the “up-gathering.” The real place of battle is the head which contains our spirit, mind, will and personality. This is the area which the enemy will primarily attack. Before willful sin is committed the will and the mind must consent to it; thus this is the great arena of temptation and the place of victory or defeat. We will be ruled by God, or we will choose our own paths which is equivalent to being ruled by Satan.

As Christians we are to be filled with the life and light of Jesus Christ today. The forces of light and darkness are now at war with one another, and often the Christian’s mind is the primary battlefield here on earth. Satan was once a high ranking archangel, perhaps the highest ranking. He was a light bearer and, as his name suggests, he channeled God’s light well. Lucifer’s major sins were the sins of independence and pride. He sought as a created being to be the Light instead of being a channel of that Light. Any teaching that makes a created being to be God is in error with Scripture. In this earthly life God seeks to channel Himself through His people. In a way we are to be light bulbs. Electricity is similar to God, real and powerful in our world but unseen to the naked eye. Electricity needs a channel to manifest its power, this channel being the copper wire and the bulb. The electricity and the wires in the bulb meet in union and produce natural light power. Thus we are called by Christ to be conductors of His light to the world.

We must use the helmet of the hope of our salvation as a defensive weapon against the enemy’s attacks on our mind. However the attacks come, we must resist. When we become Christians we enter school and begin training. Like the bike in the dream God has instruments to train and prepare us. As children we start off riding tricycles, advance to two-wheelers with training wheels, and then on to free riding without aid. During this process we may fall and get hurt, but we must rise up and try again until we learn how to ride. Many quit after the first fall in their spiritual walk and throw off God and His ways. They have no root in them and will not endure the training.

When we fall into willful sin and rebellion we need to confess and repent of sin and rise up and move on. If we fail to do so, we will begin a natural reaping of our sin that will add to the unpleasantness of this course. Punishment for our sins teaches us a simple lesson. Sin will not be worth the price we will have to pay for it! Sin can have its pleasures for a season, but the cost will be exacting for the Christian. Continued resistance against God’s dealings will produce a hardness in the rebel’s heart and have dire consequences.

God’s grace and mercy are great, but He has a limit as to how far He will go with the rebellious. Let us not lie to ourselves and think we can play with the grace of God and not reap from it. Grace bestowed has a corresponding punishment if not heeded. When much is given, much is required. The branch that continually resists the Lord’s pruning will find itself cut from the vine. That, my friends, is an unpleasant yet true fact!

All men have enough light of God to move toward Him. Some have much more light and grace given. The soul who does not yield and has had much extra grace bestowed in God’s mercy will come

into a greater judgment when God does call for an accounting. Chastening and correction from the Lord are proof that we are His. God has no bastards, and can not keep in His charge a willful, rebellious and stubborn child. One day a price will be paid by that soul.

Let us not play with the grace of God and assume we can get by with it. We will only deceive ourselves! Let us rather learn to submit to His dealings and be made like Him in holiness and character. The tree is known by its fruit; a persistent rebellious soul will reflect its master.

## #26 THE DREAM.....

*I see two keys, one named “trust” and the other “self-denial”, which I am aware are spiritual keys to understanding. I also notice an object that looks like a chair. Across the top I observe the word “trust” again. Then I glance upward in the sky and see these words printed: “Keep looking up!”*

Keys symbolize instruments used to unlock doors and locks. They are also a means of opening something to us. The chair speaks of an object on which to sit or rest. The keys and the chair signify to me that trust and self-denial are keys to a state of rest for the Christian. There can be no true trusting unless we are yielding to the Lord and denying our own will and ways. Trust is the human attitude of resting in the will of God. Self-denial is the human requirement of exchanging the fleshly for the divine. We will find it hard to trust the Lord for anything if we know that we are self-seeking in our requests and not in the Lord’s will.

God desires to channel His faith through us to accomplish His will. Faith comes peacefully to the Christ-centered soul. It does not have to be pumped up, talked up or confessed until one is blue in the face. These are mere human efforts trying to produce spiritual results. The trusting soul will find rest though there be outward conflict. Trusting hearts will find it easier to allow faith to move through them because they have no selfish motives, and desire only God’s perfect will.

In order for us to see more clearly into the spiritual realm, we must be freed from the bondage of the natural realm. Self-denial is the instrument for this. To allow God to work death in us will also allow Him to work His spiritual life in us. It is only by taking up our cross and denying self that we can produce spiritual fruit. Christ states this often.

Now the phrase “keep looking up” speaks of our spiritual attitude when we are in a state of trust and self-denial. The word “keep” means to continue; “looking” speaks of expecting, watching or focusing; “up” signifies the direction of our looking and trusting. God is the object of our faith and our source of all good things. Some answers to prayers will take long years of waiting and expectancy. Only a trusting and self-denying soul will be able to continue looking upward until the answer comes.

## #27 THE DREAM.....

The following dream came several years after the previous one but deals somewhat with the same subject so will be placed here.

*I am lying on my chest on a wooden bridge which crosses a stream. As I look down into the waters, two keys fall out of my front shirt pocket and drop below into the creek. One key is gold and the other is silver. I begin to think to myself that I must retrieve these keys before the muddy sediment covers them. The water is very calm at present but I know it will soon be stirred up so I must act quickly.*

I perceive immediately that the two keys symbolize to me the keys of trust and self-denial. They appear gold and silver to remind me that these qualities are to be valued as precious and priceless to our spiritual walk. My lying down on the bridge reveals my spiritual state of laziness. In this state we are apt to allow our spiritual growth and advancement to be hindered. The enemy of our souls will take advantage of this to rob us and cause further defeat. We must learn to quickly regain lost ground and thus not allow ourselves to drift downwards.

Those keys are easier to retrieve lying on the surface of the mud just under the water. Later, as the mud covers them they will be more difficult to find. So it is in spiritual matters. If sin is confessed and repented quickly we will not lose much ground. If not, however, we will regress spiritually and may also have to be dealt with by our Lord in a grievous manner. This action on His part will not be pleasant and could have been avoided if we had judged ourselves promptly.

Let us look at the prophet Jonah--we all know the story of this disobedient prophet. It made no difference to the Lord that Jonah did not want to preach and prophesy to Nineveh (for whatever personal reasons). We must learn the same as we mature in spiritual duties. The Lord is the Boss and we are to obey. Now Jonah decided to run away from his mission and refused to obey his Master. The prophet's sins were rebellion, complaining, stubbornness and an unloving attitude. My friends, God does not run a democracy! We do not find his will for us and then vote on whether to obey it. This is the reason many Christians can not discover God's will for their lives at a given time.

Let me say here, we may fall short and not succeed in some works the Lord gives us. Then He will either let us miss His best and give us something lesser to do, or He will require that thing to be done at all costs. The option is His, not ours as to what choice He makes in the matter. In Jonah's case the Lord would not take "no" for an answer. He could have called another prophet to do the job but Jonah needed to learn obedience. Thus Jonah goes to "hell and back" in the belly of a fish at the bottom of the sea. He repented and confessed his sins, and cried out for God's mercy and received it.

God is mainly concerned with Jonah's sin of rebellion. After being vomited up on the coast Jonah did proceed to carry out his mission, yet his unloving attitude had changed very little. We are left with Jonah pouting under a tree wishing he were dead. Nevertheless, he was obedient--we hope that sometime in the future he became right in his attitude with the Lord, but we are not informed of this.

Look at what God said to Jonah after he came out of the fish's belly, "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time" (Jonah 3:1). Poor Jonah, he hears the same word again and, though still not liking the mission, is determined to obey this time. Hard lessons of reproof and discipline should not have to be repeated--they should be remembered well. I was then reminded to take up again the keys of trust and self-denial and to move on with the Lord--not delaying His purposes or plans for me.

## #28 THE DREAM.....

A third time I dream of two keys.

*I am looking for two keys in many cabinet drawers. I open one drawer and find layers of white cloth. As I'm lifting the layers my hand presses down and discovers the keys underneath. While pulling them out I notice strings of pearl necklaces lying on and between the cloths.*

From previous dreams the two keys symbolize trust and self-denial. The pearls again reveal these keys are priceless and of great value in our spiritual progress. If they have been lost or laid aside we must search diligently until we find them, for unless they are retrieved we can not advance in our spiritual walk. The white cloth which covers and undergirds the keys speaks of the righteousness of Christ providing these instruments for our use.

Trusting and self-denial join together as faith and works and sowing and reaping. We can not properly trust in the Lord as long as we hold onto our own will and desires. When we trust we are saying to God, "I leave it to You alone to work and do as You will." We are not trusting in God when we put our confidence in our flesh. The only cure for flesh is death---nailed to the cross and buried. Trusting and self-denial are fine companions and should not be separated. Trust relies on God's life and will; self-denial is the means of letting go of self so Christ can be held.

For the Lord to give me three dreams over a period of several years on these two keys simply reveals my need of them and my need to be reminded often.

## #29 THE DREAM.....

*I am flying swiftly through the air and soar into some high-tension wires. They appear to be of the kind we see across the country from the great generators at dam sites. As I strike these wires they give way like large rubber bands and propel me backwards. I quickly maneuver about and break free to proceed onward. The whole time I am aware of the danger of these electrical wires.*

*The scene changes and I find myself in the room of a house where I hear much noise and movement up on the roof. I climb up and out on this roof to find the source of the noise. To my surprise I discover several, maybe four to six, large black demons crawling about on all fours. These spirits appear to be concealing something or someone, and I realize they do not want me to know this. Without fear I crawl forward and am able to catch a quick look at a person behind these demons. That person I know is Satan. Immediately I begin rebuking him in the name of Jesus Christ.*

We must remember that in our spiritual walk and warfare we will often find ourselves rebuking the devil. We know Satan is a fallen angel who has an angelic form that is limited to a certain time and space even in the spirit world. We as individuals will rarely, if ever, deal directly with him, but Satan has a host of demons that make up a large army to carry out his evil will. We rebuke the devil because he is the chief prince over all other evil forces---thus his well known title “prince of darkness.”

The high tension wires in this dream symbolize the power of our enemies which is spiritual wickedness in high places. We stated before that, as we move up in rank and file in God’s army, we may contend more with higher ranking spirits. We move from footmen to horsemen and up to the spiritual rulers. We should not be surprised as we move up higher in our spiritual walk if we encounter stronger and more powerful forces set against us. We should expect this.

The large demons on the roof of the house symbolize powerful and dark spirits attempting to prevent movement in the prayer-life, the roof being upward and the covering for the spiritual house. Yes, the enemies of our souls will attempt, if possible, to delay, hinder or stop our praying. Satan’s hiding himself behind his lower ranking but very powerful cohorts symbolizes his attempt to often conceal his real plans from us. Satan works best in the dark. Lies and deceptions are his greatest weapons against man.

The masses of mankind are under his power but know it not. Satan and his allies frequently operate through people, government and yes, even through the guise of religion. As we become more discerning and more familiar with God’s Word, we will see through the means and methods Satan uses to trick and deceive us. We must use the name of Jesus, His power and His authority to defeat our foe. Our adversary will give way as we do this, for Satan must draw back when truth or light is cast against him.

### #30 THE DREAM.....

*I am walking through a large, long house and see several huge lions. I walk cautiously from room to room. As I enter one room I close the door behind me, and then hear a lion approaching and lying against the outside of the door. My exit is blocked and I am under great temptation to fear. I warn myself that I must leave this house before nightfall for that is when the lions will feed. Suddenly there is a torch in my hand with fire glowing from it. As I begin to move from room to room holding this light, the lions glare at me as they await the hour of darkness.*

*The dream then changes and I find myself standing and teaching on these verses from Matthew 7:21-23:*

*“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.”*

The house of lions signifies the world, now the domain of the devil. Satan is referred to as a roaring lion roaming about to devour souls. We must know our enemy and defend ourselves against his attacks. Demons come and go in our lives whether we are aware of them or not. We must use the weapons provided to defend ourselves against these attacks. Fire is a symbol of God and of light and purifying. Just as fire purifies gold and silver and at the same time destroys the chaff and useless substances, so God's fire purifies us and destroys our sin and dead works. God Himself is called a consuming fire in the book of Hebrews.

Now in the natural world lions and wild beasts are afraid of fire. They may not be afraid of man, but fire will put them to flight. Demons work and hunt in the dark, for it is their most favorable element. The fire of God's presence or word will reveal the demons' activities and cause them to flee in terror. We must allow the light and fire of God's Word to burn in us and do its work. We can quench this fire by our refusal to submit to God and His plans, and thereby open ourselves to harm by the enemy's demonic forces. It is important to keep our lamps burning and the oil flowing at all times.

The connection between the two phases of the dream, the scriptural portion and the scene in the house is this: the lions will devour and deceive many into thinking they are God's servants. Satan has used his darkness to blind truth to the heart that is not open to the whole Word of God. Those who do not receive the fire and true light of God's Word will have no protection from the powers of darkness.

These verses spoken by our Lord are hard but must have their place. They are warnings to be heeded. Many professing Christians who find themselves in the state of saying "Lord, Lord" will be denied one day by that Lord. It matters not about our denominational beliefs or professions. Christ will address many of them and speak those hard words. What a sad time to find out one is rejected.

It is good and great to minister in the name of the Lord. It is good to have gifts and services usable for His kingdom. Ministry and works, however, are no signs in themselves that a soul is submitted to the lordship of Christ. Even true believers can minister gifts and works yet be out of God's will, ending up backslidden and worldly in their personal lives.

In these verses it is interesting that the Lord never affirms or denies these gifts or ministries, but He does address the heart of the speakers who call Him Lord and tells them that they are full of sin and iniquity. To call Jesus Lord is to imply He is just that, and that we are submitted to Him in word and

deed. Yes, my friends, it is sad but true that many shall use the Lord's name to minister and may indeed help people much, but they will be denied entrance into His heaven; their motives and lives were not right before Him. Yes, even, sinful, backslidden and lukewarm persons can be used of God. God can honor His Word even if it comes from an evil vessel.

Woe to the preacher and teacher who tell people they are saved, yet those souls may never have truly believed and repented. Woe to the ministers who give false assurances and a license to sin to many souls, thus blinding the sinner in his sin and in the end damning those souls. Greasy grace and worldly living are not a part of the true Christian's lifestyle. (Greasy grace is the belief that one can merely confess Jesus as Lord and thereby be assured of heaven without true repentance. Thus one slides into heaven at the end without having persevered with Christ and without a practical overcoming life produced by submitting to the Holy Spirit.)

Surely the soul that has Christ and walks with Him may fall into sin, but he will be dealt with by his Lord. The soul that gives me problems is the one who seems to glory in God's grace and yet appears to have a license to sin. Yes, I know what is coming up now in many of your minds, but I will not spend much time on the doctrinal debating of such. I would say to the soul that lives in gross sin and lives a worldly life, "You never knew Christ, or you had Him and lost Him!" Take your choice. We may differ here, but I am not required by Scripture to believe that every one who says "Lord, Lord" or who claims to be born again is truly born again. I would rather shake them up and have them re-examine themselves to see if they are in the real faith than to confirm them into thinking they are Christians when their lives and fruit prove otherwise.

Some will say we should not cause a soul to doubt its salvation. I say that if that soul does doubt then one of two states exists: either the soul does not have Christ or the soul is not walking in the Spirit. Their doubting fears should lead them to seek Christ. Many doubt their salvation because they were talked into a mental Christianity without the Holy Spirit's having done a work in them. A soul may also be in willful sin against God, and the Lord's judgment and frequent chastening allow that soul to experience fear in order to cause him or her to run to Him.

Our Christian walk must be practical, so let it be so. My friends, if you have to check out your spiritual salvation by someone else's opinion, you are in a sad state of spirit! The Holy Spirit and the Word will bear witness with our spirits that we are His. Woe to the ministers that give false assurances to people who sit in their pews year after year that do not know Christ! Woe to the hearers that sit in those pews and never check truth out for themselves! Gullible and lukewarm souls will be deceived for they seek not truth with sincere hearts.

### #31 THE DREAM.....

*I am climbing a spiral staircase. At the top of this staircase is a book of promises. As I climb upwards I become very weary and discouraged. I stop and rest against the sides of this staircase at times in deep weariness and sorrow.*

In our spiritual walk we have long and short term goals. By God's promises in His Word and His promises made personal to us, we move on endeavoring to reach these goals. On this upward climb we come across many dangers that can rob us of our progress. They may slow us down or even stop altogether those things intended for us. In this dream as I climbed the spiral staircase all seemed so mundane and wearisome. Step after step, each seemed the same without any variation or interest. Would I ever reach the top of this staircase or cease traveling in circles? Weariness and discouragement seem to mock us at times. To encourage and uplift us during these periods we need a word from the Lord which is a "rhema" from the Spirit that gives us new life and hope.

When I awakened from this dream I lay on my bed pondering its meaning. I thought to myself that is just where I am---going around in circles and going nowhere! Then it seemed the Spirit spoke in my spirit and said to me, "It is true you are going round in circles, but you are going up also." It was as if I could now look at this staircase from a side view instead of from my bottom to top view. God may show us a different view of things. Our faith must see what God tells us and not always what we see in the natural. We will find, if we continue our upward climb holding to faith and steadfastness, we shall one day arrive at the top of that staircase and find His promises waiting in reality for us.

## #32 THE DREAM.....

*I am flying and see a large rock at the base of a body of water. Circling the rock for further examination, I recognize it as the Rock of Gibraltar, that old fortress that separates Europe from Africa. Then I find myself moving under the surface of the strait there and being able to see in the waters. I look around and observe many sunken metal ships, hulks of steel that lie rusting at the bottom of the strait. Next I see several men in black rubber suits with blow torches cutting into these vessels to remove them from blocking the channel.*

This channel, only eight miles across, is a vital entry point connecting the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The rock symbolizes to me our spiritual fortress and wall. We must be on guard from this fortress to thwart the enemy's attempts to gain entry into our ports. I am told that on the surface of the strait it appears the water from the sea is moving into the ocean, but in reality most of the real flow is moving from the cold ocean to the warm sea. As in spiritual matters all is not as it seems.

In our spiritual wars often small battles determine great victories. We must put up and maintain our spiritual fortress if we are to gain and keep our victories. Our minds are like this strait, narrow, but very vital to life. If our minds are captured, all else will give way soon. The sunken ships in the dream symbolize past battles and victories won. These ships are the enemy's ships that we sank as they sought to gain entry into our waters.

The men with the underwater torches signify the enemy. If their attempts to gain entry by surface maneuvers fail, then they will try another method. We must have our spiritual radar and sonar in working order and be ever watchful for our adversaries' different efforts to achieve an entrance. If the surface ships can not break through, the enemy will try to clear the channel below and use submarines or hidden tactics more subtle in nature. Let us give our enemies credit for these efforts; they are determined and persevering in their attempts to destroy our spiritual life.

It is often the unseen forces that wash the foundations from under a great house. Satan may not get the serious, faithful Christian to fall into sins of lust, greed and the like, but he may succeed in luring us away through sins of pride, unforgiveness, petty bitterness and self-importance. Remember, it is often the little foxes that spoil the vines. Why, a root of bitterness, a little unforgiveness hidden to all, and a spiritual pride cloaked in false humility have done wonders in destroying a person's usefulness in God's kingdom. Let us root up the smallest sins, as they often grow to be large trees that are not so easily removed. If we overcome them while they are small we will spare ourselves much needless suffering and correction from the Lord.

### #33 THE DREAM.....

*I am in a house looking at a picture in which are painted seven white doves. Waves of water are surging against the outside of the house, and the water begins to flow inside to cover the surface of the floor.*

*As I glance outside I see in the distant waters two great sailing ships about to enter battle with each other. Each has a standard or flag flying from its mast. I then find myself swinging a sword in battle on one of these ships as they pull abreast to engage in warfare. My whole purpose in this warfare is to capture the enemy's standard.*

As I lie pondering these things I think of the seven doves and of the Scripture found in Isaiah 11:2 that explains the doves to me. He prophesies of Christ:

“And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD...” (KJV).

Six attributes are revealed, yet the first phrase "spirit of the LORD" speaks of all that He is. Seven, the number most found in Scripture, speaks of the fullness of perfection. These same characteristics of Christ are given to us to fulfill our missions and charges. The dove speaks of the gentleness of the Holy Spirit. He comes in quietness often as a still, small wind, yet a powerful one. We must learn to yield to Him and let Him rest in us. We will then be empowered to do what God calls us to do.

Our spiritual houses will often come under attack. Jesus said the storms and winds and waters would beat upon that house---notice “would”, not “might”! If we walk in Him and in His Spirit we will remain standing when the storm passes by. Sometimes we are on the defensive; at other times we are called to offensively attack. The two ships symbolize the battle between good and evil, God's ways and the devil's ways. Satan's standard is deception, hate and evil; God's standard is truth, love and goodness.

Our standard is often represented by the name of Jesus Christ, that name which overcomes all. Let us battle to win and battle to bring down the devil's standard. Our weapon is always the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God without which we can not engage effectively in this spiritual walk and warfare. This sword will cut through any weapon the adversary launches against us. It is empowered by the Holy Spirit and given authority through the name of Jesus.

### **#34 THE DREAMS AND A SPOKEN WORD.....**

*I received several short dreams which directed me to move from my present location to another state a few thousand miles away. In the first of these dreams I was simply told, "You are going to Montana." Then I was given portions of my future address in three separate dreams, and finally the name of the street.*

It is important to be in the right location at the right time. God had been leading me away from public teaching for several years and wanted my time spent primarily in intercession. Thus began several years of residing alone in my private dwelling to enter His school of prayer. These dreams were simply prophetic in nature to confirm the Lord's leading when I reached His destination for me. We are to move in the light we are given and the Lord will open and confirm things as we obey.

For example, when I arrived in this rural mountainous community, I began looking for a small, quiet place to live. I found a likely ad in the local paper, and an acquaintance telephoned for further details. When I saw her write down the address, I recognized the street and numbers as those given in the dreams above! Without further inquiry I rented the place on the spot. God can be very precise when necessary.

Again, the Lord will confirm and reveal His plans more plainly and in extraordinary ways when the revelation is needed. Usually these methods are only given in difficult situations when timing is important, or at times of a major change in ministry or movement. They are also given when there is strong opposition and when our adversaries may be hindering or trying to deceive us. God does this to affirm and encourage us to move in His revealed light so we will not be deterred by opposition.

### #35 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*As I sleep these words are spoken to me, "I am watching over my word to perform it."*

This is the latter part of a verse found in Jeremiah 1:12. Jeremiah has been given a vision and asked by the Lord what he has seen. The prophet answers he has seen an almond tree and the Lord responds,

“Thou hast well seen: for I watch over my word to perform it.”

God is using symbolism and giving a kind of riddle to Jeremiah. The almond tree is the first of the food-bearing trees to blossom and produce after the long winter. The Hebrew word for watching and almond are very much alike. Watching over, hastening and wakening are all synonyms of the same word. Thus God is saying to Jeremiah that He is watching over, hastening and awakening His prophetic word to fulfill it in due season.

God was speaking the same word to me. He has an appointed time to answer prayers and we must await that timing. We need faith and endurance to inherit His promises. Often God gives us great promises, and after a period of time we find that they appear dead and fruitless. This is the time of winter for the vision. Winter is when all seems to die and become useless or hopeless. The trials of life and the enemy of our souls will surely test and shake our promises, yet these afflictions appear to be needed by us to mature our faith and steadfastness.

In the winter the fruit trees grow brown and the leaves die, and all that remains is a dead stump that appears lifeless for months on end. As the season passes and the warm sun draws closer in the spring, that same dead looking plant begins to take on a new appearance of fullness and life. So it is with our promises that pass through trying times. They have life in them throughout the winter but it is hidden and kept secret to the natural eye, yet it is there and at the right season will blossom quickly and begin to bear fruit.

Once there was another almond branch that was the rod of the high priest Aaron. It was dead to all appearances and may have been used for years as a shepherd's staff. One day it was placed before the Lord in the Holy of Holies, and the next morning the rod had sprouted buds and leaves and even brought forth almonds. God can and does cause life to come out of death. What He commands to die in us, He will use to cause new life to come forth.

Again, unless we die we remain alone and of no spiritual value to His kingdom. When we die to self He will give us new life that will bless and feed many. All things, whether it be ourselves, our gifts or our ministries, must pass through death and be raised up in resurrection before becoming useful to God and others. We eat fruit and meat to survive. Yes, these foods were once living, but before they could feed men and animals they had to die. They were killed and eaten and our systems reassimilated them so they could be of benefit to our bodies.

So it is in the spiritual realm. We also must die to self and receive new life in Jesus Christ before we can bring forth spiritual fruit unto God and be of benefit to others. The fruit or life therefrom will blossom if that person, ministry or gift has truly gone to the grave. Much Christian work is of wood, hay and stubble---useless in the spiritual realm. That which has been consigned to the cross will come forth as gold, silver and precious stones.

### #36 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am talking with a friend when the Lord speaks very quietly to me in a still small voice. I seem only to recall His voice as the following event proceeds.*

*I am standing in the midst of a sunny pleasant summer's day when suddenly, quietly and windlessly, a very thick and heavy snow begins to fall. I then recall the quiet voice and tell my friend that God has spoken this to me, "I can change things in a moment of time."*

I awaken to be reminded that God is in control of my lot and life. He can change matters very quickly when He is ready. When he does act, though it may take years for Him to bring about certain promises He has given us, immediate and drastic change may occur.

Remember, one day Joseph sat a prisoner of Potiphar. Later that same day he was second only to Pharaoh. For a long time Naaman was covered with leprosy. In a matter of moments his skin was restored like the flesh of a little child. For thirty-eight years a man lay crippled on his bed, yet at a word from Jesus he walks away carrying that bed.

Yes, for many generations we have been told that Christ will come again to snatch His church away. We can be sure one day this mortal shall put on immortality, the natural shall put on the celestial. Not only can God change things quickly, He can do it so quietly that not even a leaf is rustled nor a noise produced. Yes, we need to remind ourselves and others that God can change things in a moment of time. Not only can He, but at the right moment He will.

### #37 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*In my sleep, this word found in Psalm 37:37 is spoken to me, "Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright: For the future of that man is peace."*

The lesson here is to understand the term "blameless" and to realize that this state of spirit brings peace. We will refer to the practical side of blamelessness. We are to be blameless before the Lord, not perfect in the sense many suppose. Our righteousness comes from Jesus Christ but our lives must bear fruit to that or else we can question our state of holiness. We as Christians are always being sanctified and changed. We all have faults and weaknesses that must be overcome. What we call gross sins need to be stopped quickly, or true repentance is lacking. Our other imperfections and infirmities will often be more slowly dealt with by the Lord.

To be blameless is to be in a state where we are walking in the light of the known will of God. This condition will always produce peace and a clear conscience. Each time the Lord refines us, we like silver will have dirt and dross rise to the surface where it can be seen more clearly. We then can remove or judge it with God's help, and through confession and repentance gain victory over that stronghold in our lives. We do go through stages where we feel pure and holy and that all is well with our soul. Our hearts do not condemn or convict us. This is a state of peace and joy. Later the Lord will begin to refine more and show us new dirt and dross that need to be removed. We then become somewhat grieved realizing we are so sinful and weak.

Yet, my friends, we had these things in us from the time before we came to Christ, but God in His mercy does not show us immediately the full extent of our sin and selfishness. Our poor human frames could not bear it! This is why the Lord takes us through degrees of sanctification that we can partake of His nature and grace. Again, to be blameless in practical terms is to be walking in the light we have been given and not willfully and knowingly rebelling against the dealings of the Lord, or sinning purposely against Him. This is a state of peace and joy that causes us to move upward with the Lord.

### #38 THE DREAM.....

*I am teaching on the word “meekness” and these verses found in I Corinthians 1:26-29:*

*“For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God.”*

The apostle here is speaking of our call to salvation through Jesus Christ. The gospel is said by the prophet Isaiah to be preached to the poor. Its main appeal is to the poor and common man. God has nothing against the exceptional person, but they may find it harder to receive Christ. The wise, mighty and noble have many advantages in this world. They often see no need for God and are self-sufficient. So they think! We who are less endowed know we have only God to lean on in difficult times. Jesus said the poor in spirit are blessed. Why? Because they realize their spiritual poverty and total dependence on God, and are always drawing from Him.

God does offer salvation to the rich, wise and noble of this world, but few will respond to that call. Why? Because it will cost them more to come God’s way. They will have to be brought down in order to be built up. The wise of this world must become as fools in their own eyes to receive the secrets of God. Remember, God still hides from the wise and prudent, but reveals things to babes and the simple. Moses and Paul were wise in this world and became great spiritual leaders for God, but look at the price they paid to be brought to their elevated positions.

Now concerning this word “meekness,” it does not mean weakness or feebleness. In simple terms, it means humility and dependency. Meekness is the knowledge that without Christ we are nothing! Meekness depends solely on God’s grace and help. Yet meekness is strength, for it knows its power and help comes from God. Yes, only the meek shall inherit the kingdom of God. Meek persons are those who allow the Spirit of truth to live and move through them. They do not think too highly or lowly of themselves. They evaluate things in truth.

Meekness is a humble attitude that is based on knowing the truth. Jesus was very meek and told us to learn this of Him, yet He was very powerful with God. He never spoke or acted outside the Father’s will. The way upward spiritually is to be nothing in ourselves. Then God gives us of Himself! The outward man must perish that the inward man of God can come forth.

### #39 THE DREAM.....

*I am standing as an angel approaches me. He has a very radiant presence about him that glows with peace and pleasantness. He carries three loaves of bread in his hands and informs me that one loaf is for me to eat and two loaves are for others. I take the loaves from him and begin to eat from mine.*

Angels of God minister as the Lord commands and sends. An angel twice awakened Elijah the prophet from a weary sleep and told him to eat bread for his long journey. Angels ministered to Jesus after His forty day fast. On this occasion Christ rebuked the devil and refused his suggestion to turn stones into bread. In His extreme hunger He waited for His father to supply His need. So I can assume the angels came to bring bread and to strengthen Him. They came not only at the beginning of His public ministry but also in His dark hour in the Garden of Gethsemane while His own slept. One day I shall ask what that angel said or did that helped Jesus during His intense travail.

Angels are still in the business of helping the children of God, the joint heirs of Christ. They come only at the bidding of the Lord, not at our bidding. Angels probably have much to do in ministering to true Christians but we may not perceive most of it. Angels deal a lot in what we call circumstances or providential movings. Surely, if we are called to spiritual battles against wicked demonic forces that seek to tempt and seduce us, we should not find it hard to accept that Christ sends His angels to aid us in buffeting and countering their attacks.

It does not appear since the Holy Spirit came to dwell in true believers that angels have ceased their workings for us. Not only did they minister to Christ during His earthly stay but also to Peter, Paul, John and others. So let us know that God still uses His heavenly messengers when and where He appoints. However, our focus is to be on Jesus our Lord. Angels are sent to minister to Christians because of our relationship and covenant with God. They, like the Holy Spirit, always do all to magnify Jesus and never subtract from His glory and honor. For in truth angels come by Christ's will and command and serve His purposes.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14 KJV).

The three loaves speak to me of heavenly bread, three being the symbol of heaven. God sends us spiritual food. Christ is our bread from heaven. His life and words feed us, whether given directly by His Holy Spirit or by His Spirit moving through angels and members of the body of Christ or by any other avenue and method.

The angel's giving me three loaves but allowing me to eat only one speaks this to me: we are given heavenly graces and aid not only to feed ourselves for our growth and development but also to feed others. We give from what we are given. Without Jesus we can give nothing of any spiritual value. Yet He is our friend at midnight who always has a supply. We not only give to people but we give back to God a portion of what He gives us. We are only stewards of all we have or shall ever have. All is Christ's and we are His.

Love must give. Love must reveal itself in emptying itself for God and others. Yet as love gives up itself it will never be empty. When love ceases giving of itself it then ceases to be love.

## #40 THE DREAM.....

*I see this portion of Scripture from Psalm 126:4-6 laid out before me:*

*“Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (KJV).*

The psalmist in verse four refers to the southern part of Israel or the desert area that depends totally on seasonal rains for life. Because of rebellion and disobedience the children of Israel were led into captivity under the yoke of hard taskmasters. Long-term rebellion always leads to harsh dealings from God’s rod, yet He is willing to lift that rod when we are ready to confess and forsake our sin. In this psalm are some great lessons for us. Whether our tears are from our own selfish reaping or from Godly suffering, He can refresh and bring joy and life from pain and sorrow.

There is often to the casual observer a fine line between suffering as a result of sin and rebellion, and suffering as a result of true persecution, tribulation and affliction (which are our lot at times for being faithful to God and His Word). We are promised reward and approval in Christ’s Kingdom for these latter sufferings. Frequently we must endure great sorrow and conflict before gaining our spiritual victories. Thorny crosses precede golden crowns. We do not always leave the battles without scars or pains.

Those who continually go forth speak of perseverance in the sowing of seeds. Seeds are intended to produce fruit and grain. Those who sow in tears are informed that there is a weeping at times in this spiritual pilgrimage. Tears speak of sorrow, pain and suffering. We will all experience these in this life, yet in our sorrows Christ will comfort and sustain us as we trust and cast our burdens on Him. As we move up into higher levels with the Lord we encounter tears and sorrows of a different sort than the ordinary believer. That soul will tread paths that the babe and novice will not understand. Children know little of labor pains or toil to provide food for them, but as they grow up they become aware that these are the lot of all. Novices and babes, let alone those who we consider worldly, carnal and lukewarm, have no deeper knowledge of what it really means to lay down their present lives for the Lord. Much of the suffering inflicted on mature believers is from such persons.

The path to deeper levels in Christ is often trod alone and in small groups. Why? Because it is a costly price to the flesh and the natural man. It costs that soul dearly to be brought down to a place of humility which is the only soil in which God can begin to reveal His deeper ways. Much of the deeper soul’s life is formed in darkness and hidden places, far from the eyes of gazing men. We may sow in tears but we also will reap from that labor. We labor not in vain in the Lord. Our very tears that reveal our sufferings for Him will be the waters that cause the seeds to sprout.

We will never see all the good we do in the name of the Lord in this life---much will be laid up for us in the next. The Lord, however, will let us see enough to confirm our labors here and encourage us to press on in our sowing with the sure knowledge that there will be a day of harvest. There is a time to sow and a time to reap, a time for tears and for sorrows, and a time for joy and for fruitfulness.

## #41 THE DREAM.....

*I am in the midst of many waters---waters from streams, waterfalls, rivers and fountains. Abundant, refreshing and beautiful is this ocean of waters.*

Christ and the Holy Spirit are often likened to life-giving waters. Water means life to us; we must have it to live. Christ said He would give waters that would cause persons never to thirst, but He did not say that they would never drink again. He meant that having Him would guarantee a source of water always, as long as we drink from Him continually. Just as the body needs water throughout the day, so the spirit needs spiritual water throughout its lifetime.

We would consider it absurd for one to say that he drank water once a long time ago, yet some Christians seem to imply this when they say they once were saved from their sins. They once had an experience. They once were sanctified. My friends, salvation had a beginning in us, but let us not forget that salvation is also a Person. Jesus is made unto us salvation and sanctification and all things. We are being saved and sanctified! We are growing by that living spiritual water. Salvation has a beginning and a present and an end. All these are found in the Person of Jesus Christ.

My friends, your past experiences are of little value if they are not current also. What good is a past experience if we have no present ones to live by? Yes, I know it is not very popular to say this, but it needs to be said. I do not care how many souls you brought to the Lord in the past. If your walk with God is not up to date today that past will not carry you through to the future. God is a God of the now! He lives in the eternal present as far as we are concerned.

I have sadly come across many professing Christians living in open gross sin. Call them backslidden, carnal, worldly or lukewarm, God has a message for them. They must repent or He will remove their light and they will be forever lost! My friends, God offers no fire insurance and false eternal security to the rebellious, self-seeking soul. We had better examine ourselves by His Word and not by men's distorted interpretation of Scripture. Remember, it is not the hearers only but the doers of God's words! It is not the professors only but the possessors of Christ's life that truly please God.

Moving on to more pleasant things, look up Ezekiel 47:3-5. I will paraphrase as you read in your Bibles.

“...the man measured...he brought me through the waters; the waters were to my ankles...Again he brought through the waters; the waters were to my knees...Again he brought me through; the waters were up to my loins. Afterwards he measured...and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.”

One of the most revealing Scriptures concerning our spiritual walk and progress is found here in these words. We all start our spiritual walk as babes, newborn in Christ. We feed on milk and we grow but, sad to say, most Christians are just like children on the beach---young and immature. We watch as they run up and down the shoreline playing and kicking up the surf with their little feet. They make a big splash, but little more. New Christians are supposed to grow on the milk of the Word and move on to the meat of maturity. However, some refuse and some are unable to receive the meat, yet these babes attempt to take on ministry and leadership roles. This service will be of little value to God's kingdom and may even be a hindrance. Look around and you will see a multitude of ministries, seminaries and churches that are run and maintained by immature Christians. Some have growth, yes, but is it fleshly or spiritual?

Once I heard of a church in a city that had over a thousand children in their Sunday School program. I was curious to discover their secret. My friends, to my horror I learned that the Sunday School teacher had promised to swallow goldfish if the students brought a certain number of kids from their neighborhood. How foolish, how insulting to God! My friends, I can tell you another thing. That leader will have to keep swallowing goldfish to keep those kids coming. Gimmicks of any sort will not produce spiritual results. Yes, the little babes and children make a big splash and create much activity which seem to impress many, but will never produce any real lasting fruit.

Now some on the beach venture further into this river---they go up to their knees. At that level it is harder to walk, yet one still has quite enough control of his movements. The soul who goes deeper into the waters up to his thighs is surprised to find that the current pulls stronger at his body. He almost panics as the undercurrent draws him out, his feet skimming the sand under the waters. Now, here is the place where many stop in their spiritual walk. Why do they stop? Because they begin to realize that they can no longer have much control over their practical life in God. They wish to serve on their own terms. They are torn between their desires to go all the way with God and their desires to know and control that going. As long as they keep their feet on the sands of the river they can run back and forth and limit God's control over their movements. What a sad state, for that soul has enough vision to know what God wants, but is not willing to submit himself to go deeper. That soul will never know God's best for him. He will always be wondering what He missed by limiting the Holy One of God.

Some will ponder and count the cost, and decide it is time to launch out into the deep. As that soul steps forward into the moving river, he feels it tugging at him. As he goes further lifting his feet in faith, he discovers to his amazement that he is no longer feeling the hard pulling of the current, but is flowing and floating with it. He is in waters now in which he can swim. The Bible tells us, my friends, that God is this river that can not be crossed. The more we move out into this wonderful river of the Lord the less control we have over our own lives, and the more we become controlled by His Holy Spirit. As we flow with this current we go much further and faster than when in those shallow waters.

Let us read one more wonderful portion of Scripture in Isaiah 33:21-23:

“But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey” (KJV).

This, my friends, describes that river we have been discussing. Do you understand? No oars, no tackle, no sails! Why? Because these imply human control and guidance. We do not need these human labors in the river of God. We cease from our own works and let Him work through and in us. We are to be lame! We must become weak to be strong in Him. We must learn to let the river move us. We do not lead it! In doing this we are given power of the Lord to overcome our enemies, to take spoils for the Lord. Then we are building up the body of Christ and building with gold, silver and precious stones---not as the novice and immature who often build with wood, hay and stubble.

We can move into this river by way of yielding to God's will and ways. Jesus foreran those waters for us and bids us to come in! Let us stop our wavering and vacillating and swim out into that vast river.

## #42 THE DREAM.....

The following dream was given to me immediately preceding my move to another location to enter into a time of intercession in much solitude.

*I am driving a car with four persons in it, and appear to be showing these people around the island on which I live. After finishing the tour, I find myself walking down to the edge of a beach and gazing out over the ocean.*

*The scene changes and I am now elsewhere in a mountainous region. I notice my feet are bleeding! I come to a small country store. Looking around the store, I see an object that catches my attention in a display area. It is a model of a mountain about two feet high. The mountain is composed of beings, beings which cover and shape the mountain completely. The beings are humans, demons and angels. At the top of the mountain stands the Lord Jesus. He appears to have His right arm, hand and index finger extended in a pointing motion. I have the impression that Christ is giving directions to someone.*

My driving four persons in a car symbolizes my teaching four groups on this island. My coming to the end of that tour was just that---an indication of that work's coming to an end. As I look over the ocean I am aware that my new direction lies across that sea. The country store in the mountains speaks of the new area where I will soon be living. The model of the mountain was twofold in meaning---literal and symbolic. Literal, for I would be living in the Rocky Mountains and symbolic, as I would deal more in the spiritual unseen mountains. These mountains would be battlefields with which to reckon.

God, to take us deeper must at times separate us from all! We will be called aside alone to be taught our new lessons. Moses, Elijah, Paul and even Christ went through these hidden years. It is often the hidden, mundane years of sameness and seemingly inactive states that drive us closer to God. We are hedged in by the Lord and seem unable to break free. Waiting, inactivity and boredom have a way of molding us into useful vessels. In the dream my feet were bleeding. This speaks of suffering. Yes, it is suffering at times to wait, long suffering to wait for years to see any outward fruit of our hidden times. In deeper waters we must be moved by God---not by man or man's need of us or our ministry! Suffering is often being able to minister, but being forbidden to do so. Obedience is better than sacrifice or working out of our own wills.

Jesus is not mentioned for eighteen years of His life. From twelve to thirty years of age we hear nothing, but He did the Father's will even then! Much of our time is spent in preparing us for ministry. It is far better to actually minister in the Spirit and be profitable to Him for a few short years than to spend a lifetime doing much work in our natural strength! Time, waiting and inactivity take their toll on our flesh. Friends, Christians and even ministers often misunderstand what God is doing, and thus they create more suffering for us. Those who move deeper often move alone. These my friends, are real pioneers! The same ones who fight our endeavors and tell us we have missed God's plan are often the ones who later follow the paths that God has us pioneer.

That mountain of beings symbolizes our spiritual warfare. At the top of all spiritual beings is Christ our Lord. Under Him is a vast army of angels, demons and human spirits that are warring to obtain victory! Christ stands at the top ready to give us, the members of His body, direction and guidance as needed. Though we often are not aware of it, angels are sent to help and protect us at given times. Demons also are sent from the devil to hinder and harm us if they can. Humans are frequently the unwilling or willing servants of God and of the devil. Much of the providential workings of God are carried out by His Holy Spirit through angels and Christians.

Above all these spiritual beings is Christ directing the trusting believer's life. He will give guidance and discernment to us in spiritual matters. Christ stands at the top having all wisdom and knowledge concerning our spiritual battles. Nothing takes Him by surprise nor will it take us by surprise if we are yielded to His Spirit and guided by Him. He will lead us on that narrow path and, even when it appears dark, He will give us the light we need to move ever upward. We will be led forth with His light or by His voice, and we will trust and obey Him.

## #43 #44 THE DREAMS AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

The two following dreams were given to me in one night. I did not see any real connection between them until later. Sometimes we receive certain revelations from the Lord but do not always get the full understanding of them at one time. It is sometimes a little here and a little there, line upon line, line upon line. We frequently have to search out, pray out, ponder and wait upon God. We may have to meditate and let the Spirit reveal as and when He pleases. Reading and studying the Word of God is often like that. We would be foolish indeed to say we had read the Bible once and had no need to do so again. We can never exhaust Scripture or ever grasp every new level available to us. The same words can be milk to one and meat to another.

*First dream: I see many shells, the sort you find on the seashore. These shells are shaped into an object that resembles a cross. I begin to handle and examine this shell-cross with interest. Then a voice speaks to me saying, "The shells have a special meaning."*

*Second dream: I am flying up and down in a swooping motion. Then I am on the ground gathering dark purple plums which are ripe and ready to eat. Looking upwards I see a large, forty-foot-high plum tree laden with fruit. I fly to its higher branches to pick more plums and encounter a large demonic being who attempts to prevent my taking the fruit. At that moment I find a sword in my hand. The spirit has a sword also and, as we fly about swinging and slashing at each other, we lock weapons. We fall to the ground and begin to fiercely wrestle one another. My opponent fights with rage and determination to keep me from that plum tree and its ripe fruit. Often I would break free and fly up quickly, snatching and eating a plum or two before the spirit attacks me again. This scene is repeated several times before I awake.*

Thoughts began to pour into my mind as I pondered these dreams, and I thought of death! Shells are the leftovers from former life in the sea. The shells in the shape of a cross speak twice of the symbol of death. I assumed the special meaning of the shells was death, but later discovered it was just partially so. In my research weeks later I came across some information that began to connect the two dreams. As I read the Bible I noticed the phrase "sellers of purple." I knew that purple was a dye used for thousands of years back in the Bible days. This dye was made from a shellfish called murex. The living animal was removed from its shell, and slowly and carefully an excretion was extracted from this mollusk. It was very costly and time consuming to produce. It is believed Phoenicians were named from this dye, as the root word of Phoenicia is "purple."

The costly dye was used by royalty and the wealthy. On the one hand, purple symbolizes royalty and high rank and on the other, sorrow and suffering. As the shellfish had to die before this expensive dye could be produced, so Christ had to die on the cross to have His life extracted from Him for our sins. It cost the Son of God his very life to redeem us. It will in like manner cost us much to go deeper with God.

We do not take up our cross to deal with sin, for the Lord has accomplished this. We take up our cross to put to death the flesh in us so that we are able to receive more of Christ's life. When God calls a Christian to higher service or authority, that soul must be brought down lower and deeper than the average soul. It is just that way! Moses, Elijah, Job, Paul and, yes, the many others who went deeper with God also went down deeper in death and had the cross-life worked well in them. Why, the apostle Paul declared that sufferings and conflicts were a truer sign of an apostle above all else.

So the special meaning of the shellfish is this: for higher calling and service we must go down deeper and let the cross and death be worked in us. Things do not just happen with God! God has no

favorites we know. God takes great pains and time to make a vessel of gold. Precious gems are not created easily---intense heat, pressure and cutting are needed. God considers these stones worth the time and expense to produce. Even Jesus, for the joy set before Him---the redemption of many men and women---endured the cross and death to gain those jewels. So must we.

Now consider the plum tree and the battle. As mentioned before, the purple plums and purple dye speak of royal service and suffering. They often go together---the cross and the crown, life and death! Newborn babies bring great joy to their mothers, but not before labor and great suffering. So it is with our spiritual walk---the suffering is counted worth the joy of the goal attained.

We think of a plum as something desirable---something special or of value to us. In the search for a higher level and deeper walk with Christ we must reach further and higher than normal. In that pursuit we will have opposition and conflict! Now the plum tree was forty feet tall. Forty often in Scripture signifies a period of testing or probation. Yes, we will be tested and proved of the Lord. God knows our character and abilities but proves us that we may know our own capabilities and weaknesses.

Those proved and tested who emerge victorious are ready for higher service in our Lord's kingdom. We do not pick and choose our crosses and trials---God does this for us. The Great Refiner knows what He is out to obtain. We often try to exchange our furnaces or crosses for more pleasant experiences, but then they would not be crosses, would they? We say, "If only God would remove this one thing, life would be so much better for me!" No, in the long run it would not, for without those crosses of His choice, we would only produce leaves and dead wood, but no fruit.

God created fruit trees to produce fruit! The only object Christ cursed while on earth was the fruitless fig tree. That tree boasted of fruit but had only leaves and branches. God cuts and prunes His own branches for one purpose---to provide more fruit. Leaves and branches can draw out the life of the vine into themselves, keeping the tree or vine from producing more fruit; God cuts these away so they will not be a hindrance to His purposes.

The enemies of our souls will attempt to prevent us from going deeper with the Lord. As we are given a weapon---the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God---so the enemy also has a sword. His words will be lies, discouragements, threats and whatever else he finds that will work against us. He stands between us and the plums! We will take the kingdom by force at times, and we will wrestle against our spiritual foes to obtain higher ground. We must drive the usurpers away.

Our warring is with the spirits of darkness and spirits that rule in higher places. Let us not be naive in assuming we will have easy, walk-over victories---we shall not! We will fight in the name of the Lord and, with His Spirit's aid, will win those battles to gain that higher ground for Him. We will battle and fight, but let us battle and fight to win! The fruit of those victories will be worth the conflicts we must endure!

## #45 #46 THE DREAMS.....

These two dreams came a few years apart, but both speak of similar things so I have included them here together.

*First dream: I am sitting in a chair at a table with a large mirror in front of me. I am handling a gold crown and am ready to try it on. As I place it on my head I notice that the golden crown has seven crosses around its rim.*

*Second dream: I speak the following phrase out loud, "The cross and the crown are one!"*

As stated before, there is no crown without the cross. Life comes by way of death. They are not to be divided in the sense of taking one without the other, for each completes the other. Grace must have its fruit. Faith must have its works. Man tries to keep them separate so as to excuse his duty to each. Seven is the number of perfection and completion in Scripture, thus the seven crosses on the golden crown speak of perfection. Perfect death will bring forth a perfect, pure, gold crown. Gold signifies that which is divine and pure. Crowns speak of victories, kingship and authority. Many try to wear crowns for which they have not been fitted. As faithful believers we obtain an overcomer's crown, but there are many other crowns offered to us. Look at Revelation 2:10:

"...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

What are the terms of that crown? It is faithfulness unto death. It is not for those who say "Lord, Lord" yet do not submit to His lordship.

Now read carefully Revelation 3:10-11 and heed its statements without attempting to add or subtract from them:

"Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown."

Notice the words "keep" and "hold fast." They speak of our responsibilities in this matter. We can be sure Christ will do His part, but He will not do our part also. He will keep us as He stated, but did you mark the condition of that keeping? The condition was that we keep His command to persevere! Christ does not warn without reason if there were no danger to be avoided. He tells us to hold fast that no one takes our crown. The implication here is the possibility that someone can do this. Remember, Satan is a thief and a destroyer who will steal or destroy our crowns if we allow him. We must not only hold on to our crowns but we must never waver nor backup during this spiritual pilgrimage.

Many talk of being called and chosen, but the same Scriptures speak of being faithful to the end also. If our position in Christ has no practical side, then we do well to examine ourselves to see if we are in the true faith. Surely no one can pluck us out of the Father's hands, but nothing is said of the soul's walking out of his own accord to live his own life again. Satan would seduce us this way. As we walk in the Spirit we have no fear but, if we remove ourselves from His will and way, we are then open to a great spiritual fall. Take heed, the apostle warns us, that when you think you are so strong, lest you fall!

## #47 THE DREAM OR VISION?.....

The following was a vision or dream---I could not discern which at the time. I use these terms as I was resting, but never remember sleeping or waking.

*Sword in hand, I am battling again with spirits! I am dressed in an outfit that causes me to think of Robin Hood. Before me is a large wall about twenty feet square composed of large, angry, evil, demonic faces. As I move toward the wall swinging my sword with supernatural strength, these hateful, evil faces---as one---retreat backwards. Now, where once this demonic wall stood, lies a large solid block of pure transparent gold.*

The wall being squared and made of evil spirits symbolizes this: our enemy presents a force that is real and actual. Though spirits are unseen in the natural realm, they are powerful and very real in the spiritual realm. We must perceive that the spiritual realm is as real as any other dimension. The sword's being swung by supernatural power speaks of the Holy Spirit's empowering us to use His Word against our enemies. My being dressed as Robin Hood symbolizes that we are to rob the enemy of his treasures.

Our adversary's treasures also include objects of the natural realm that are needed by the saints. We must take back from the enemy many natural things, whether monies or objects, that are to be used for God's purposes. These items are impartial in themselves but can be valuable to the work of the kingdom. Money is not evil---money is neutral. It has no moral standing of its own. It is a source of good or evil according to the user's intent. Money can be used to support missionaries or buy Bibles and tracts. It can build churches and feed needy saints.

Paul said all things are pure in themselves. All natural objects in this world can be channels of good or evil according to their usage. No one would think of a Bible as being a tool of evil, but it can be and has been used for wickedness. Many a wolf in sheep's clothing and many a covetous minister has proclaimed some truth for selfish reasons. Why, false religions have perverted the Bible to damn many souls. Again, most things are neutral in themselves---it is the user who determines their good or evil.

The transparent gold signifies that which is good and pure, like the objects we take from the enemy and set apart for godly use. It is not that they retain any holiness or virtue in themselves---that is not the case. It may offend some but in the New Testament church age we have no sanctified objects. Church buildings, altars or any ritual objects are not holy or unholy. The only item mentioned as being holy and bearing the Spirit of God is the body of Christ, His true believers. The presence of God's Spirit comes into a place simply because two or more believers gather together to worship and fellowship. When those believers depart from that building it again becomes a place having no good or evil.

## #48 THE DREAM.....

*I see the word “pragmatic”, and then find myself carefully watering several young green plants. These plants are in different locations.*

The word “pragmatic” simply means to concern oneself with that which is his own, or dealing with matters in a practical and realistic manner. This dream came at a time when I was counseling, responding to letters and just being a listening ear to several young Christians who lived in various locations. These were the young green plants I found myself watering in the dream.

Yes, we need to be careful in watering and helping younger Christians in their spiritual progress. We must water with the Word of God and teach them practical lessons from the Bible that will be useful in their present state and in preparing them for later growth. We must allow the Holy Spirit to direct us in these matters as no two persons are at the same level or have the same problems at any given moment. Pat answers are no help. We need God’s wisdom so we will not give meat to babes or milk to those who are more mature. We are to make disciples for the Lord by His help. We are not to be making disciples for ourselves. Disciples are born-again Christians in training.

Babes and novices are also to be taught about humility and about not being puffed up in false pride and self-worth. Many a young believer has been harmed greatly by supposedly mature leaders, who place them in positions of authority and leadership when they are unprepared. Sending babes to front line warfare is not wise, neither is entrusting them with leadership and authority simply because they are naturally gifted or talented. To feed the ego of the young nature is neither good nor wise. Now let us clarify something here. Even a person seventy years old is a babe if he has just come to the Lord, and must be treated accordingly. Yet a teenager may be mature if he has known the Lord and been grounded in the Word of God.

Let us consider another matter here. God may give unusual revelations to babes and novices at times to prepare them for future ministry, but these revelations are no sign of Christian maturity. We live by faith and the Spirit’s dwelling in us. Young Christians need to be taught that gifts and callings and powers and revelations are not necessarily daily experiences. They are usually given for exceptional times and needs. Let us prepare the young believer to live in the real natural world, but to live by the faith and grace of our spiritual Father. They must learn to live by daily faith in God--not by powers, gifts, dreams, visions or any other spiritual grace that may be given for ministry or special times.

## #49 THE DREAM.....

*I am riding down a street on a bicycle, and pass someone coming from the opposite direction. I greet him warmly and, to my surprise, that person speaks out some very unkind remarks. Anger seems to rise up in me. The "old man" is ready to react to these unprovoked words. As I formulate a most appropriate word-for-word response, I see the letters spelled out in front of me: "RETALIATION."*

God was beginning to deal with this quality in me which so easily led me astray. Retaliation is simply the act of returning injury for injury or an eye for an eye. We all desire justice in avenging our personal injuries and affronts, but we must learn to leave justice with God and not take action into our own hands. Vengeance is the Lord's and we can be sure in due time all injustice will be handled. In our lives we are often tested by the desire for justice in all cases. Now justice is good and God delights in justice, but as believers we must leave the judgment to Him and trust Him in these affairs. We are to forgive what a soul has done to us and leave the retribution to God, knowing that He will deal with all sin in some time and place.

Now let us make a clear distinction between personal revenge and governmental justice. Many Christians falsely assume that government has no right to take a life as a penalty for murder. Far from the truth! In the Old and New Testaments this justice was carried out. The same misguided souls that quote, "Thou shalt not kill", do not bother to read its true meaning which is really expressed in the words, "Thou shalt not murder." Those who commit murder should expect a righteous government to exact their lives in return.

When God laid down civil laws in Scripture they were intended to be upheld for the benefit of society. Government has a right and duty to maintain order and to execute murderers. Murder is the unlawful killing of a person or persons. Killing is the right of a government to put to death that murderer to restrain evil within its borders. Some will say that the death penalty is not a deterrent. Even if it did not deter others from committing murders, it would surely prevent the one being put to death from murdering again! Sad but true, the average murderer in the United States spends about seven years in prison---many return to freedom only to murder again.

In this context we are talking about cold-blooded murderers. We can find God's instructions on this in Exodus 21:12, 14 and Numbers 35:30-31. A good government must take into account self-defense killings, unintentional manslaughters, and those acts that fit the exception. These, however, are not called murders by God, but killings.

Since we are on the topic of murder, let us move on to a subject which is very controversial in America---abortion, the murdering of unborn children. It is grievous that a nation can legalize and justify this evil action. We can be sure that God will not overlook these millions of deaths or the millions of women who cause these deaths. Men and women are evil to the utmost as they murder unborn human life because of their immoral, sexual and pleasure-seeking affairs. Though the nation may legalize it, those committing such evils will find themselves in hell forever under the wrath of an angry God. Only true confession of murder and true repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ can avert such punishment.

Abortion is just one step up the ladder leading to other evils such as euthanasia, assisted suicide, destroying retarded and maimed persons and total genocide of a people. Hitler ran the course well, and was he not inspired by Satan himself?

What an expression of warped thinking and perversion of justice when women and men fight against capital punishment with posters of "thou shalt not kill", yet themselves murder countless unborn children at their convenience! These same persons will fight tooth and nail for the rights of animals and

pets, but will murder unborn babes of whom God said He knew them in their mothers' wombs---such a gross, sub-human evil. Yes, God will soon call America into judgment for these abominations before His eyes when people call evil good and good evil.

God will have perfect justice in the end and none will have a place to debate it. If Christ said that evil men would come into judgment for every idle word spoken, surely He will not look kindly at murderers! People will be judged out of His records, and they will be just and perfect accounts. These things are not pleasant to hear, but God warns mankind to turn from their wicked ways or face a perfect judge who well knows how to deal with evil-doers. He may enlarge hell's borders to accommodate them!

Now we will return to our previous subject of governmental justice in a nation. Of interest are the New Testament Scriptures that tell us the two duties of government are to reward good and punish evil! The apostle Paul states that government acts as a minister of God and does not bear the sword in vain which was, my friends, the sword for putting to death those who had committed capital crimes. Social law and order must be maintained in any society, and anarchy held in check. The government's requirements for restitution and its penalties for breaking the law must be met. Repentant Christians at times need to make amends. Not that the murderer or law-breaker can not be forgiven by God, but society has the right and duty to uphold all law that is deemed necessary to keep order. Otherwise anarchy would prevail.

Now retaliation comes in a more subtle form to believers who wish to move deeper with the Lord. We may find ourselves retaliating in our hearts against the Lord because God has not answered or met our desires and expectations according to our plans. Like children we pout and, rather than openly rebelling, we play a game of sulking and getting even. You may say that is absurd, yet how often have we quit an area of discipline or duty to the Lord, or done it with a half-hearted attitude because we felt God had disappointed us. We must deal quickly with this small root of bitterness and resentment toward the Lord because, if not, it will grow into bigger and more hurtful sins.

Personal revenge and retaliation only hurt us and hinder our walk with the Lord and with people in general. Let personal justice die. If the offender has not repented of his sin you can be sure at some time he will be called before the Lord to give an account. When we entertain bitterness and retaliation, we reveal to ourselves that we are very much alive in an area that should be dead. If one kicks a dead horse that horse will feel nothing. Our old nature is supposed to be dead and buried. When we learn more how to take up our cross and follow the Lord we will take our affronts less personally.

One last thought here on retaliation: if Christians were more honest with one another they would do as the Lord commands in Luke 17:3:

“Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.”

Now in dealing with the unbeliever, leave them to God, but with our fellow Christians deal promptly to resolve matters before roots of revenge and bitterness can set in. Furthermore, we are told in Ephesians 4:26-27:

“Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil.”

Christians have a right to express anger---as the Lord did and still does---but anger is an emotion that some can not contain well, and so should not be carried long.

Anger as an expression of serious displeasure at sin or evil has a valid place in us, yet it must not be taken beyond the limits of that which is right and just. We must guard against self-justifying anger that may originate from personal hurts afflicted on us. Remember, too, that serious rebuking, reproof and warning are more effective when given in stern anger rather than in wistful or light attitudes. Anger toward injustice and wicked sin is normal. If you as a Christian do not sense this occasionally then you should check out your Christian walk and principles.

## #50 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am following a person dressed in white whom I soon perceive to be the Lord Jesus. I follow Him for awhile, expecting a word of direction or guidance. It appears that He is purposefully avoiding speaking with me. Then, without so much as an audible word, He looks behind Himself directly at me and continues to walk on. As He gives me this backward glance, I hear words in my mind as His Spirit is speaking. He simply says to me, "Go and use My name."*

We must learn that even in our desire to do His perfect will God does not dictate to us every moment what we are to do. We are to study the Bible to learn its commands and principles so that our renewed spiritual minds can practice its teachings. We live and move by the general principles of God's Word. He will give clarity and precise direction if and when needed. We have His Word and Spirit, and He gives us His name to use in carrying out His will and commands in ministry. We are not robots whose minds are regulated to act without rational thought or decision. We are free and moral beings who act out of choice and resolve. God gives man and angels delegated authority and power to carry out His purposes. The Spirit gives advice and helps us to fulfill the ministries that are entrusted to us. He will make known when He desires a clear prophetic word or message to be given. These are more the exception, however, and not the everyday method of God's communication with man.

As previously stated, the name of Jesus is not a magic word, but a powerful weapon for the Christian to use who is walking in the Spirit and obeying the commands and wishes of the Lord. To use the name of Jesus, whether in prayer or spiritual warfare, is to use delegated authority given to us as born-again believers. God expects us to be trained and disciplined in all our ways. He sets down no legal laws, but each is led by the Spirit as to timing in prayer and ministry. There are not only general daily times of each, but the Lord may call us to seasons of prolonged prayer or ministry. To spend time in private, secret prayer when active ministry is required is not God's best, nor is ministering when He requires our undivided attention.

Let us look at an example of authority and proper timing. Read the fourteenth chapter of Exodus. Moses, the great lawgiver, prophet and intercessor, is leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, and Pharaoh is fast pursuing to destroy them. The Israelites, boxed in between the sea and the approaching army, are in a state of panic. As usual, they murmur and complain against the Lord. Moses attempts to console the fearful Hebrews and begins to pray and intercede to the Lord over this desperate situation. Now, my friends, prayer and intercession are great, but often if we are not "prayed up", we will not have time to do so. The great intercessor is somewhat mildly reproved by the Lord with these words in Exodus 14:15-16:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea" (KJV).

By the delegated word from God Moses was to divide the sea and lead the people across. It was not the time to have an all day prayer vigil! It was the time to act in accordance with His revealed word and will. The time to act is at the appointed time and, if we are not moving in the will of God, we will not be able to do so.

In conclusion, one other point comes to mind. When I was once a volunteer telephone counselor I received a call from a woman who asked that I join her in prayer and agreement that God would help

her pass a nursing exam. I first asked what I thought was a simple question, “Did you study for this exam?” She replied, “I studied for one-third of it.” To my own amazement and surprise I responded, “Then you want God to cheat for you and give you the portion of that exam for which you did not study!” Her parting remark before slamming down the phone was, “Well, I thought that was what miracles were all about!”

Friends, God will help and deliver, but He never will do what is morally wrong or what is not in line with His Word or character. God will help us remember what we have studied, but He is not into giving passing grades to lazy, undisciplined students, or winning football games to appease carnal desires. It is sin to implore God’s help for anything contrary to His character or nature.

Yes, miracles are for today, but what is a miracle? It is a happening that is not understood in the natural realm. It is a supernatural event that can not be explained yet is true. To God a miracle is simply moving from a lower law, whether spiritual or natural, to a higher law of which He has perfect understanding. He rarely seeks to explain to us, for our limited minds could not understand.

Gravity is a natural law that holds all down on planet earth. To leave this planet we must either do away with gravity or go to another law that would override gravity. So spaceships must use thrust to overcome the force of gravity. Gravity has not changed but a higher, more powerful law has superseded it. The virgin birth was a miracle as God allowed the spiritual realm to override the natural realm. God does not explain all the outworking of His laws to man, but expects us to walk by faith and trust---not blind faith and trust. Faith reacting with a word from God has a sure working foundation.

## #51 AN AUDIBLE WORD.....

*This word is spoken at the moment of awakening and it is audible to me, "polished shaft!"*

I thought to myself, "That's King James language." Since we use several translations of the Bible it is not surprising that the Lord will use these at times in communicating to us. Human language is ever changing. The text of this word is found in Isaiah 49:2:

"And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me" (KJV).

Now this portion of Scripture is a prophetic word concerning our Lord. All that Christ became (excluding His being the Son of God and our sin-bearer) He delights to give to us or, more clearly, it is Christ in us doing His Father's pleasure. At the time it was given this word was particularly applicable, for the Lord was causing me to withdraw from public ministry to a long season of solitary intercession.

What is a polished shaft? The word "polished" here is more clearly understood to be select, chosen or examined; the word "shaft" is understood to be an arrow or spear. Thus, a select arrow---God is the Archer and we are His arrows. No two of His arrows are alike, and He has a different calling and purpose for each. Before we become arrows we are made according to His plans and purposes. The wood must be cut and the head of rough stock must be chipped, ground and sharpened. Even when the shafts are made to the degree He desires, they may have to wait until the needed time.

We as arrows may be used to pierce the hearts of men in conviction and truth, or we may be used for warning, reproving and correcting. The anointed minister or preacher may be the arrow to stab consciences to awaken spirits and minds to the true word of God. The arrow may also be used to strike at the wicked, deceitful, false and cunning shepherds who fleece and attempt to make merchandise of the saints. We must allow the Lord to make us into the arrow of His choosing and be ready at His will to be used when and how He pleases.

## #52 THE DREAM.....

*I am standing in a large auditorium in a long line of people who are waiting their turns to be given something. As the line finally comes to an end I find that I am the last. There seated at a table are two angels smiling at me. One lifts his hand and gives me an object about a foot long that resembles a thick, short scepter. It fits well in my hand, and its top is somewhat shaped like a cube, solid and heavy with a small pointed tip. This object handles and feels like heavy metal, and I seem to know it is for knocking. I also seem to know it is called a "prayer-block."*

*The scene changes and I am in the midst of a swarm of bees. I feel no danger but instead a peaceful state of sweetness and calm. These bees appear to be flying from one container to another.*

Here again I would like to remind the reader of the purpose and part angels have in God's work. They are delegated beings---sent from God to help, deliver, instruct and reveal whatever the Father commands. They delight to do God's will and appear well-equipped to carry out His instructions. In heaven itself these holy beings seem to be active in worship, praise and joy in serving God. They are ever ready to do His will and run His messages between heaven and earth. Studying Scripture we find that angels appear to number at least in the millions. The Lord calls them holy and also states that they are witnesses of life here on earth---of life in the true body of Christ.

Acts 7:53 states that the law that was given to Moses was given by the angels. Angelic activity does not seem to decrease in the New Testament. In the Book of Revelation it appears that angelic activity is somewhat increased. I Peter 1:12 tells us:

“...them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.”

Yet angels higher in wisdom and power than humans are not to be honored above measure or to be worshipped. Their appearances therefore seem to be scarce as far as openly revealing themselves. Humans often seem unable to handle appropriately their appearances without proper instruction from God about them. Of the multitude of angels only a few have ever been named for us. Though working and serving much, they are mostly unseen by us mortals.

We Christians could learn lessons in wisdom and humility if we would work more and desire less attention! Because of our human weaknesses and proud hearts, God must hide much from us until we have been dealt with in these areas. Carnal curiosity and the desire for mere information is not proper soil of the spirit for any spiritual revelation. Angelic appearances are the exception rather than the general rule. They can and will reveal themselves as God permits, and then only to encourage, deliver, strengthen or comfort us in our work or calling---never to carry on idle small talk or casual familiarity. Most of my angelic appearances are in dreams, for in that state I am more of listener and receiver than an idle talker or interferer.

There appears to be a need for great humbleness to be able to receive some visions. God would avoid our being puffed up---thus the apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh. Be advised that if you are the receiver of exceptional revelations you will most likely come into greater conflict with the devil, and will have the cross-life worked well in you by the Holy Spirit. To whom much is given, much is required---there are no lucky, special people with God. Those who are given much must be willing to be more responsible.

Now back to the dream---the two angels symbolize God's delegated authority. Two speaks of confirmation. In my dreams or visions an outstanding feature of these beings is their smiling, peaceful

countenance. They are joyful, loving beings that are a giant step ahead of us in allowing the life of God to be channeled through them. The seated angels speak of this: the angels represent God's delegated power and authority, and the seats or thrones refer to places from which power is executed. The auditorium symbolizes the area of our work for God in the church and world. The whole body of Christ is to be in unity submitted to Christ and ready to receive and accomplish its work for Him. The long line of people speaks of our work as individuals in this group and His master plan. The angels are messengers that come from God to deliver our duties, works and helps. We choose not the methods of God's gifts, ministries or works. He is the source and decides His own methods as He pleases.

My being the last in line symbolizes two things. One, though our position may be last, it may one day be first. Two, we have a timing and place as members of the church of Christ to come into our full ministry and complete our work and gifts. It matters little our calling, if He calls. It matters much our faithfulness to His call. Let us be ready when He does call us forward to service or duty.

The prayer-block in the dream was handled and examined by me. We are to prove and test all things. I could have misread the prayer-block as a blockage or hindrance instead of its real purpose. Many of God's ways are not plain at first and even appear hidden. We must discern them by prayer and God's Word and Spirit. My ministry has more to do with prophecy and intercession. Teaching and other ministry must be subordinate to that. To explain further, I am called more to the ministry of intercession, but prophetic insight is given so that I may know more clearly how to pray with precision. The angel's giving me the prayer-block was confirming my ministry of intercession during this period.

All Christians should pray and be intercessors as we all teach and help and show mercies at times. In a sense we are all general practitioners, but He would have us to be specialists as well. Though I may teach, counsel or exhort, my specialty is prophetic intercession. We all can witness and lead lost souls to Christ, but the specialist is the evangelist. My intercession requires more time alone with God than that of the ordinary Christian, and I must meet that requirement to fulfill my calling. The prayer-block is for knocking---knocking on the door of heaven. In Matthew 7:7-8 it reads:

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

Ask, seek, and knock---each work louder and more intense. There is asking prayer, there is supplication and there is intercession---all forms of prayer, yet each different. The point at the top of the prayer-block simply is to remind us that all prayer is to be addressed upward to God. Up is the direction of heaven or the place of God's throne and rule.

Your little child may not have much trouble getting a quarter from you, but your teenager may find it more difficult getting twenty dollars. Yes, some things cost more to obtain, cost in the sense of effort and persistence. It is somewhat the same in the spiritual realm. Prayer and praying is not only a means of receiving from God and communicating with Him, but also can be warfare. Praying may be conflict and frequently hard. God and devils know the spiritual rules but often, sadly, Christians do not. We must make time for God and prayer if we would learn these rules and principles.

The last part of this dream was of bees. They were moving from container to container, as if searching for something. We are searching for answers to prayers and problems. The sweet answers of prayer, like honey, must be sought after carefully and consistently. The bees that make honey are called worker bees. They do not sit in the hive waiting for it to appear. They persevere in their seeking, unlike Christians who give up too quickly and surrender to the temptations of resentment, bitterness and frustration. I know---I have been there, too. These failures will not bring answers to our prayers.

We must know that in any worthy pursuit we will encounter attacks of discouragement, self-pity and laziness. We must counter with faith, perseverance, steadfastness and continual knocking. Faith, obedience and an expectant hope will open the doors. If the unjust judge was moved by annoyance, and the sleeping friend by disturbance, how much more will our heavenly Father delight in answering our prayers when they meet His spiritual conditions? Remember, the devil is very persistent in hindering, stopping, robbing and destroying if we allow him. One of my favorite Scriptures on intercession is found in Daniel 10:12-14:

“Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words’ sake. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days.”

Now Daniel is said to have had all understanding of visions and dreams (Daniel 1:17). Intercession is a different form of praying, and appears to deal more with spiritual conflict than other forms of prayer. Intercession differs also in that the intercessor stands in the gap between man and God, and between God and man. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are spoken of as being intercessors for the church. Like Daniel, a person acting as an intercessor must be in a spiritual state that is acceptable to God. Remember, Daniel had confessed and repented of the known sin in his life and had further humbled himself by fasting. If you have refused to deal with known disobedience to God, you can move nothing in prayer for yourself or anyone else. Those who intercede must at times lay aside normal desires of body and soul to keep their minds tuned to the spiritual. This is true self-denial and dying to one’s self. Selfish and self-seeking souls can not be used of God for intercession.

Sacrifices, fasting and self-denial earn us nothing before God in themselves, but are tools that put us in a place to be more open to spiritual matters. The cross is not an end in itself but a means to new life. Only as the old man is put off in a practical way in our lives is the new man able to take over. This is the “works” of which the apostle James speaks---without which faith can not live. Deeds, works, actions and labors are to be united with our faith, hope and grace. Many misguided Christians are so afraid of dead works that Satan deceives them into doing nothing. They think they are exercising faith and grace but soon find no reality in their spiritual walk or work. Our positional standing in Christ is of little or no value if we have no practical experiential life that follows.

Now the angel’s appearing to Daniel after twenty-one days tells us much. Notice how weak Daniel was bodily, not only from the effects of his fasting but from the supernatural presence of his visitor. The great lesson on intercession in this text is: “from the first day...your words were heard.” Yes, often before we finish asking or speaking to God the answer is heard and sent. Now enters the enemy and the spiritual conflict. It appears this angel was sent the very day of Daniel’s humbling and praying, yet some demonic spirit of high rank was able to delay his coming. This tells us much about warfare and intercession.

The prince of Persia was an evil spirit, not a man! The angel sent to Daniel was himself of high rank on God’s side. Satan can not stop a real prayer of faith prayed in God’s will and according to His plans, but he may succeed in delaying it (yet only as God permits that we might learn and mature in faith). If Satan can cause the seeker to give up or draw back in this conflict, the answer may not come.

This is not due to God's unwillingness to give, but because of man's unwillingness to meet the spiritual conditions of answered prayer, which often is this "fight of faith."

Finally, the archangel Michael, the strongest of angels, is sent to help this angel press through. I wonder how much faith and perseverance is required of angels to fulfill their part in this spiritual realm of conflict. He, the angel, was said to have been left alone. Have we not experienced this in our prayers and service for the Lord occasionally? Not that God is ever away, but that we are often not continually aware of His presence. This is where true faith and faithfulness are required. As the angel stood and waited twenty-one days for help to arrive, so did Daniel. We can be sure God and the angels will do their part, but will we do ours? What if the mighty intercessor Daniel had given up his praying and fasting on the twentieth day? He may not have received the message at that time or place.

Daniel may have had to battle again to obtain these answers. Most of adult mankind will end up in hell. Is it God's fault when He has revealed it is not His wish that any soul should perish? No, indeed! Much that God will give or reveal is limited by us, not by Him. I wonder how many prayers and answers were heard and sent, yet before their arrival the soul lost faith, hope and endurance, and thus aborted the answer. The lower spiritual life settles for lesser blessings. Many accept all circumstances in their lives as from God. This is not always wise, for in so doing we may receive from the devil that which God did not intend for us. If we settle for crackers instead of good, fresh baked bread it is because we fail to press on spiritually. Even so, God gives good crackers, but He would rather have us taste His good, fresh bread.

We are looking for the great wonders and blessings that God's Word promises. Yet God is looking for individuals like Moses, Elijah and Daniel who will put themselves in a place to obtain those blessings.

Do I weep and murmur when my prayers  
unanswered go?  
Surely it's not God's fault, this we really know.  
Maybe it's because we have not done our part  
Of firmly holding in the storm to the great ship's helm,  
Or maybe it's because we have not sought for wisdom  
To understand the ways of this spiritual realm.  
Let us arise and stand and brush off the dirt  
of our last defeat.  
Move on, as He will feed us---perhaps from  
milk to meat,  
So we will be strengthened to fight our battles with  
the plan to overcome;  
Then when the smoke and dust have settled those  
battles will have been won!

R.F.H.P.

### #53 #54 #55 AUDIBLE WORDS.....

During a season of prayer and intercession and fasting these words were spoken to me on three separate occasions within a few days of each other. They were spoken at the moment I awakened and were audible to me.

*The first word: "Look unto me and be radiant."*

*The second word: "No weapon formed against thee shall succeed."*

*The third word: "I will in no wise fail thee."*

The first word is found in Psalm 34:5 and reads:

"They looked unto him, and were radiant; And their faces shall never be confounded (disappointed)."

If we look at our lot or circumstances at times we will be disappointed. Life, friends and various situations can and do disappoint us. When we look with natural or unspiritual eyes we will find much to frustrate us. We must learn to gaze more into God's face and not so much at our natural surroundings. We need to learn to draw grace and faith from Him. When we are hedged in on all sides and feel trapped, we must look up with faith and trust to God to deliver---He will either deliver us in the furnace or out of it. Dark hours and days are part of our lot, and are needed to mature us in faith and spiritual growth.

God is always there, though we do not see Him. Just because the night comes does not mean the sun has burned out---it is simply being hidden by the earth. So in the spirit realm God is there, but we are often looking too intently to the earthly to perceive this. God will give us light or His voice in the dark valleys. Moses' face shone for he was in God's glorious light. Jesus was transformed while in the Father's presence on the mount of transfiguration. Often at those times their outward lot had changed little, yet they knew and had God's radiant presence to sustain them. We must stay in that presence for that Light to radiate through us.

The second word, "No weapon formed against you shall succeed", is found in the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah---read the whole chapter for its context. This tells us that we shall have some enemies assault us which come by God's permission only. As we place our faith in Him and in His righteousness we shall overcome these foes. A faith without true spiritual works of abiding and yielding is a false faith and will lead many to destruction. True faith and righteousness can only be seen as real if they are working out of that soul---no greasy grace or license to sin here! Mental acceptance of a doctrine of grace and faith without the corresponding fruit and works is proof alone that it is a false grace and faith.

With Christ as our Lord in word and in deed, no enemy is a match for us. No trial or temptation will come that God is not more than able to give grace to withstand and overcome. No, it is a sad soul that believes he or she shall have victory without yielding to God's grace and provision. We not only stand in the victory that Christ provides, but we move on to take more ground. Let us be realistic about positional victory and practical victory. False teachers will pacify souls into thinking they can have one without the other---not so, my friends. Remember again, righteousness imparted will be holiness in its outworking.

Caleb, a man of faith and obedience, said in Numbers 13:30:

“...Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”

Now, you know the story---God had promised Israel the land of milk and honey. He had given it to them, yet they had to go up and take it from their enemies. They started well on their spiritual trip from bondage, but soon ceased their journey. Not only were they disobedient and rebellious against God’s will, but they wanted to destroy those who would obey. My friends, it has not changed much today, has it? The professing, carnal and nominal Christians are still with us. Not only do they not have the faith and obedience to be overcomers, but they seek to hinder others from going on with God. Like the Pharisees they will persecute in order to justify themselves.

Why, our church buildings are full of them---fearful cowards, lazy and unbelieving of true practical Christianity, possessing a form of godliness with no real power or godliness. This will offend many but it is so true---these will not make it into heaven! Like those in the wilderness that refused to overcome, they will be overcome. They all died in the desert never tasting the milk and honey of that land. Yet some will advance and conquer those giants and win great spoil.

Again Caleb, that man of a different spirit, tries in vain to encourage those rebels with:

“Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us...” (Numbers 14:9 KJV).

Do you understand? Those adversaries who attempt to hinder and eat us, we will find as food for ourselves. We will overcome in a practical way, or we will be overcome by our spiritual enemies---it is just that way. We must ever remind ourselves that as true Christians we are in a state of spiritual war until we enter heaven’s doors.

Our battles are to teach and mature us for further usefulness in this life, and to determine our rewards and rank in heaven. Be not deceived, friends, talk and mind-belief alone are not true Christianity. Grace and fruit, faith and works, crowns and crosses and, yes, overcoming in battles are the real proofs of true faith and Christianity. We may deceive ourselves into thinking we have to believe some mental information about God’s Word and that is enough. Why, do you know the devil himself knows more about the Scriptures than we do, yet it has not saved him, has it? True Christianity is a lifestyle and a practical walk, not just a mental assent to some doctrinal teaching of the Scriptures.

Christianity is Christ living in us and through us. Salvation is the vital union of Christ in us and living experientially with us. Why, some will say we should not scare people and make them doubt their salvation. If they have the real born-again experience the Spirit will bear witness with them, and we will not have to convince them of the unreality of head-game Christianity. Better to shake up a few souls and cause them to seek God for truth than to have these same souls stand speechless before God at the judgment day and find themselves sentenced to hell. Although we may make a few enemies in the process, at least their blood will not be on our hands! Yes, some may even turn to God by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The third word, “I will in no wise fail thee”, is a true statement of God and of God’s Word. God is as good as His word and that is good, indeed. One of my favorite words in Scripture is found in I Kings 8:56:

“...according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise...” (KJV).

You can be sure that God's promises and words will stand. Where that promise or word applies to man, man needs to be faithful to do his part. God will not fail us, but the real question is shall we fail Him? Many a Christian has gone down in defeat---some of us have tasted defeat also. We did not fulfill our part of yielding and obeying, but blamed God and became bitter and resentful. However, it was our own laziness, unbelief and failure to persevere that cost us the victory.

We had best be careful to place the blame where it truly belongs, and not imitate Satan in falsely accusing God. We must be humble and honest enough to acknowledge the truth. If we are defeated we can not blame God---or even man or the devil. Now man and the devil may tempt and hinder, but if we are defeated there is one person to blame. Go into your bedroom, look in the mirror and point your finger directly ahead and say to that person standing there, "It is your fault!"

Is this condemnation? Indeed not, it is truth. Truth brings conviction that will guide us to help and victory. When a soul blames everyone for his or her defeats and failures, that soul will never progress with God, for that lie will keep them bound to the past. Confession of sin and true repentance is the fastest way to be delivered from bondage. Too many Christians are turning to needless inner-healing, counselling and prayers of others when their sin is the problem.

Surely it would be easier to blame a demon and feel excused. It would be easier to blame someone else for our failures and get wasted sympathy which only feeds self-pity---a deadly sin. Surely some need deliverance and inner-healing, but most Christians' problems could be solved by true confession of sins and turning from them. Much deliverance and healing is sought when, in many cases, a good dose of the cross and self-denial is needed. The old nature can not be cast out nor can it be healed. It must die! This is called losing our life. Whatever happened to the biblical truth of losing one's life in order to find it?

Today we are told to love ourselves and to lead our own lives. Sad but true, most of our churches are little more than places to go to have our egos and selfish desires pacified, indulged and pampered. Woe to the preachers who do this! Take a look, friends, at most of the television and radio ministers who seem to gain such notoriety. Why are they so popular? They feed the egos and the materialistic and covetous desires of the masses---giving to get, promising gimmicks and smooth words to pamper souls in their self-seeking, earthly ways. Yes, they are teachers with itching ears looking for and finding people wanting smooth words. Christ said, "If the blind lead the blind they both shall fall in the ditch."

A final thought on this subject: let us stay close to God's Word and rightly divide and heed it, not adding or subtracting to satisfy our own selfish desires. If we do not rightly divide God's Word we shall be open to seducing spirits.

## #56 #57 THE DREAM AND A AUDIBLE WORD.....

*I see two little children, each carrying a piece of poster-board with these words printed on them: "God keeps His promises."*

*A day or so later as I awaken from my sleep this word is spoken to me, "Wait for it."*

These two revelations are interrelated. The two children and two posters again speak of confirmation of a word or truth. The children symbolize the childlike faith and trust we must exercise in spiritual matters. Children, once having learned that someone is trustworthy, find it easier later to believe all they are told. In the spiritual realm we must learn this also. God will tell us that which is essential for us to know, but then He requires our trust when we are given no further revelation.

The word "wait for it" is simple but very vital, because most big or important requests appear to take much time and endurance in receiving their answers. Waiting is, again, abiding in expectancy and faith with steadfastness. Often the greatest hindrance to our prayers is time. Time can wear us down and, if permitted, can rob and discourage us. We must wait it out! God will answer at the right time, not too soon or too late. We must wait in faith for what He has promised us and one day we will fully receive those desires.

## #58 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

This dream followed the one above, and is closely related.

*I see a door which begins to open of its own accord. A shining bright light with many beams streams out. I hear this word spoken to me, "vouchsafe."*

As I awaken, the Scripture from Acts 12:10 comes to mind:

"And when they (Peter and the angel) were past the first and second guard, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him."

The word "vouchsafe" was not a common word to me so I had to look for its meaning. It is an old English word that pertains to giving as a favor or guarantee. Thus the opening door was a guarantee to me in this dream, and in the weeks to follow the door did open. Now look at Revelation 3:7-8:

"...he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth: I know thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut), that thou hast a little power, and didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name."

When God gives us a promise He intends to keep it. We, too, sometimes find ourselves blocked with closed doors and iron gates (iron speaks of bondage). As the angel led Peter out of jail the iron gate opened of its own accord, or so it appeared. In reality the Lord pushed that door open! God will at the right time open doors for us and we must be ready to walk through them. His voice and light will come forth to enlighten our paths so that we can walk on in His leading. He will also shut doors for us so as not to confuse or perplex us. Sometimes though, like Peter, it is only as we are being led in His will and moving in the light that we have that He begins to open those doors.

Some doors are for us to open by prayer and the use of Christ's name and authority. Some doors are of the enemy's making, and we are to storm them and tear them down in the name and by the power of the Lord. Those doors, though, that are set to be opened in God's timing are like doors of a bank vault which will not open except to the correct combination at the right time. When that time comes, however, we must open that door or we may find it blocked later. Great wisdom and discernment are needed in this situation. Doors are opened by faith, perseverance and thanksgiving, but if a door is set to be opened at a different time and place, no amount of faith or pushing will open it.

As we walk in the Spirit and heed the Lord's word and desire He will let us know which doors to knock on, which doors to knock down and which doors we must simply wait for Him to open. The spiritual realm works by principles and laws, yet unless we are personally led by the Spirit we will not know God's timing and method for us to move and labor. Each of us must find God's plan and work for us and then allow Him to guide and teach us the method and manner He chooses.

Imitating the ways God leads others (as far as timing and method) may be a hindrance. No two members of His body are alike nor is their work. Only the Holy Spirit can guide each member, and each is to answer to the Head of the church for that work. We may work under other ministries and act as

helps and servants to them, but even that must come from the Spirit's guidance to us. Otherwise, people will be led astray by overly zealous leaders who think only they can hear from God.

Remember a shepherd leads, he does not drive---Christ our chief shepherd will not push or drag us. Beware of shepherds who try to tell you God's will for you when you have heard nothing from the Lord. His sheep hear His voice and will be guided by Him. Some are called to help other ministries. That is the ministry of helps in whatever manner it may come. Even in our ministry to others, it is as a servant of Jesus Christ foremost! Let us learn to listen to Him and we will find the right doors opening at the right time in our spiritual walk.

## #59 THE DREAM.....

This dream is similar to the one above, but with a different emphasis.

*I see a turtle walking up two or three steps. There is a door in front of those steps that begins to open of its own accord. As it opens a very bright light beams outward and reflects off the turtle. The turtle seems to stop and pause as this bright light bursts forth.*

The door's opening of its own accord again speaks of God's opening doors at the right time and place. The two and three steps signify "in the mouth of two and three witnesses let every word be confirmed." The light coming forth speaks of God's enlightening our steps as we proceed toward the open door. The turtle, as you most likely have surmised, symbolizes slowness. God may appear slow but He is sure! In the story of the race between the rabbit and the turtle we learned the good lesson that speed may not win every race, but persistence will finish the course. Many start running well in this spiritual pursuit but often burn out quickly. The same is true in prayer and receiving answers. Some have genuine revelations and moving experiences with God, but somewhere along the way they give up and do not find the answers they seek.

This dream caused me to think of a Scripture found in Habakkuk 2:2-3:

“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (KJV).

This is a word of truth that tells us the beginning and end of vision and faith. Vision and faith come by revelation from God. A vision is the revealing of a promise that produces faith in us to which we add our trust. Faith comes by the hearing of God's Word by whatever means He chooses. That chosen method, however given, will stand the test of the Bible's and Spirit's witness. Remember Satan used the written Word to attempt to seduce Christ at the end of his forty day fast. Many television and radio ministers today misuse Scripture to achieve their own ends. Just because one quotes from the Bible is no proof in itself that the message is from God.

God can speak to you in your language with all its faults and weaknesses. The Lord often condescends to communicate with us using our vocabulary. Do not be critical of a word or a prophecy that may come in the King James Version. Would you understand it better if it came in pure Hebrew of two thousand years ago? Language changes from generation to generation, and is often that which becomes acceptable. If you favor a certain biblical translation God may use that version to speak with you. We must not limit the Lord or we will find ourselves limited instead.

Now back to Habakkuk. The prophet was ordered to write down the vision. My book would not have been written if I had not done likewise for many years. We record God's words to us so that we will be able to recall them later for meditation and remembrance. We are forgetful creatures, are we not? Why, Eve's first sin was in this very area. When God asked her about eating the fruit, you know what she said, "The serpent caused me to forget." To forget a truth one must accept a lie instead, or have that truth stolen. We must study the written Word of God always to learn and remember so we will not forget it. We must do the same with the vision or promise that God gives us.

After writing down the vision, we are to run! This is the race of faith. Faith must run its course to the end to obtain its prize. Along the way hope, endurance and waiting join in. The runner in an

earthly race may know where the finish line is, but often does not in the spiritual race. It is our faith that tells us to press on toward the prize. We are told that the vision has an appointed time to be fulfilled, yet we are rarely told the exact timing. While Satan and the flesh will test us much in this race, God will mature and perfect us much. Often our greatest battle is with time. We want the request or answer now, but God has His own timetable.

The vision or promise is His means for refining and perfecting us. We are told as we wait that one day the vision or promise will surely come and there will be no more delay. Faith must be thus tried before it produces the reality. The turtle is not only slow, but is also known to live to a ripe old age. Usually the greater the promise of blessing or the greater the ministry and authority to be given, the longer the fruit requires for maturity. Moses endured forty years in the desert, Joseph suffered nearly fourteen years in bondage and perplexity, and the Son of God waited almost thirty years in obscure, mundane, day-to-day living before His final ministry came into fulfillment.

Do we think it will be much different today for those whom God has chosen for great works and ministry? The Lord may indeed do a quick work when the time comes to move, but He will never mature the human born-again spirit any faster than the ways He has always chosen. Man may run to and fro in busy activities but God still requires time---much time---to make present day Pauls and Peters and to mature useful saints. These souls are rarer and more costly to produce, and it costs them much to be made into these vessels of exception!

## #60 THE DREAM.....

This dream was a warning to me which I must say, to my sad failure, I did not heed.

*I am very weary and discouraged, and am being tempted to turn back from this spiritual walk with all its conflict. I see a man running in a race along a path on the mountain tops. Suddenly he stumbles and falls down the long muddy slopes. Then I see a young man on horseback who stops in his forward path and turns about in an opposite direction. This direction I knew was the enemies' territory.*

This dream proved to be prophetic for me. I had gotten off the firm narrow path and had fallen down into the mire. I had allowed the enemy to cause me to descend into bitterness, resentment and distrust towards God. For weeks this state prevailed and I was soon faced with a decision. Shall I walk away from God and live my own life, or shall I confess and repent of my sinful attitude? I chose the latter and through God's grace and provision was able to recover ground and move on with Him.

The young man on the horse was the man I would have become had I not made peace with the Lord. God can and does show us events that will come to pass if we continue our present paths. God often gives prophetic warnings to nations or people to advise them to change their course or reap the consequences.

God will speak to a church or an intercessor of some coming judgment on a person or nation, but is not for us to sit back and watch. If we will place ourselves in the gap God may extend the period before He judges, or may not judge at all if that person or nation repents. Warnings are meant to alert us to dangers. Likewise, God's warnings are meant to alert souls of approaching judgments unless there is a change of direction. God may make that last warning known before His grace and patience come to an end and His justice must be upheld. Remember, before God destroyed the children of Israel for refusing to enter the promised land, He warned them many times! God is slow to judge, yet His long suffering has its limits. Those who find themselves in hell will have known God's long suffering well before their final judgment.

## #61 THE DREAM.....

*I see two oxen grazing on top of a mountain peak. They are yoked together, yet one is different from the other. One looks normal but the other appears transparent. As my eyes begin to focus more clearly on this scene, I notice these words printed in the sky: "Mount up high."*

Concerning the two oxen---one is myself, and the other the Lord. He is the transparent one and I am yoked to Him as I am meant to be. We are told by Christ to take up His yoke in Matthew 11:29-30:

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

His ways and commands are light burdens for He graces us in them. If we walk after the flesh we will find His ways grievous. The natural man will not and can not submit to the law of Christ. He smooths our rough times with oil and gives peace during tribulation and affliction. He will make our afflictions and crosses bearable with His grace and help. The apostle Paul received a thorn, but he was also given great revelation and grace to deal with the suffering it caused him---so much that he rejoiced in his affliction.

We like the oxen must be yoked and trained. Oxen often symbolize the servant attitude, but also speak of perseverance and strength. As oxen are working, serving animals, so we are workers in God's vineyards and fields. He feeds and cares for us, but He desires our service as well. Christ will come along beside us in the person of the Holy Spirit to live, work and abide in and with us in our spiritual labors.

In the dream the oxen were grazing on a high mountain peak. The phrase "mount up high" usually refers to eagles. The connection between the eagle and the oxen is this: we fly up high as eagles to see more clearly in the heavens, but as oxen yoked with Christ we see more clearly for work and service here on earth. We need the high mountain view to enable us to walk deep down in the valleys.

Visions and revelations encourage us to minister and serve Him, not to feed our desire for manifestations which only puff up the ego. The eagle does not, no matter how high he flies, lose his focus of returning to earth. His high soaring does not cause him to forget that he is needed down below. Thus, we need the keen eyesight of the eagle which is discernment, yet we need the servant spirit of the ox---that will spend his strength for his master.

All knowledge, revelations and visions are to be put to practical use in laboring for the Lord, or else they are of no spiritual benefit. All that does not cause us to know, experience and serve God in a greater way is of no real lasting value. How sad a fact that many Bible students and many Christians never seem to rise up out of the low valleys. Many ministers and seminary students live and die never having weaned themselves from the milk of the Word. They are caught up in information and knowledge, yet so lacking in practical experience and true spiritual insight. Ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth applies to many in the church today. I say this not in criticism, but in sadness that so much wood, hay and stubble will be burned up one day.

## #62 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*This word is spoken to me just before I awaken, "Go, shut thyself in."*

So simple, is it not, and yet can be so difficult! We love outward action, fellowship and socializing. As social beings and members of the body of Christ we are made to communicate with others. We are also made to communicate with God. In our present age we seem to think it is different from biblical days when men and women of God withdrew at times to seek the Lord, giving Him their undivided attention. Christians today seem to think it is okay to give God five minutes here and there. If they had the same attitude in their marriages those relationships would have ended long ago!

Being busy about the Lord's work or service is not good if we are doing it to avoid spending quality time with the Master. The church of Ephesus mentioned in the book of Revelation was perfect in ministry and service, yet Christ was displeased with them---displeased to the extent that He warned them to repent or He would remove His light from their church. They had forgotten their first love which was Christ! Relationship and service complete one another as faith and works do---one will not take the place of the other.

Most praying is meant to be done in secret, as is giving and fasting. When we shut ourselves in solely with God, we are placed in a state to be more honest and serious with Him, but we must shut the door! It means to shut out all distractions so we can communicate personally with God. To know the Lord and His will and ways we must spend time alone with Him, and not just when we are desperate and hard-pressed for His attention. We can not be fair weather friends if we expect to go deeper with Christ. This time alone does not have to be spent chattering constantly and then leaving when we are finished with our agenda. Regardless of what the television charlatans may say, God is not a banker to whom we run to endorse our checks, and off we go to spend them. God will not be our Santa Claus or our big papa bear!

Prayer is communicating with God, and on many occasions we need to listen quietly and give Him time to speak. This is waiting on God! Busy, rushing and talkative souls have no time for such activity. Now some will say, "You just do not understand how busy I am, and all the duties to which I must attend. Why, I have my family, my church, my job, and---and---and---. It is not really how much time we spend in prayer as long as it is quality time." Sounds good, but is very untrue! Do not kid yourself, if all these things leave you no time for God you had better check your spiritual state.

Christ said something like this, "If you put anything before me (and He included family and self) you are not worthy of Me." I didn't say that; He did! We had better get a truer grasp of what the Lord means. We are children of God, yet we are His bondservants---His love slaves. A slave has one main duty which supersedes all else at all times. What is that one duty? It is obeying the master.

Surely it is not easy to discipline ourselves in this matter of time with God. It takes determination and effort, yet I find it very interesting that we make time for what interests us. My friends, if we are going to know God and know Him better we will make that time at all cost. Why, I am appalled that even ministers and students of the Word spend hours studying the doctrines of the Bible to make them fit their brand of theology or doctrinal slant. Yes, they can debate doctrine and prove many points, yet it often appears they do not really know God. Why? They major on minors and minor on majors. Biblical knowledge without the walk with the Author is dead works and useless.

We must have knowledge with experience. Satan often tries to sidetrack us. Knowledge without experience, like faith without works, has no proof of its reality. If we spend time with God and are obeying His Spirit's dictates we will have sound doctrine and meaningful experiences. Those who

gravitate toward mental knowledge of God's Word without practical application are often stunted in their relationship with God, yet can quote many Scriptures. Still this is wood, hay and stubble.

Those who are ever living for emotional feelings and stirrings are also stunted in their spiritual walk and never seem to be able to get past these childlike feelings that constantly rule their actions. If they do not have a tingle at every meeting they think the Spirit has departed. Experience without biblical knowledge opens one more to spirits of deception and to false emotional and even demonic experiences. Those who play the mind-game and those that play the feelings-game will never mature in Christ. Knowledge and feelings are good and have their place. They are not, however, the foundations of true Christianity.

Only as we submit to Christ and His Spirit in prayer and faith and obedience will we receive true discernment in these matters. Knowledge and emotions are good channels for the Spirit to move in and through when He so desires, but they are not the motivating factors. Our only motivator should be the Holy Spirit Himself.

### #63 THE DREAM.....

*I see a tall mountain peak and its name is revealed to me as "Mt. Intercession."*

This dream develops further on the previous dream's topic of shutting oneself in. As maturing Christians we are sometimes called to intercede in our praying, yet some are called more to the ministry of intercession. Some will say that the ministry of intercession is not mentioned in the New Testament. Rightly so, for I believe all Christians can be intercessors and excel in it. In the Old Testament the prophets were not only preachers and exhorters but foremost were intercessors. In the New Testament the apostles were not only given to proclaiming and teaching the Word, they were much given to prayer and intercession.

If all Christians were intercessors in reality, their other ministries and gifts would be more useful and of higher quality. Moses once said to Joshua (his aide was concerned when God had taken of the Spirit that was upon Moses and given it to seventy others), "Would to God all the people were prophets and did prophesy!" We could say somewhat the same today, "Would to God all His members were intercessors and knew the deeper things of prayer."

The mountain's name being Mt. Intercession speaks of this: as that tall peak stands out foremost in our sight, so was the ministry of intercession to stand out in my life at that period. This dream was a confirmation to me of my priority at a given time to be shut in with God in intercession. God delights to confirm His will and plans as we move in the light that He has already given us.

## #64 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*“Faith learns to yield to God’s grace.”*

These words are spoken to me in my sleep and are a response to my praying about the fine line between my faith and God’s faith. All spiritual endowments come from God by His grace and Spirit, yet we know we must move in response to God. This yielding is our work and our obedience. Faith that supernaturally moves impossible things is a gift that comes to us from God. It is not something we hold and use whenever we wish. God gives it for a reason, and that is to accomplish His purposes. The faith that is required of us is that human response of yielding to God’s given grace. Our faith is simply trusting and believing. Notice that Hebrews 11:6 reads:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (KJV).

This faith is more to be understood as our trusting or yielding to the faith of God given to us. Our believing and obeying are the works often linked with faith. Without works of this sort, faith is dead to us. There is nothing wrong with the grace or faith of God. If fault is to be found, it must be found in our not surrendering to this faith and grace. God is the author and finisher of every real spiritual work, yet between its beginning and ending you will always find a man or woman that became His vessel for its completion. God begins the life-giving move to every ministry, including teaching and intercession. We make ourselves instruments yielded to His use. He works in and through us to accomplish and complete that ministry. Thus we are co-laborers with Him. The vine produces no fruit apart from the branches.

Jesus Himself, the perfect human, said that He never spoke a word or did a work which He did not first see the Father do. Sometimes He said that He worked as His Father worked. Other times He said that the Father spoke and worked in Him! What submission, to so move in God that at times it was hard to perceive who was doing what. That is union of spirit and work---that is being yoked to God! We remember that Jesus was the Son of God, but often forget that every act He performed He did as perfect man surrendered to the Holy Spirit; He could only use His divine nature by permission. The great temptation of Christ in the wilderness was to use His divine side to make bread when He was hungry. He knew it was wrong to do so, and waited in perfect trust for the time that the Father would feed Him. That is the real wonder and amazement of the life of Christ---He completely submitted to His Father’s will.

Indeed, our faith must learn to yield to God’s grace. Our trust and assurance must hold to God’s grace as God’s grace holds to us. It is never all God. No, we are free, moral, spiritual beings and need to respond by yielding to His grace. Let us not allow this grace to be bestowed in vain by refusing to trust and submit to God’s will and works. The epistles speak much of grace and faith. They also speak of man’s duty in believing, obeying and yielding to that grace and faith.

The danger today in all this new so-called faith teaching is this: it often attempts to make our faith an object we can take and do with as we please. That is not true! God will never give such faith to men and women who still see faith only as a means of satisfying their own covetous and self-seeking desires. Great men of faith used their faith in union with the Spirit of God to accomplish His will and plans, not their own.

Faith teachings that leave out the cross-life and self-denial for Christ are deadly. One may use faith by the Spirit's leading to do as He directs and not as selfish man desires. The many television evangelists that speak much of faith often use it to cloak their own covetous, materialistic lifestyles! These seed-faith teachers frequently prosper financially at the expense of their many deceived and fleeced sheep. Surely, if worldly prosperity is the great sign of God's blessing, then the heroes of Hebrews and most of the early church forefathers of the first century were deceived.

No, I am afraid it is these wolves in sheep's clothing that are deceived. They not only teach half truths and lies, they begin to believe their lies to their own spiritual destruction! They are false shepherds and prophets whose works shall indeed find their reward. That reward, my friends, is this: because they love not and desire not the truth, and love greed and covetousness instead, death and hell shall await these souls. It is a hard saying but God Himself shall give them over to believe a lie that they shall be damned.

The most terrible judgment which God can give a living soul is this: to believe one is okay and right with God, yet at the judgment seat of God to stand speechless in horror to find his or her soul committed to outer darkness. Do not envy the covetous ministers, for most will not recover from that great snare of which the apostle Paul gives warning---those that would be rich will fall into many a lust that drown men in hell (I Timothy 6:9)!

## #65 THE DREAM.....

*I see printed before me this Scripture from Psalm 37:34:*

*“Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it” (KJV).*

*Then I find myself singing a tune which simply states this fact three times: “Christ is in me.”*

The first part of this dream concerning the print-out of Psalm 37:34 was repeated to me about a year later in exactly the same manner! So it was to confirm more clearly its meaning, and to remind me of important truths that needed to be remembered. When we wait on and for the Lord let us be careful to keep His will and way. Our waiting will be in vain if we are not trusting and obeying the Lord in the revealed light He has given. It is to wait in vain if we have not met the conditions of the promises, or if we are not being led of His Spirit. To inherit the land we must wait on the Lord and keep His way. That land signifies the promises or the land of promises and fulfillments. God will lift us up to higher levels in our spiritual walk and we will take more spiritual ground for Him. This implies moving up to the higher spiritual planes that will allow Him more control of our lives and service.

Now the last part of this psalm, “when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it”, is a hard saying over which many Christians stumble. Remember we previously discussed the place for governmental justice and judgment being carried out---this type of punishment and retribution being just for a lawful government. There is a place in the work of the ministries of the apostles and prophets and, yes, even in the ministry of an intercessor to call such judgment down. No wicked person will ever get full justice in this life, and many seem to go unpunished. However, as God is a perfect and just Being, He will surely one day call into account every sin and deed, and full retribution shall be measured out. Only Christians that are true overcomers will be spared this judgment of sin, for Christ bore it all on the cross.

In this life we do observe cases of God’s judgment on a wicked person or nation. We rejoice not in God’s wrath being displayed, but in the display of justice and holiness in God’s dealing with evil. The punishment of sin in lives here are warnings to us of the consequences of sin against God. Apostles, prophets and intercessors are moved at times by God to pray His judgments down. Judgments are not just intended to punish sin, but to cause the sinner to see that the reaping of such is not worth the indulgence of the sin. Often it takes God’s judgments to bring a soul to Him, for some do not respond to God’s longsuffering and kindness.

When the authority is given to pray such a prayer in God’s stead that person must be very disinterested in it. He or she must have no personal vengeance or justice to gain by it, for that attitude will not move God, and may bring harsh dealings to one’s own self. Judgment is harsh and final for some, for they have spurned all attempts of grace and longsuffering on the part of God. Holiness spurned and mocked is very deadly to the soul of the wicked. We have several Scriptures that deal with mocking souls refusing to repent and God’s response to them. God is recorded as laughing only a few times in the Bible, and that laughter is usually His mocking of the wicked. Read Psalms 2:4; 37:13; 59:8 and Proverbs 1:26.

The last verse speaks of wisdom mocking. Christ is our Wisdom. You can be sure that when the time comes for God to mock and show contempt for a person or a nation that the person or nation has repeatedly rejected His overtures of grace and longsuffering. This is especially true for those who persecute God’s messengers who are sent from Him to warn and guide them to grace. The final end of such is hell---the outer darkness where God has chosen to remove the awareness of Himself from those who enter.

Hell is not only a never-ending state of the soul but a total loneliness and separation from God. Hell is spoken of as a place of utter contempt. From whom is this contempt? Why, it is from God Himself! This contempt is total disregard and not, as some misguided and humanistic ministers tell us, a weeping throughout eternity by Christ for those assigned there. Hell is hell! Whatever fire is to the body, hell is to the soul of man. God will forever turn His back on those lost souls, and their anguish will be that their cries will be unheard forever in their hopeless state.

We must be careful to not remove from God's Word that which we find hard and difficult to swallow. Many will ask how can a loving God judge so? If we understood holiness in its purest form we would understand how He could. Once the door of hell is shut it shall never be opened again. Many think and say, "I could not bear to live in heaven knowing that my loved ones are in hell." My friends, when we cross over into heaven and our spirits are thus perfected we will take on the nature of God in such a way that we will live and think on a higher plane. No longer bound by mere human sentimentality alone, we would judge our closest loving friends and relatives with the same judgment and attitude of Christ! Not only would we see the pure justice of it, but we would see the wisdom of that final eternal separation from the holy, happy and perfected saints.

Therefore let us not worry about heaven's joy being marred. Now we see through a darkened glass, then we shall see perfectly! Many of our problems as Christians come from humanizing God's ways too much. He will and would take us up to spiritual levels that go beyond mere human reasoning and limits.

The second part of this dream, when I sang three times "Christ is in me", was given to encourage me in my walk when things appeared so bleak. When we look within too much without the Holy Spirit's leading, we can become very discouraged at our failures and lack of spiritual growth. We must be reminded often that it is Christ in us that makes the difference in our lives. We need to walk that narrow path that lies before us.

God's grace will see us through if we do not walk in the error of greasy grace where we live as we please, or we do not become self-righteous workers who think we can earn our way into heaven. These are false beliefs which take us astray from the narrow path of Jesus Christ---that path on which our Shepherd leads His sheep as they follow Him. The more we allow Christ to rule and live in us, the more the old nature and flesh will be subdued. Our faith and hope is Christ living in us and changing us from glory to glory. The phrase "Christ is in me" being spoken three times again confirms a truth. The Spirit will bear witness with our spirits that we are children of God. Mere mental acceptance of a biblical teaching or doctrine will not. It is the Spirit that gives life, the letter killeth!

## #66 THE DREAM.....

*I am walking down a street in the darkness of night. As I enter an intersection I see two men standing behind a large delivery truck. I overhear their conversation as one says to the other, "We have done all that we can do. Now we will just have to wait." They then appear to be in an attitude of waiting as if at any moment the delivery will come.*

The darkest hour for us is the hour when we do not see, feel or hear any way or means of our prayers or promises being fulfilled. Then comes temptation to discourage us to give up, turn back or despair. The intersection or crossroads represents the choice we must make as to the direction we will go. It appears easier to move on as long as we are exercising faith and perseverance, and our hope remains strong. Our very activity often spurs us on.

The fact is also true that sometimes we can do nothing but wait when we have done all we know to do and are walking in the light we have received concerning our prayer or promise. Waiting is very difficult when days, weeks, months and, yes, sometimes even years pass by. God knows the appointed time of delivery. We do not want a premature birth---fruit picked before it has ripened is sour and bitter! We must do all that God requires of us but then must wait His timing to deliver. When we grow impatient with God, we are revealing that we think we know better than He does. Perhaps too much of us wants that answer to prayer and not enough of us wants God's will in the matter.

## #67 THE DREAM.....

*I appear to be at a concession stand ordering some food. When the food and beverage arrive, I am displeased with the order and begin murmuring and complaining about it. Again food is brought to me and again is not what I ordered. Very disgusted with the service, I proceed to look about for some sandwiches to buy. The sandwiches all seem different in size, variety and appearance. I search in vain for the prices and names of the sandwiches. I continue my complaining, and am now very angry and emotionally upset as well. Then, as I turn, I see over on the side of the wall a sign with large printed letters that spell out: "Quail Sandwiches."*

Previous to this dream my day had been full of complaining and murmuring. Several days had gone by in this state. It seemed as if nothing went right and all was set up to provoke and irritate me. Not only had my complaining been directed at people at work but soon was directed at God also. After all, He would not remove the causes of my present state, nor was He answering me in the way and manner I had expected.

Now most of us know the story in the Bible of the murmuring and complaining of the children of Israel against the Lord. For years He had fed them manna from heaven. He had given it to humble and discipline them, yet they tired of God's dealings and even wished they were back in bondage for their garlic, fish and onions. They forgot how poorly they had been treated and how they had cried to the Lord for deliverance. God gave them what they wanted---quail for a month or more. He said He would give it to them until it came out of their noses, or until they were sick of it! On top of this He sent a wasting disease among the people that killed many.

Thus God one day may give us things that are not in His will or He may allow the devil to do so. It is the sins of covetousness and selfishness that cause us to desire a thing whether it is in God's will or not. Many a soul has received what it wanted---to the great regret and sorrow of that soul.

Much that happens in our lives tries and tests us. To murmur and complain is to accuse God or find fault with Him. If He is God Almighty and I am His child, then why does He allow all these things to provoke me? It is really a simple answer that had we allowed Him to work more of the cross and self-denial in us, then all these provocations would have been cast upon Him and we would not have had to endure so much. A dead person can not complain! We are so alive in ourselves.

Christ is attempting to humble and subdue us by all the circumstances we find so annoying. The trying of our faith and lives produces endurance. Tribulations work steadfastness. Being humbled produces humility. Storms strengthen the character. Complaining and murmuring only add to our problems and drive us deeper into trouble in our spiritual walk. We must, though it appears hard during some seasons, accept our present lot in life. He will change it when He desires or when we have learned what we are to learn from it.

If we try to change our lot on our own without regard to the Lord's will, then He will have to arrange another furnace for us. This only prolongs our maturing and learning, and causes more needless suffering in which we reap the fleshly consequences of having caused delay. We may find ourselves very willful and stubborn at times in our reactions to God's dealings, but we will soon learn that He also can be willful in His determination to accomplish what He desires of us. There is no profitable winning in our fighting against God's methods, so let us submit and save ourselves needless wasted time.

When I awakened from this dream, I sat up in my bed in the middle of the night. I confessed my sins of murmuring and complaining to the Lord and asked for His grace to put them away. I was then able to return to sleep with peace of mind and soul. Circumstances did not change much, but I was better able to accept them without a bitter and resentful spirit.

## #68 THE DREAM.....

*I see a small bird flying around in circles in a darkened room. This room appears to be a prison or a place from which the bird seeks release. As the bird flies about I notice that it is very black, but its appearance begins to change as it circles higher. The higher it flies the greater the change. Finally I see this black bird transformed into a pure, bright white bird! As the room begins to darken even more, the white bird finds a door and flies out and up to complete freedom.*

In pondering this dream I began to see myself and my spiritual walk as that bird. I see the darkening room as our earthly life here in the present world system. The black bird symbolizes our spiritual life at its beginning before we are found of Christ and before we find Him. Sin, self, earthly is our spiritual state. That black bird moves upward as if drawn by some unseen force, and flies on to meet that force. Though not clearly seen, the bird's appearance begins to change. Something happens in the innermost being of that black bird that causes it to change as it flies higher and higher.

So we in our being drawn to God and in our yielding to that drawing are born anew in our spirit--our innermost being. Thus true salvation is imparted to us by God. The life of Christ is formed in our spirits by the very presence of the Holy Spirit. We have confessed and repented of our outward grosser and more obvious sins. We have seen our lost and hopeless spiritual state and exchanged that life for His, yet there is still much mud, dirt and mire present in us.

Sanctification begins in our being born anew. Infirmities, flesh and self will be further dealt with in our practical spiritual walk. The work of God, if spiritual, will always be from the inside out--from spirit to soul to body. The Spirit of Christ lives in union with our renewed spirits. From there He works in and with us.

We will have periods when we experience a definite work of grace being wrought. This is where we use such terms as being sanctified and being filled or baptized with the Holy Spirit. We may differ in our doctrinal understandings of such, but to experience their practical, vital outcomes is of utmost importance.

“Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror (glass) the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit” (II Corinthians 3:17-18).

So, too, as we have His Spirit in us and are looking up to Christ--the face of God---we will be changed from natural to supernatural, from earthly to spiritual. The bird's gradual change of color from black to brightest white symbolizes this transformation.

As that changed bird found a door that led from darkness to light, so we are taken from the earthly to the higher spiritual planes. One day we will finally enter into the everlasting light of heaven and God's presence. This present world system is dark and will get darker as the end times approach.

“For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee” (Isaiah 60:2).

Even now darkness has covered and blinded the world's systems and masses. Much of professing Christianity is dark, but Christ has and will have a remnant of true spiritual believers who will be and are

being changed. Let us keep moving up in our spiritual flight and allow God to transform us in this present life. Let us move up in practical, experiential Christianity, which is the only true way to the overcoming Christian life.

## #69 A SPOKEN WORD.....

The following word was given to me in my sleep. At first it made no sense, but later the understanding came to me.

*This is the word spoken, "You rock the One who rocks the boat!"*

We all know what it means to rock the boat. It means to shake things up or to disturb the status quo. A spiritual state of status quo could be complacency---a true counterfeit for spiritual contentment. Many just flow along with any and all winds of doctrine, often with the attitude that all is well and everyone else is doing it. They have little regard for the fact that the majority is usually wrong when it comes to spiritual matters.

Thus our boats at times need to be rocked to get our attention. The ministries of exhortation, teaching and preaching are good boat-rockers with their methods of reproof, rebuke, warning and admonishment. Even these ministries must have the Spirit of God motivating them to have true life and urgency in them. The soul tuned in to the Lord will welcome these rockings and often will see them coming and prepare for them. Unsuspecting or disinterested souls will find themselves in for a rude ride once God begins to shake things up. As in a boat when we see the waves coming we brace ourselves and hold on for the ride. However, if the waves come, and we are not prepared for them, we may find ourselves soon overboard! Let us allow God to rock our boats and stir our nests as often as He sees fit and as often as we need it.

Another aspect of this rocking as revealed to me concerns the intercessor's ministry. We will see that in a sense we may rock the throne room of God. Take a look at Isaiah 62:6-7:

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (KJV).

Watchmen are prophets and intercessors. We as the spiritual body of Christ are a spiritual Jerusalem being built. Intercessors are persevering, persisting and continuous in their prayers and objectives. For this reason we ask, seek and knock. We come to the just Judge and the Friend at midnight! We are told to keep praying and not to faint.

Once while baby-sitting a friend's children, I awakened one morning and lay meditating with my eyes closed and body still. One of the children came into my room to awaken me. It was Saturday and the boy was hungry for breakfast. Normally the children had cereal on those days, but this child wanted eggs, bacon and toast. As I lay there he gently pushed my arm to wake me, pleading, "Please get up and fix me some breakfast." I responded by quietly lying still, hoping he would go and eat some cereal. Vain was my hope! After two or three times of this persistent nagging and pushing I finally told him I would get up "in a little while" (still secretly hoping). As I continued meditating this little badger soon returned, and I knew all efforts to stall or put him off would be useless. I would not be able to lie there in peace, so I arose and he got what he wanted.

Thus God is to us at times. He hears though He may appear not to. When we are hungry and desperate we will mean business in our spiritual pursuits. We are in a sense to give Him no rest in our intercession until we have obtained some sure promise of its answer or the answer itself. We may not be able to convict or stir up a complacent soul by only our words and deeds, yet by intercession before our

Lord He will send His Spirit to hound and badger the consciences of men. How many souls have come to God because of the dealings of His persevering Spirit! Men may shut us out bodily from their presence, yet God is not so easily shut out from the consciences of men.

Let us be the ones who will rock God by our determined attitude that we will keep rocking until He looks our way and we know we have His willing and smiling attention. If God seems to hide Himself from us at times (and it is not due to any fault on our part), then perhaps He is hiding in the desire that we will come and seek Him out.

## #70 THE DREAM.....

*I am playing a game of chess in which my opponent appears to be beating me. Each player starts with sixteen pieces or soldiers. The game's objective is to corner the chief man, the king, so he can not move and is thus "checkmated." My opponent has most of his playing pieces while I have only three left. To all outward appearances I have lost this game. Suddenly, to my great surprise, it seems in only two or three moves I checkmate his king and win the game. I tell my opponent, "You should have won this game."*

Our spiritual battles often appear this way. We seem to be losing and not accomplishing anything. We begin to feel defeated and are ready to quit and give up. How often we must remind ourselves that our outward look and state is not always a good gauge of our spiritual progress. We must remember that our enemy will not only tempt us to give up inwardly, but may temporarily affect our outward circumstances as well. If our faith and trust is calculated by often changing outward appearances we will find ourselves on a real mood-swinging roller coaster ride.

Never mind if the enemy attacks. Did we expect differently? Satan and his host are often allowed directly or indirectly to test and challenge our spiritual walk and works. Outwardly Satan frequently seems to be winning when we look at our circumstances. Indeed, apart from the Spirit of Christ in us, we will be defeated by our spiritual enemies. Yes, he would have won over us, for human flesh is no match for this evil spiritual being. As Christians we would be deceived and led astray if not for the wisdom of God's Word and Spirit. Humans standing in their own strength and flesh are no match for these demonic beings, yet God delights to deliver His children out of seemingly impossible situations and sometimes seemingly at the last minute. This is to God's glory and honor, to our maturing in faith and trust, and to Satan's total anger and frustration.

## #71 THE DREAM.....

*I am in a spiritual state of discouragement and depression. I am being tempted to give up in despair and defeat because I do not see the promises of God being fulfilled to my expectations. Someone comes up to me and takes my arm and leads me around a street corner. There I see waiting the answers to my prayers.*

We must always remember that faith deals with the unseen realm, unseen to the natural eye. Yet at the right bend in the road, often just around the corner, will be the manifestation of our faith. There faith, hope and waiting will have completed their roles.

Our problem often in our spiritual walk and in this life of faith is again the danger of letting outward appearances discourage us. We run by faith, we believe by faith and we wait in faith. Time and circumstances tempt us to give up and stop running in faith. Faith is not a hyper-emotional feeling worked up by some preacher. Many so-called healings, spiritual manifestations and hyperventilations are no proof of faith or have no real substance in faith. Confessing, professing and constant quoting of Scripture is not a producer of faith either. Excitement, emotions and feelings may or may not follow genuine faith, but these are not faith.

Poor desperate souls have been told during some of these so-called healing services that they are healed by faith, and these souls get excited emotionally with wonderful tinglings only to go home and find to their great disappointment they are not healed. To add to this tragedy, they go back to be told by the same healer that they exercised unbelief and allowed Satan to rob them of their healing. My friends, when God heals He is not so petty to remove it because we fail and fall into sin or unbelief. He has better means of chastening us than holding a cruel stick of fear over our heads. Would to God He would use that cruel stick He is so often reputed to possess on the heads of those preachers who cause such harsh sufferings to misguided souls!

Even positive thinking is not faith! Often this counterfeit faith is used as a cure-all to obtain a good self image and positive thoughts about one's self. Positive thinking is good if it is based on the whole of God's Word and not on portions taken out of context to prove a point. Why, many will go to hell with a positive attitude that all is well with themselves and God, only to stand speechless at the Lord's judgment seat when sentenced to hell!

Positive thinking will not cover unconfessed and unrepented sin, nor will it work as magic to keep God off our backs so we can live selfishly, puffing up our egos with self-worth and esteem. There is not an ounce of good in any of us apart from God's grace and Christ's being lived in us. We are supposed to be losing our life according to Christ, not finding it. Christ said those who find their life will lose it, and that forever. The old man and the fleshly ways are to be put to death, not reformed!

Mental believing of God's Word is not faith either. Demons have that sort of belief yet are not saved. True faith is simple, but spiritual.

“Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen”  
(Hebrews 11:1).

Hope is future. Assurance is the trust that waits for the unseen to be brought into the seeable realm. Faith sees into the unseen and holds firm that word or promise until God manifests it when, how and where He so desires. Any faith that seeks to bring about a result that is outside God's will, timing or glory will either be false, counterfeit or misguided. All this will lead to spiritual harm, not good. Faith

must not be used to commit the sins of covetousness and greed or materialism. Spiritual gifts and ministries have been and will be used at times by Christians to promote themselves and their own self-interests instead of God's glory. Such are bad stewards and will one day give an account for their robbery!

The faith that moves mountains is the same type of gift as true gifts of prophecy, words of wisdom and knowledge and discerning of spirits. It is given by and when the Holy Spirit so desires, and is not a twenty-four hour gift one uses as one pleases. These are different from the faith, wisdom, knowledge and discernment that one receives from growing in the knowledge of God's Word and from maturing in one's spiritual walk. We may grow in our faithfulness to God by learning of His faithfulness to us. The gift of faith is given to meet or solve a need, and is not to be had as our permanent possession. If we had a permanent gift of faith and healing, we could have cleared out the hospitals long ago! I have yet to meet such a gifted person, yet I have heard many claims to that fact.

I believe in all of the supernatural gifts, and know God moves through His people to use them. Yes, and perhaps He would accomplish more in and through His church, if the members of His body would yield increasingly to the cross-life. Our faith will grow as we walk and submit to the practical lordship of Jesus Christ. Then when mountain-moving faith is imparted it will flow out of us with or without an emotional experience. If just a small amount of this faith---as small as a mustard seed---can move a mountain, we will not have to work up any more in us by emotional excitements. God does not need our help in this faith, as it is given by Him and is His faith!

## #72 THE DREAM.....

*First, I see written: "Isaiah 33:2."*

*Then I find myself in a drive-in restaurant where I am sitting at a food counter. I seem to be waiting to be served as the plate set before me is empty. In the background I hear music playing and it appears to be a song about the grace of God.*

The first part of Isaiah 33:2 reads:

"O Jehovah, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee..."

The two key points in this dream are waiting and grace. We learn in this spiritual walk that much of our working and thinking has to do with waiting on and for God. To be able to wait effectively we must not only be helped by the Lord, but we must believe that He is gracious and will reward our waiting. Our proper waiting honors God and submits to His will. We reveal our faith and trust in Him by waiting His time and place to fulfill His promise.

If we wait on God with an attitude of impatience or with a feeling of being put out with His timing, we have not learned proper waiting. He will strengthen us in our waiting by giving us the grace to endure. The Lord will be gracious and give us that object desired when it is proper and right to give. We must remind ourselves that God does all in perfect wisdom and knowledge, and that all He does in or for us must not only have a good result in our spiritual walk, but serve His own glory and will also. All His giving is meant to be for our good yet, if we are asking or waiting with self interests, that thing desired will not work out for our good.

Our self-seeking, impatience or displeasure at His will and timing is a sure sign that whatever we are seeking is either not good for us, or that we are not ready for its reception. God will answer at His appointed time. That timing can not be moved closer if He has a set appointment, though it may be delayed if we have not learned what the Lord is attempting to teach us in it. It does take God's gracing to wait long for some answers, without giving up or becoming displeased with His ways. We must learn as little children to sit with our forks in hand ready for our plates to be filled. We wait for a hot, fully cooked meal, not a lukewarm, half-cooked portion which will be tasteless!

### #73 THE DREAM.....

*I am sitting and fishing on the edge of a river bank. Something tugs at my line, and I proceed to pull it up. There at the end of the line appears a cubed, solid block of gold. It is perfectly cubed and of purest gold.*

Fishing in this dream symbolizes our seeking answers to prayer. Gold often is a symbol in Scripture of that which is pure and of divine origin. We are frequently told in the Bible to seek wisdom the way we would search for rare, costly gold. As in the dream we are like fishermen. We are sitting on the bank and the object desired is under the water. It is unseen to us as what faith sees is unseen, yet we know it is down there. From our experiences or the experiences of past and present believers we know that answers to prayer are often there though unseen with our natural eyes.

Between us and the object desired are the fishing pole, the line, the hook and the bait. Like this fishing, spiritual fishing has its proper tools that are meant to produce a catch. Between faith and its actual manifestation are patience, hope, steadfastness, waiting and other God-given requirements. The fishing line can be compared to the faith we have been given and the trust we are to unite with it. The line that we see is our trust; the line under the water which is not seen is the faith that God gives. They are united as one, two and three threads are twined together to produce a strong line.

This fishing line with all its combination of helps is still not enough to catch fish. We must wait patiently until the fish comes by. Yes, in our spiritual fishing we must wait until the appointed time for results, and likewise must be alert---not sleeping or away from the fishing pole. Our alertness in observing is like our spiritual watching with expectancy. A time will come when a fish swims by and we must be ready to jerk and pull up the line and hook that fish. Spiritually, also, the appointed time will come and we need to be ready to receive the answer to that prayer or promise. Real-life fishing takes great patience and frequently much time.

In our spiritual pursuits lack of patience and proper attention to the necessary requirements can cause us to delay or abort the answer. As in fishing we may have to watch the surface of the water and its currents to detect any movement out of the ordinary---God may be sending us further confirmation and encouragement that something is there circling our hooks. If after great waiting we still receive no nibbles, we may have to check our bait. We may have to pray and wait before the Lord, doing what we have been given to do and asking Him to correct or enlighten us concerning hindrances to the catch.

This portion of Scripture found in Jeremiah 29:10-14 tells us much as to our seeking and praying. Read these verses in your Bible which I have paraphrased:

“...I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you...For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you...” (KJV).

What words of hope and promise to the soul that makes God his priority and seeks Him with a heart determined to find Him and His promises.

## #74 THE DREAM.....

*Someone comes up to me and hands me a necklace of purple pearls.*

Purple again symbolizes high rank or royalty on one hand, yet on the other speaks of sorrow and suffering. Pearls speak of beautiful and precious spiritual fruit that are produced from suffering. The pearls are a package deal. Like the cross and the crown or faith and works they are meant to be taken together. As in a previous dream of purple dye being made from the death of a mollusk, objects of value are very costly. Most of us know the simple process of how pearls are formed. First a grain of sand or a rough object is inserted into the flesh of the oyster. The oyster begins to secrete a substance to cover the object which is irritating and painful to its flesh. After much time and many layers of secretions the grain of sand become a smooth beautiful pearl.

Common to us is a similar illustration of a blister on our foot. We buy a pair of shoes and find parts of the shoe rub away at our foot. Because we like the shoes and perhaps can not find another similar pair, we decide to keep them. Soon the shoe wears a raw, painful place on our skin that will fill with water and burn. We may hobble around a bit very aware of that blister's presence. That blister may burst and dry, and new skin will be formed under it as the outer layer of skin hardens and thickens. A callus is then produced which has no nerve endings to feel pain, and soon we find those shoes fit to suit us!

Our first reaction to any kind of suffering is to alleviate it. Much suffering is needless. Suffering can be caused by the devil, the reaping of our flesh, or by God's permission to mature us. The suffering that we are mainly concerned with here is that which is meant to produce a good spiritual result. Suffering is not the purpose of spiritual maturity, it is a means to spiritual maturity. We are talking about suffering for righteousness' sake. These other types of suffering have many sources and, though many are not God's best for us, He will waste nothing in our lives to cause all to work together for good.

For example, consider the souls subdued by drugs taken for pleasure or wasted by diseases caused by their promiscuous sexual lifestyles. These are punishments in themselves for making sin out of things that in themselves are neutral (by neutral, I mean drugs and sex have their proper place). We may call drunkenness the disease of alcoholism; this disease, however, is the result of alcohol abuse which the Bible calls sin. Many diseases originate from the abuse of sexual relations that the Bible only sanctions for the marriage bed between a man and a woman. God can and does forgive these sins that are confessed and repented. He can cause good to come out of anything, although we dare not call these sins good and acceptable in themselves.

Now the apostle Peter has much to say about proper suffering:

“But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye...” (I Peter 3:14 KJV).

“For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing” (I Peter 3:17 KJV).

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves like-wise with the same mind...” (I Peter 4:1 KJV).

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings...”  
(I Peter 4:12-13 KJV).

“Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator” (I Peter 4:19 KJV).

“...knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren (true believers) that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (I Peter 5:9-10 KJV).

These words explain much of the true proper suffering we will endure. Much comes from the devil’s attacks through people, through the world’s system, and greatly from our own fleshly nature that wars against us. Taking up our cross involves suffering of a proper sort in subduing that lower nature. It is vain to think we will not suffer for Christ and for His kingdom; therefore many verses are used because this is a hard saying to many. God is building a spiritual church out of spiritual jewels, and they take some suffering to produce!

If His will is for us suffering to bear  
I then must trust in His perfect care,  
For when that purpose comes to full end  
A crown of jewels we will win.  
But, if we resist the Refiner’s hands  
And do not submit to His commands  
To bear the suffering for Christ below  
And as He did to the cross we must go,  
Then we miss the best that God can give;  
In deeper waters we can not live.  
We stay in the shallow waters there to sup  
For we have refused to take and drink the bitter cup.  
Let us ask God for great grace to do all His perfect will  
Leaving the lower valleys to climb the higher hills.  
Those paths may be rough with pain  
Yet crowns of jewels we will obtain.

R.F.H.P.

## #75 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am walking in a vast forest of trees, and come upon a stump. I did not think of the word "stump", but instead I think that it looks like a large table.*

*Before waking I hear these words, "table in the wilderness."*

This dream came to me during a season of treading dark and dry spiritual avenues. Amidst our times of trial and seeming emptiness, God will send His grace to help and sustain us. He will make a table to feed us, and will let us find an oasis in our dry desert times. He may prune and test us in ways that seem cruel and harsh, yet He will also help us when we feel all is lost and hopeless.

God gave the children of Israel manna---bread from heaven---to satisfy their murmuring cries. After awhile they complained to the Lord that this food was bland and mundane. Out of His love and wisdom, God gave it to humble and train them. Sometimes we too may have to live on manna or be fed by ravens, taking what He provides when He provides. Whether water, oil or bread, He will provide to meet our need---and perhaps nothing more. For training and discipline He will take many through a rougher path, yet their rewards are greater. We may forget we are spiritual soldiers, and He must train us by more severe means and methods to produce strength and endurance. We must learn how to handle times of need and times of full supply, and be as the apostle Paul---content in whatsoever state He sees fit to place us.

## #76 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I see written a scriptural verse and chapter: "Romans 8:26."*

*Just before waking I hear these words from another scriptural verse spoken to me, "...He will beautify the meek with victory" (Psalm 149:4).*

From our standpoint meekness is reliance on God's abilities. It is total dependency on the Lord, without whom we can do nothing of any spiritual value. Romans 8:26 reads:

"And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered..."

Christ is our great intercessor, yet He uses His body---the true believers---to be vessels through whom He intercedes. He does this in the Person of the Holy Spirit who is our helper with intercession in many ways. He has all facts and wisdom in all matters, and all righteous means to accomplish His desired ends. We must learn meekness in depending on God for spiritual graces, yet we must allow the Holy Spirit to work the meekness of Christ in us as a fruit of the Spirit.

The written Word of God gives us the principles, laws and insights of the general will of God concerning spiritual growth, works and ministries. Because we each are different and are called to different ministries and lots in life, we need precise and particular directions and instructions. In prayer each case is different also. God knows all the facts about the need or desire; He knows what He wishes in the matter and His plan for its conclusion. For example, sometimes we are to witness, and other times we are to pray for unbelievers that God would convict them of their sin and their need of a Savior. Though one soul may respond to God's goodness and kindness and come to repentance and faith in Christ, yet another soul may not. Some souls can only be brought to a state of conviction and dealing with God by severity or judgment coming into their lives. If we are meek before the Lord in prayer and truly interested in praying effectively for a certain situation, He will guide us with His mind in the matter.

To pray the most useful prayers, the intercessor must be free from allowing human sentimentality to interfere. It may be in certain cases that God knows only judgment and suffering will cause these souls to stand before Him forced to confront their sinful and willful ways. High-minded and proud unbelievers often have to be broken before they will listen to God.

Yes, my friends, it is easier to pray nice, pleasant things for people, but to ask for hard and rough measures is quite another. An intercessor must be free before the Lord to be the Lord's intercessor, not his own intercessor. As one moves more into intercession he begins to understand that much of his or her interceding is directed by God and less of his own choosing. Higher intercession becomes more the Lord's informing us how to pray and for whom, than our informing Him of our agenda.

I am convinced more than ever that any will or desire of the Lord which affects Christians or matters on this planet will be prayed through by the Holy Spirit in and through believers. By this I mean that Christ is the Head of His church and He uses His body for all spiritual works on earth. Even evangelism is done by preachers, evangelists and believers who are the body of Christ. God could send an angel to each person to proclaim the gospel, but He in His wisdom prefers to use the saints. Even---and it is possible---if an angel did preach to a soul, I believe that angel would have been sent by God because of a believer's intercession. It appears that in everything God does on earth concerning man, that man to some degree is used.

As believers we are placed in a position of being channels for the Holy Spirit. Contrary to some beliefs, the angels and saints in heaven do not pray concerning affairs on earth---they are witnessing our progress. Christ and the Holy Spirit are moving in and through the saints on earth to carry out their plans here. Thus we find such statements as “the harvest is white but the laborers are few.” All of mankind has enough spiritual light through nature alone to bring them to God. Paul tells us in Romans they are without excuse. We as yielded believers can put ourselves at God’s disposal to give Him useful vessels to reveal more of His grace and light to the world.

Now let us look at the proclamation of the gospel. Whether the gospel is preached or not, the wicked will be judged according to their consciences and the light they have had. They will die in their sins, but not because we have not preached the gospel to “the poor sinner lost and going to hell.” God never called them poor sinners destined for hell. They are called wicked and deserving of such.

Many evangelists and funding-raising ministers in their misguided zeal attempt to make us feel as if thousands of souls are going to outer darkness simply because they have never heard the gospel. The fact is that each soul will be judged according to the light they have received. If those souls had followed and not seared their consciences they would have been found of God---even if an angel from heaven had to be sent. Our preaching of the gospel gives much more grace and knowledge to the unbeliever, and is the best means that God has found. Men will go to hell because they are willful sinners against God.

Furthermore, it is a reproach to God for preachers to tell us that all these poor lost sinners are headed for hell because we will not give our money and send missionaries out. Poor God---He is wringing His hands for He is helpless to do more! My friends, God may have limited His working through the body of Christ here on earth, but if there is one sinner in the deepest, darkest place on earth that cries out for truth and to know the true Most High God, you can be sure our Lord will wake up ten intercessors in the middle of the night to intercede for that soul. Then you may see a believer sent from half-way round the world to preach the gospel to that person---God may even send an angel to proclaim the good news. We all have read of these types of cases, though they seem to be the rare exceptions.

A word about God beautifying the meek with victory---to beautify means to adorn or decorate. This is what God will do for meek souls. With what will He adorn them? Some translations use the word “salvation”, but more clearly understood in this context is the word “victory.” Thus God gives strength and victory to the believer that submits to His power rather than his own.

## #77 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I see a large sailing ship and then find myself aboard steering at its helm. There are several other persons about me. The ship is headed for a rocky mountain in the midst of this body of water, and appears to be ready to run aground and crash. I turn loose the steering wheel with my right hand and lift my hand slowly upward as if to heaven. While doing this and maintaining a steady forward course, the ship begins to rise out of the waters and seems to fly up and over the mountain of rocks. I hear these words spoken to me, "shattering rocks." As the ship clears the obstacle, the rocks begin to explode as if dynamited. The vessel moves on and upward.*

In this dream I am a navigator which speaks of ministry. We each have a work and ministry for which we are responsible to God, a spiritual ship for which we are accountable. The Holy Spirit places us in His church as He wills, not as we will or as others will for us.

The other people on this ship symbolize other ministries and believers that help us. All spiritual ministries work to build up the body of Christ in some manner. Though each of us has his or her own vineyard to work we are each helping and being helped by other parts of the body. Even the apostles needed support and help from other ministries. Like the human body each part has a place, and must give and take as needed. Some who are proud and seemingly self-sufficient say they have no need of anyone but God. This may sound good but is unwise and not true. God is our Source, but God moves through His people and His methods to give to us that which we can not obtain for ourselves. Yes, even Jesus was fed by a following of people on most occasions.

The ship represents our spiritual work and each having his or her own ship to guide by God's wisdom. He helps and gives us direction and power to do so. In the natural, rocks are a great danger to ships, but our vessel is controlled by higher principles that can override natural laws. In the dream as the ship approached the rocks I lifted my right hand, but my left hand still held to the wheel. Again, a union here of God and us steering the ship together. As my hand rose the ship rose above those dangerous rocks as if by some unseen power. We move by faith and obedience to God and, as we do, His unseen powers of faith and graces help us to rise above the natural into the spiritual realm.

Faith always moves in the unseen realm where the natural eye can not see. God sends us forth yet He also goes ahead to remove any hindrances to our walk. True faith will move ahead though the natural appears to change little or not at all. Faith responds to God's directions. Remember, it was only as the priest began to carry the ark into the waters that God responded. Only as they moved forward and stepped into the waters did the waters begin to divide. We are tempted to stop and wait for God to move before we move, but once He has given the command to go forward we must go.

Our faith is like a man in the woods at night. He has a flashlight which allows him to see maybe fifty feet ahead. He can remain all night in the woods and will see not a yard further. He must move on for his flashlight to reveal more. Simple, but our faith walk is often like that. The natural man will say, "When I see all I will believe"; the spiritual man will say, "I will walk in what He has shown me and trust Him to reveal more as I move on."

The phrase "shattering rocks" speaks of faith shattering and destroying any object or mountain that stands in the way. Faith will do the impossible as that natural ship did. Instead of the rocks wrecking the ship, the vessel of faith will destroy what is meant to destroy it! Faith in God's word and promises will release much power. "Is not my word like fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29). Yes, the faith that God gives will cause ships to shatter rocks, and will cause ships to fly in the heavens. It will do impossible things when aligned with God and with a God-yielded soul.

## #78 THE DREAM.....

*I see printed before me: "39th day" and "out of the ashes."*

As I pondered these phrases I sensed a good spiritual feeling of hope and faith. To me, thirty-nine symbolizes a period of waiting and of not giving up just before the promise is fulfilled. In a previous teaching we mentioned Daniel's twenty-one days of fasting and wondered what would have happened if he had given up on the twentieth day---perhaps the angel would have returned to heaven without having given him that great revelation. Thus thirty-nine and twenty are similar. Thirty-nine is a personal number to remind me that we can miss God's best by giving up prematurely, when the answer could be very close to us.

A biblical example of this is found in Exodus 32 concerning Moses and the children of Israel. Moses is called up to the mountain to meet with God and to receive the law. He is there forty days where he fasts without food or water. The people below get weary waiting for Moses and finally give up on him. They insist that Aaron fashion a golden calf for them to worship, and decide to have a feast and celebration the next day to honor their new god. Meanwhile God tells Moses what the people are doing and to return immediately.

Now this was either the thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, or fortieth day. Because the Bible day begins at sundown it may be difficult to get a precise date, yet as I re-read that chapter many times I began to consider it to be the thirty-ninth day---we might say the eleventh hour. Whatever the exact day, the point is that they gave up very close to the time Moses would have come down with God's law and blessings. They rebelled and sinned, not only in making the golden idol but in not waiting for God's timing. To add further to their sin they began to enter into sexual impurities for which many were killed. So close, yet they failed and lost not only God's blessings but received His judgment as well.

Our enemies in the spirit realm surely see the answers to our prayers being sent by angels and by God's providential workings. If this is the case, they would be foolish not to launch a massive attack at the last hour. Truly this would explain the old saying, "It is darkest before the dawn." Many Israelites lost their lives from impatience and open sin. Moses, having broken the ten commandments, had to return to the mountain to begin another forty days of fasting before the Lord. He also interceded much for the people, and God heard his prayers. Several times God threatened to destroy those rebellious Hebrews for their sins, yet was moved by the great intercessor to relent.

Thirty-nine is one short of forty. Forty in Scripture often symbolizes a period of probation or testing. We must not give up on the promises by human impatience and willful sin. The Israelites failed in their testing; let us not do the same.

"Out of the ashes" has a two-fold meaning---one we will call negative and the other positive. The negative side is that promises and blessings can come to ashes. Sin can delay and abort the blessings of God in our lives! The positive side symbolizes God's ability to bring forth blessing and new life from sin and death. From the cross of Christ came life to us! The ashes of true spiritual sacrifice and our taking up the cross will bring forth God's blessings. The fire that alters the gift on the altar is the same fire that refines the gold. That true spiritual fire is the Holy Spirit.

Now when Moses came down and rebuked the people he had them do a strange thing:

"And he took the (golden) calf which they had made, and burnt it with fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it" (Exodus 32:20).

This was done to make the people realize their sins of impatience, rebellion, idolatry and wild sexual immorality. To drink the impure mixture of gold from the crushed idol was a sign of their partaking of sin and of the bitterness of that sin. Moses ordered those guilty of sexual sins (fornication) to be destroyed. Thousands were put to death and, had not Moses interceded, all may have been destroyed. God's grace was extended and His full measure of judgment was averted.

God does forgive our sins as we confess and repent of them, yet many Christians wrongly assume that because He does so there are no consequences for their actions. God's discipline and chastening can be grievous and costly. Christians are not bastards and will be dealt with by their Father if sin is continued and there is no repentance. Many only confess their sins without the slightest intention of repenting and changing. God is very long-suffering with us in our sin, but if we will not judge ourselves in these matters He will take them into hand. The more mature believer will be dealt with more sternly by the Lord for falling into open gross sin. To whom much is given, much is required!

Sometimes in our spiritual walk we come to the place where the Holy Spirit convicts us of some known sin with which we must deal. Usually like children we are convicted and spoken to by the Lord several times in warning and correction. However, like children, we say we are sorry yet often keep doing what we have been told not to do. When the word fails to get a proper response, then God like a parent may turn to the rod. Now if God gives this advice in Proverbs to human parents will He do less as our Father?

“Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Proverbs 23:13-14 KJV).

This is not child abuse, and neither is using a paddle, switch or brush. The intent is to cause some temporal pain that will serve to show the consequences of disobedience. Some children respond to other types of punishments, but some do not and must be put under the rod. God not only allows us on occasion to reap from our sins as believers, but He also corrects us Himself with His rod. The punishment or correction for sin (even for the believer) is a means to teach the all-important practical lesson that sin is not worth the pain reaped from it. God does remove our sins when we really confess and repent of them. Here we are talking of repeated sin that we have not judged ourselves. God, having no bastards, must now take the correction into His hands.

I want to share an example from the eleventh and twelfth chapters of II Samuel concerning God's dealings with His children when gross sin had not been properly repented. We all know the familiar story of King David's sin with Bathsheba, but let us look at it more closely. King David in the night arises and looks out his balcony window and observes a pretty woman bathing. The simple sin was sexual lust---simple in that it is not hard to understand from the drawings of the lower nature. His lusting caused him to send for this married woman (wife of Uriah) and to commit adultery with her. Later she becomes pregnant, and now there is the problem of possible discovery by her husband. David's attempts to settle the matter do not work, so he orders the death of Uriah---murder by God's evaluation. This one night stand of adultery has led to lies and deceptions and to the cold-blooded murder of the husband along with innocent soldiers who were included to make it appear that Uriah had died in battle.

After Uriah's death the story continues on for a period of time and we see no true repentance from David. God then sends a prophet who cleverly causes David to pass judgment on the crime of which the king is guilty. The prophet confronts him, “You are the man.” David confesses his sins and

repents and the prophet tells him he will not die---the law's judgment for adultery and murder. Pay close attention to the important scriptural words of "now", "behold" and especially "nevertheless"---serious words of consequence for those who continue in unrepented gross sin. God did not exact the law's full penalty for the sins he committed, yet look at the punishment and the consequences of those sins. Yes, the Lord's anointed will not go unpunished or undisciplined. God's grace had been bestowed in not judging in full measure because of David's late repentance and God's merciful dealings.

Bathsheba's child by David died according to God's will. David's lust and desire were even more sinful because he already had several wives. The Lord tells David that because he murdered Bathsheba's husband the sword would never depart from his house---battles and strife would enter his own home. God further states that because he committed this sin in secret darkness that He, God, would have the same sin committed openly against him.

Yes, many years later his beloved adult son drives him out of Jerusalem and makes himself king. Then he sets up a tent in the sunlight before all the people and has intercourse with some of David's concubines who were left behind. In David's older age he wanted to build a temple for his God, yet the prophet was sent to tell him that he could not for he had spilt too much blood.

Now some preachers will say, "That was true but we are now under grace." The apostle Paul addresses believers with the following:

"Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted" (I Corinthians 10:5-6).

"Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition (warning, reproof), upon whom the ends of the ages are come"  
(I Corinthians 10:11).

Sin, my fellow Christians, is deceitful and costly to us. You say one sin can not do that much harm. Then let me ask you this, how many sins caused the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden? Sin is a strong cord, each time indulged it binds stronger. Some think we may play with grosser sins without consequences---many have thought so to their own destruction!

Sin will master us if we by God's grace and true repentance do not overcome it. Sin deceives and lies to its users. It says, "You can stop whenever you want to. You can stop tomorrow---enjoy yourself tonight." Sin will even tell you are really not that bad. We are told to flee from certain strong sins, and flee we must. The sooner we escape from its cords the better, for the longer sin is indulged the harder it is to be set free, and the more sternly God will deal with us.

## #79 THE DREAM.....

*I appear to be standing on the wall of a large fortress. Directly below me are the gates to this castle-like fortress. Outside below I can hear the noise of the enemies' troops as they storm the castle. I can even hear the conversations of the high-ranking officers as they give out clear instructions to kill everyone in the fortress. To my surprise I see an enemy soldier standing about twenty feet away from me on the wall over the gate, fully armed with a long spear in his hand. He stares at me gleefully and murderously as if anticipating my death.*

*I am aware that he can not harm me now, but know he is waiting for the right conditions to do so. As he stands with his hateful and gleeful look, holding firmly to his weapon, I grab my stomach---I can almost feel the pain that will come if he runs me through with that spear! Suddenly a great temptation to fear and terror comes over me, and I consider surrendering to these enemies and opening the fortress gates to them. By this action I am being tempted to think that perhaps the enemy would now show mercy and not kill me. Then at that moment it was as if I had an intuition that if I did surrender, this spearman would show no mercy and would kill me at once. I somehow know, too, that he can not harm me unless I give the order for the fortress gates to be opened.*

*The dream then changes to another scene. I am still standing high up somewhere on a pinnacle of that fortress and am looking outside and observing. I see a horseman emerging from an opening in the fortress to face his enemies. This horseman is swinging a sword in his hand and advances quickly to meet his foes. He is very brave and appears unmoved at the enemies' ten horsemen. I watch in utter amazement at this soldier's courage and determination in meeting and fighting against such odds.*

Knowing immediately that this dream was about spiritual warfare I desired to learn all its lessons and insights, for at that time I was involved in spiritual conflict. In this dream the fortress symbolizes our mind which the enemy so mightily desires to capture, the mind being the base on which one's will, affections and spirit rest. My standing on the wall over the gate of this fortress was a defensive position. Thus we must stand as spiritual Christians---born of the Spirit---for our spirits are often under attack from demonic and fleshly enemies. Though an all out attack is being made on the renewed mind where our spirit dwells, those foes can not enter unless we consent to defeat by opening the door to them.

The gleeful enemy spearman standing near me on the wall of the fortress gate was on the wall but not fully in the fortress. This speaks to us of the area of temptation where we overcome or are overcome by the enemy. Temptations come to our minds to persuade us to surrender to their suggestions. They, like the spearman, have no power as long as we do not consent to their desires. This soldier had come as fear and terror hoping through intimidation and lies to persuade me to open the gates. However, my spiritual hearing allowed me to overhear the high-ranking officers' plans. Satan, being a skillful liar, will often promise many things to gain entrance or compromise. Our enemies can come near to tempt and attack but have no spiritual power against us without our consent.

Satan always comes to rob, kill and destroy our spiritual walk and even our souls if permitted. If his lies and deceptions succeed he will take truth away which leaves us spiritually helpless before him. Like a bully he will scream, threaten and puff himself up in an attempt to cause great fear in us and thereby demand a surrender. Fear and lies must be met with God-given faith and courage, or else discouragement and defeat will follow.

Fear often comes as a feeling or emotion just as lust and greed. This feeling is not sin but a drawing and tempting to sin. This temptation must be resisted quickly before it gains entrance to our minds. Christ lives by His Spirit in our spirits and renewed minds, so we have been given power to overcome. Another great trick of Satan is frequently to entice Christians with unforgiveness by welling

up feelings of anger or resentment in them. Again, it is a feeling or emotion that can be dealt with as such and thereby no sin has been committed. Forgiveness is a choice of the will.

It is the will, which is working from the mind, that determines whether we submit to sin or resist it. We resist sin by willfully choosing to do so, putting our spiritually renewed mind to work---this mind being strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit. Often the Scriptures tell us to have courage, fear not, be not afraid. This means we do have power of will in these matters as born-again Christians. We are also often told to put on the new man in Christ---it is our responsibility to yield and be co-workers with our Lord. Emotions, feelings and desires frequently come and go, these being neither good nor evil in themselves but good or evil according to their use. Emotions and feelings are not a good gauge by which to measure a Christian's character. The Christian's will and actions are surer proof of spiritual fruit at work. Feelings and moods must not dictate our spiritual life. We must allow the Holy Spirit to control our wills and choices if we are going to follow the Lord and move upward unto maturity.

Fear, lust, anger and unforgiveness are frequent assailants. We must not be tricked into thinking they are sin to us if we have not entertained them or opened our minds to them. These are mere temptations that come to all. We choose sin by our wills and we can also choose to resist sin by our wills. It matters little if our feelings and emotions are in conflict. They soon will pass if not fed by sin. We must not consent to be defeated by our enemies. They are liars and are cruel also. If from fear or whatever other temptation we consent to Satan we will not fare well in the long run. Satan has no true interest in us---he desires only to use us to express his rebellion and hate toward God.

When or if he succeeds in getting us to open to him, he soon will throw us aside when finished. He is unable to love or be faithful to anyone! Selfishness is at the core of his nature. It is rough on occasion to have Satan as an enemy and worse yet as a power over us. However, it is far worse to have rebelled against the Lord and have to face Him in displeasure as Satan stands there to accuse.

If we sin and are defeated in willfully yielding to Satan's temptations, we must put the blame where it is due. No one makes us sin, not even Satan! If we sin it is because we have consented to it by choice. We have chosen to allow ourselves to be drawn away by sin or not to put on the armor of Christ or, having done so, refuse to use it.

The second phase of this dream deals with our offensive stance. Most of the armor given in the sixth chapter of Ephesians is for defense, yet the sword is given for offense. The Word of God is that sword. The Holy Spirit is the power behind that sword. The brave horseman was swinging that sword as he advanced toward his enemies. The ten other horsemen speak to us of the full power of the enemy---ten being a complete number. Though Satan attacks at full fury he is no match for any believer who uses the sword of the Spirit in battle against him. The horseman charged with courage and determination. Numbers mean little in spiritual battles. A little faith can move a large mountain---one soldier empowered by Christ can stand if need be against any high-ranking demon or demons.

God delights in using weak human vessels empowered by Him against whom no enemy can stand. God's grace and our yielding will withstand any spiritual foe set against us. As long as we by faith and obedience draw on God's graces we shall not go down in defeat. If we do, it is our own fault--not the devil's or God's. If Christians would remind themselves often that they are in a spiritual war until they cross over into heaven they would prepare themselves to do battle. They would determine by God's grace and enabling to win these battles here in the practical walk---not in some positional walk and life in which they may have no fruit to prove it exists. Holiness and overcoming are practical outworkings of the Christian life. Lives that do not bear these fruit would do well to examine themselves to see if they are in the real faith.

## #80 THE DREAM.....

*I am fleeing as I run around this city block. I can not clearly see, but I hear what sounds like some large evil creature chasing me (though I never really see this beast with my eyes). After running several laps I finally come upon a hiding place. I enter a spacious room, and close and lock the large metal door behind me. In this room I find other people who must also be hiding.*

*I am standing against a wall with my heart pounding hard as I hear the noise of the approaching creature. The screaming, loud groans and fierce cries of this beast are so overwhelming. Suddenly the creature sounds as if it is just outside the room. I begin to hear the battering of its arms and body against the door. After a great while of pounding I can see the large shape of the creature being imprinted in the metal of the door. The entrance is slowly giving way and being twisted loose as the beast keeps throwing itself against it with loud banging of its arms. As the door is loosening I see light coming from underneath it and what appears to be a large, shadowy, claw-like foot indenting and lifting the bottom of the door. With my heart still pounding I seem to know that something must be done soon for this beast is almost upon us.*

*I slowly lift my right arm and hand and point it toward the battered door as if to exert an unseen force against it. At the moment I do this, a little child in the room quietly walks over to the entrance. With perfect composure he appears ready to open the door, and I am thinking (as my heart beats louder), "This child will be eaten alive!" The child opens it quickly and I and the others in the room look in amazement at the small object lying in the doorway. The object is a black box which looks like a tape-recorder with a loudspeaker. The roaring cries of the fearsome creature are coming from this box! The child looks down in his simplicity and picks up the recorder and throws it aside as a discarded toy. I watch the recorder tumble out the doorway as the child walks on out the door into the street.*

The creature in this dream is fear. It is never usually seen in the light but uses darkness to mount its attack. We are tempted most to fear that which we can not see or understand. Darkness is fear's great helper! Evil spirits love to make Christians think that they are bigger and more powerful than they are. They do it so well that they keep using the same lies. They favor darkness as it is the unknown and the unseen which works well for the spirits of fear, hopelessness and discouragement. Fear is a strong man that often holds many Christians in his grip. When we master fear many of our spiritual battles with the devil are already won.

Satan roars like a lion--his loud voice alone being able to put fear in many. As with the lion on the plains the roar can be heard from great distances. All the animals begin to fear and attempt to flee long before the large cat has arrived. The lion is somewhat like Satan in that he, the male lion, is a ruler. He has a pride and subordinates who serve his purposes. The male lion prefers to let the females do the hunting and then takes the prey from them when hungry. They all are subdued by his size and roar.

Satan also prefers to let his helpers do his hunting, and sends forth fear, hopelessness and discouragement. They do a fine work and Satan takes credit for it. Many Christians enter into defeat through his use of these servants. Only if these fail will he be forced at times---or his higher-ranking spirits---to come out in the open to do battle with us. Yet, my friends, the same weapons of our spiritual warfare will work against him as well as any spirit under him!

The creature of fear in the dream makes his roar louder than usual and attempts to mask himself with all sorts of deception and to cause us to see matters out of proportion. Fear may hold us in its grasp by convincing us to see lies and distortions---as I beheld the creature with the claw-like foot making indentations in the door. This creature in reality is only a loud noise in the hidden shadows trying to convince us otherwise. We must stop running and hiding from these lies and attacks and meet them face

to face. The metal door speaks of our natural strength used to resist the evil spirit's attacks. This is useless as they are spirits and must be dealt with in the spiritual realm. It does no good to flee or hide, for the evil spirit can search us out. We must stand against the attack, or wrestle with our enemy until we are standing and he has retreated.

In the dream, as I lifted up my right arm and hand toward the direction of that door with the creature behind it, I was aware of exerting an unseen force against it. The unseen force was faith and courage given to us to use against our spiritual enemies. Just a little faith, just a little resistance will begin to work. The Word of God used with faith will put our enemies to flight. Once that faith is used God calls more help to our side.

The child symbolizes the weak, trusting and unafraid Christian! Though weak and small he proceeded to engage in fearless warfare. The weak but trusting soul will be graced by God to defeat the enemy. Surely then the lame shall take the prey. Instead of our becoming bread for our devouring enemies, we shall defeat and make them our bread for greater victories.

The enemy may appear large and powerful if he convinces us by fear or belief in that fear. These lies will work against us if we allow them, but only if we refuse to stand against them in the name and power of Christ Jesus. Most of mankind is under the control and power of Satan, the god of this age, yet most people never know him as the devil and are blinded in their minds from truth.

Yes, Satan's lies and deceptions are his main weapons that will defeat the majority of people of this age. However, we as Spirit-led Christians need not be tricked by him into believing his lies. The truth will set us free and it will keep us free if we persevere in that truth. No spirit can stand against the pure light of God's Word that is quickened by the Holy Spirit. Let us use truth, faith and courage in our spiritual battles and thereby gain our victories.

## #81 #82 THE DREAMS.....

These two dreams are similar in revelation so will be shared together.

*First dream: I am walking through a deep dark forest, and find myself often stopping to rebuke spiritual enemies in the name of Jesus Christ.*

*Second dream: I am standing before a large fireplace, out of which roars a large, strange-looking fire. It is of a greenish-blue color and I discern an evil demonic presence in the flames. I approach this roaring flame unafraid and, while pointing to it, rebuke it in the name of Jesus Christ. This rebuking continues until I finally see this strange fire with the evil presence draw back into the inner parts of the fireplace and disappear.*

These dreams both deal with rebuking our enemies and doing it steadfastly. Spirits do not give up easily and are persevering in their warring against us. We must act in the same manner toward them, and be consistent and not faint.

In the first dream the deep dark forest symbolizes the source of demonic attacks. They come from darkness and avoid light when possible. In our spiritual walk we must stop often to contend with these forces---they seek to block or stop our spiritual progress if possible. We must not only come against them with the whole armor of Christ (having put Christ on), but on occasion must speak against these spirits in rebuke using the name of Jesus. Demons recognize the power and authority of our Lord Jesus. They also recognize those who walk in the Spirit, and therefore they know God will back them in the use of His name. The true Christian who is not walking in the Spirit---and that includes practical obedience to the Lord---will find the name of Jesus of little use in his conflict against spirits.

The second dream not only deals with our steadfastly rebuking evil spirits, but concerns a certain type of spirit. The fire coming from the fireplace speaks to us of a strange or different fire. Its presence is evil as is its source. "Strange fire" is that fire which is different from the fire of the Lord. It is counterfeit fire or an "angel of light." As Christians we need to be able to discern strange fire and to rebuke, reprove and expose it---yet we must be grounded in the Word of God and walking in faith and obedience to do so.

We have many ministers who stand each week in pulpits across our nation proclaiming a gospel that is strange fire according to the teachings of the Bible. Usually the ministers themselves are deceived in what they are proclaiming and lead many astray with their teachings. When the blind lead the blind, both will fall. Angels of light from the pulpit often proclaim a mixed gospel. Many biblical truths will be taught but these will be taken out of context with the whole of Scripture. Herein we get so many strange, extreme doctrines. When truth is taken beyond its intrinsic nature it soon becomes a lie. A half truth is a lie and so is an adding to or subtracting from the truth.

Often these ministers give lip service to God and Christ, yet they deny Him by altering His words and principles. They will call Jesus Lord but they neither submit to Him as Lord nor do they proclaim what He teaches. They will preach of God's love and grace, yet they will not preach on His wrath and judgment against sin. They pick and choose what they like and leave out what they find offensive. Deceived false shepherds and teachers that compromise God's Word and truth for any reason both will find themselves in a terrible state when they stand before the Lord.

The hearers of these shepherds are deceived in that they are like their ministers in their desire to hear smooth and pleasant words that soothe their ears instead of that which enlightens the soul. Many faithfully come to church, tithe and do much service, yet their hearts are far from God. Their deception

is that they will serve and worship the Lord on their terms instead of His. Unless their souls submit to the righteousness of Christ and to His practical lordship all they do will count for nothing.

Deceived souls perform many good deeds to pacify their self-centered lifestyles hoping that one day their good may outweigh their bad and be pleasing to God. Because their heart is not bent on serving the Lord by His terms they are given over to lies and deceptions. They sit in the churches feeling content and fine as they measure themselves by one another and begin to think: "I am as good as they are. I give to the needy, I come faithfully to church and I pay my minister well."

They reveal their own wicked hearts in that they never really study the Bible with a desire to know the truth at any cost to themselves or to their own personal opinions about His Word. They think they must surely be all right since most people they know are in the same situation. Christ, however, tells us that the masses as a whole are deceived and on the broad way to hell. Few find the way that is narrow of which Christ speaks, the reason being most do not mean business with God and His Word--they do not seek and find nor do they desire to do so.

Now let me give you two main reasons why ministers become deceived and why their pew-warmers are deceived also. Number one: these people do not really want the truth in their hearts because it costs their self-life too much. Number two: they (including true believers) continue in willful known sin, refusing to confess and repent. This is a form of resisting the Spirit, and one day He will allow that soul to believe lies for truth has been rejected.

Even the Christian with a good sound knowledge of scriptural doctrine who plays with this sort of sin will one day be deceived. Sin or the "mystery of iniquity" is often of this type. Because the soul willfully rejects God's dealings and drawings it becomes hardened to that sin, or it must sear its conscience to do so. Let us desire the truth of God's Word no matter how much our human reasoning may not like its correction.

From a human standpoint I do not like the idea of an everlasting hell for anyone, yet if I am going to know the truth I must be ready to accept God's evaluation. Human reasoning does not fully understand God's nature and His holiness. We must have our minds renewed by the Spirit of God in order to have spiritual understanding in these matters. He desires to bring us to God's ways of thinking. Through the Holy Spirit the yielded soul will obtain the wisdom to see as God sees. We are to be partakers of God's nature. The fleshly soul or even the natural thinking, good moral person can not understand true spiritual concepts. Conform to God, do not try to conform Him to yourself.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7 KJV).

To lower God to a mere humanistic view is to alter truth and dishonor God. Even our feelings, human sentimentality and affections can not be the foundation of our understanding of God and His ways---only His Spirit and Word can be this foundation for us. Attempting to fit God into our mold is the basis of all false belief. God is not conforming to us and never will; we are to be conformed to Christ and thus will see as He sees.

### #83 THE DREAM.....

*I see this word spelled out clearly: "unreserved."*

This word basically means not to be constrained by a rigid standard or bound by a limit. When I awakened it seemed as if the Holy Spirit impressed my mind with these thoughts: "You must give me your all without any set conditions and must not hold back anything from Me if you would move deeper into Me." Often we Christians hold back much from the Lord when it comes to moving deeper and growing in the grace of our Lord Jesus. Here we are not talking about sin or rebellion but about becoming thirty, sixty or hundred-fold Christians in fruit and ministry.

We are afraid to fully trust Him---to put all our eggs in His basket! We know, if we have followed Him for awhile, that to move higher with Him into new spiritual planes will cost our flesh much. God will give all by His grace and mercy---He will give us more of Christ and His life in us. If we would have this deeper manifestation of Him, the flesh and natural man must pay the price of going to the cross. We think we are playing it safe by holding back some eggs for ourselves. If not in this life, however, then in the heavenly one we will look back and see that those eggs we refused to put in His basket have become rotten!

Many times in our spiritual walk we will come upon more eggs---things that are neither good nor evil in themselves. The Lord will always desire to sanctify these things so they are useful to Him and cause blessing for us. What we hold to and keep for ourselves will never produce any real spiritual blessings for our own life. Each time we face these new areas that God desires from us, we face another dying to self, but what is given to God in sacrifice by spiritual obedience is blessed by Him.

The Lord sowed the same seed of His Word to all, yet some brought forth thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some a hundred-fold. It was not the seed that so much determined the amount of harvest, but the soil. We are His soil! The more we submit and give ourselves to the Word of God in practical faith and yieldingness the more fruit the Holy Spirit will be able to produce in us and our ministries.

Each new level in the Lord requires another cross and another graceful helping of the Lord. We find that our spirits are often willing yet our flesh fights and resists this death. Even our natural man can not seem to bring itself to the fact that it must give up its life to find His life. We seem to go up to the place of death, yet as the Lord stands there ready to cut and kill that thing, we desire to bargain first. We tell Him it is not really a big thing nor is it sinful, yet we know it must be put to death and released before He can produce life and good from it.

Many a Christian is called by the Lord to die---even to their ministries. Why? Because we easily take His gifts and graces as being our own and desire control of them. We forget that He is Lord over all and must always be Lord over all our life and ministries. This is why so much ministry is mixed with flesh and good intentions. Nevertheless, if not empowered and blessed by His Spirit, it can not produce spiritual results.

The manna fed to the children of Israel daily, if held beyond the appointed time, would breed worms. So any ministry or gift that God gives, if mixed with our flesh and our independence, will breed fleshly results for us if not for those to whom we are ministering. We are not our own, and all we are and have are not ours either! We are mere vessels and stewards of God. To become independent of God in any way is to rob Him of His glory and honor, and to reject light and court darkness.

Remember that Lucifer as the lightbearer was a channel of God's wonderful light. When he sought to keep this light and be the Light himself God removed Himself from Lucifer and he became the prince of darkness. Always allow God control, and then spiritual good and God's blessing will come on us and our ministries.

## #84 THE DREAM.....

*I see a large dead snake floating at the top of a fish aquarium filled with water. Its fangs are sticking out and are covered with blood. Someone comes up and begins to put his hands in the tank with the dead snake. I speak to this person, "It can kill even though it is dead."*

I did not think too much on this dream---perhaps I'd had too much pizza before going to bed! Yet the dream kept coming back to my mind, and so in prayer and meditation I asked for its meaning. This soon brought thoughts that reminded me of several matters. The snake symbolizes sin and its father, the devil, both legally judged at the cross of Christ's death. However, Satan and the flesh can still have power over us if we refuse to walk in that new life. Faith in the cross and the power of Christ must produce experiential results in our lives. When we refuse to walk in faith and obedience to Christ, that old man---the carnal side---will rise up to gain power over us. We are often told to put off the old man and put on the new who is made after Christ. Satan and sin can only have power over us as we consent to them and refuse to walk in the Spirit.

No one can pull us from our place of victory in Christ! Nevertheless, we can walk away from that victory and power by moving back into a worldly, carnal and fleshly lifestyle. The dead snake could not bite of its own power yet if one were to grab it by the fangs, they could still produce enough poison to kill. God will never remove our free choice in spiritual matters as this would not make us free, decision-making humans. You never need worry about Christ letting go of you---you had better be concerned with your walking away from Him by willful choice!

Continued rebellion and willful sin against God without true repentance will cause one to become captive to Satan and sin. To whom one yields becomes one's master---whether Christ and life, or sin and death. God will not save a soul against its will, neither will He keep one that desires to walk away and live in sin and death again. There is much teaching today that speaks of a gospel of greasy grace and a license to sin---hoping for a kind of fire insurance! This is a false gospel that will deceive and cause many to enter hell.

Salvation is not just a gift, it is the Person of Jesus Christ living in us. By their fruit we shall know true Christians, not by their profession. True security is in a Person and in a relationship with that Person! Faith and works, grace and fruit, profession and lifestyle will reveal who is really of God. Our daily living by faith and submitting to Christ is our real assurance of true security. I will say it again---though it will offend some---if we live in sin and do not follow Christ as Lord in our practical daily living, we either never knew Him in real salvation or we have lost it.

Christians not only can break fellowship with God but can lose their relationship by making shipwreck of their faith. They have crucified Christ afresh and are twice dead (Hebrews 6:6 and Jude 12). Satan and angels of light offer a false security to willful, sinning souls who have only a profession of Christianity and of being born again. Let us not allow the grace of God to be bestowed on us in vain.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Romans 6:16).

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (II Corinthians 7:10).

Worldly sorrow produces only remorse or feelings of guilt. Many experience this type of sorrow yet do not repent of their sins---thus their confessions are dead and produce nothing. Yes, we can go out and look at an apple tree, yet if it never produces apples---like the fig tree in the Bible---we know its end!

## #85 THE DREAM OR VISION?.....

The following dream or vision came in the middle of the night. As with much in the spiritual life it may be difficult to determine when one fruit or grace or gift or ministry stops and another takes over. Sometimes it is difficult to determine when one is having a dream, vision or trance. Even when it comes to the ministry of the Word this may happen. For instance, when preaching or teaching one may also be exhorting, admonishing or comforting. When one is preaching under the anointing of the Spirit there also may be portions of prophecy included. When one has a ministry of helps, it may include the gift of mercy and giving. Even the apostles often were prophets and teachers. At times one gift or ministry is more recognizable than another, and we must look at the effect and edification of that ministry or gift. The knowledge of the details of what ministry or gift is operating is secondary.

In II Corinthians 12:2 the apostle Paul tells us that he had been caught up into heaven. He also tells us he did not know if the experience was in the body or out of it. He could not tell if he was in heaven in the spirit or if he was just having a vision. He states only that "God knoweth." So, too, we may have experiences of which we can not clearly distinguish the details. If that be the case, and God does not see fit to explain to us, then it is not considered important enough to do so.

Even Moses, who turned aside to see why the burning bush was not consumed, received a gentle rebuke from the Lord. God was not interested in satisfying Moses' natural curiosity---He wanted Moses more aware of the Holy Presence in which he was standing. This thirst for information to satisfy our intellect often can and does hinder many Christians from going deeper with the Lord. Remember this point: to read, to study, or even to rightly divide the Word of truth for mere knowledge's sake profits little if we do not experientially apply to our life the truth obtained. We must not be hearers only but doers of the Word.

I lay in bed one dark night pondering and questioning many things. The Lord had given me a new charge or mission to begin. It seemed to me to be very unreasonable and difficult. Many natural fears, puzzlings and apprehensions filled my mind. I tossed and turned in the night in a state of aloneness and discouragement over beginning this mission.

*After awhile I turn on my chest and, reaching up to the cold bars of the bed's head frame, I begin to weep and groan in deep sorrow. Still assuming that I am awake, but not really knowing, I sense a person come into my room and take a blanket and place it gently over my body. Then that person, after carefully tucking the blanket over and around my shoulders and the bed, begins to gently pat and rub my back and shoulders. I sense a presence of peace and assurance and of very deep tranquility that lets me know "all will be well." Then I remember going off to sleep.*

When I awakened in the morning I found myself still lying on top of the bedding which had not been ruffled. It mattered little to me whether it was a vision or a dream, or whether my visitor was the Lord or one of His angels. What mattered most was waking up with a sense of great peace and renewed faith and hope in my spirit and soul. Zeal and encouragement had taken the place of sorrow and discouragement. God comforts us when we really need it.

No matter how hard at times it may seem, when we are determined to obey His will He will grace and help us. He comforts and confirms us when the battles come and we are hard-pressed. He does not comfort us in our self-pity or unbelief. No, indeed, yet He knows we are mere flesh and dust and have need of grace and aid to follow His will and plans. Thus when we are weak, He gives us strength. Often our spirit is willing to do the Lord's will but our flesh or natural man is unable, so He gives us of the life and power of the Spirit of Christ.

Remember, the apostle Peter was sincere when he said to our Lord that he would never forsake Him, even unto death. Peter really meant it at the time and valiantly drew out his sword and fought to defend Christ. His intentions were good but it was mere natural strength desiring to help Christ, and was actually opposed to God's plans. This same Peter who was ready to die at that moment was the same one to deny Christ before a young woman hours later. Why? Because of these facts---Peter did not watch and pray as the Lord forewarned him so he would not enter into temptation.

When the prince of darkness came during Christ's own darkest hour, Peter was no match for him. Peter's natural strength was overcome by a demonic spirit of fear that caused him to deny and fall at that dark hour. This same Peter after being filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was empowered with boldness. He was beaten, abused and forbidden to preach about Jesus, yet he continued to proclaim the gospel. It is the Spirit's help and grace that gives us supernatural strength to do God's will today.

Many Christians debate the signs of being filled with the Spirit. My friends, show me Christians who have real boldness to follow the Lord at any cost, and who are partaking of practical holiness---I will believe them to be filled with the Spirit. We too must draw on God's Spirit to live and walk in the Spirit. Good intentions and natural strength are of no value in spiritual matters.

Though your flesh seems strong, your heart so brave  
Your enemy will attack with an awesome rage.  
You, too, like Peter will soon sink beneath the waves  
If you have not trusted in His Spirit that He gave.  
Yet by faith and reliance in Christ's gracious power  
You will emerge victorious in your darkest hour.

R.F.H.P.

## #86 THE DREAM.....

*I see in front of me a jungle scene including a large elephant with his trainer. This elephant is a working animal whose job is to pull large logs up a steep hill. The animal has a long chain tied to one of its hind legs with the other end attached to a log. The trainer begins to talk to me and says, "The elephant can rest when it is tired but must not relax the strain from the chain." Otherwise, the log will roll back down the hill. When tired, the beast can simply lean forward (its weight keeping the chain in tight tension) and stop and rest until refreshed.*

This dream came during a time of great stress with feelings of weariness and seemingly fruitless labor. I was in the first part of a mission for the Lord, and was almost to the point of quitting as I felt I could not complete this charge which appeared so hard.

We need refreshment and rest, whether for body, mind or spirit. God surely knows this and gives to us as needed. When we are on some mission or ministry to which He has called us, we must be careful not to give up in defeat or abort because we have grown weary. Everyone must bear his or her own burden and work. Jesus did say that His burden was light. He also said we will have many afflictions and tribulations in our spiritual walk. We need to reconcile these two statements.

The flesh, the world and the devil cause many of our troubles. We are battling them from the moment we are born again until we cross over into heaven. They trouble and war with us daily to overcome us, and are difficult to handle at times. When we are relying on God for grace and help, His commands and words are easy and not grievous to handle. His Spirit also gives us power to overcome and maintain victory in our spiritual walk. He even helps us to deal with our enemies, the burdens of battle, our crosses and whatever else seeks to wear us down. He makes the burdens easier and light in comparison to what they would have been without His grace.

The woman who is expecting a baby may have some bad days when she does not feel well because of the physical discomforts of her burden. However, the burden is lighter to her as she looks joyfully to the time of delivery. Expectation of that child overrides all the unpleasant discomforts she is presently bearing. Likewise, God gives us extra grace and refreshment so we can carry His burdens and ministries to a fruitful end. We can not very well continue doing the Lord's work if we are defeated in heart and worn out in mind, so He provides aid and rest for us when needed. However, we must be like that elephant at rest in the dream who does not retreat or allow the log to slide back down the hill. After we are refreshed, our Lord expects us to rise up and continue our work.

Remember Elijah the prophet---he called fire and rain down from heaven after three years of drought. He stood alone publicly mocking all the false prophets---fearless in his stand against all. Yet a short time later this same spiritual giant is fleeing from the threats of one wicked woman. If we are not careful, we too may come down from great victories on the mountain top to find defeat waiting for us in the lower valley. God often gives greater grace for greater difficulties. However, we must return to daily living in this world where, if not watchful, the mundaneness alone may weaken us.

There is a difference between failing in God's work because we have willfully sinned in disobedience, and failing because we are under spiritual weakness and weariness for not waiting for grace and aid. Elijah sat under a tree wishing he were dead and fell asleep in total exhaustion. God sent His angel to wake and feed the prophet so that he could meet the Lord up in the mountains forty days away. No harsh reproof for Elijah; instead the angel gave him food for strength---a double portion---to see him on his way. After the nourishment, still weak in spirit, he arrived days later to meet with the Lord. Elijah had allowed his mind and spirit to be weakened for he had a false evaluation of matters. God corrected this and sent him back to his path. The Lord has great compassion for those who may fall

in bodily or mental weakness, whose hearts are sincere and right before Him, yet He may rebuke severely those servants or children who, out of simple laziness and self-pity, forsake their duties.

We can not take up and put down our duties unto the Lord with every whim or mood change. We must be mature and responsible unto Him for what He commits unto our hands. If we fail and become weary, let us not lie there in defeat---instead, let us get up and seek His grace and encouragement to move on. Forgetting our failures, let us persevere in doing the will and work given us. If we fail because of willful sin and rebellion, let us be quick to confess and repent, allowing God to reprove and correct us. Then He will give us our next task and duty. Some failures can not be undone--God's will and time may not allow it---yet we can learn from those failures in hopes that we will not repeat them again.

## #87 #88 THE DREAMS.....

*First dream: I am sitting at a table writing down statements that I know are important to remember. Then it appears I am forgetting to remember that which I have just written. I say aloud to myself, "I can not remember what I just wrote---Satan has taken it from me!"*

*Then I awake and go back to sleep and dream again.*

*Second dream: I am running up a steep mountain, but find it easier than I had thought. I see the word "steadfast" printed in front of me.*

The first dream deals with a problem we all find too often---our common infirmity of forgetting quickly our spiritual lessons. We need matters written down that we can ponder and muse over frequently. Moses, the prophets and the apostles wrote down what they heard and saw so that we can have their words to read, study and pray over. The human brain and mind can store much but can not remember many things on instant recall. Therefore we study and pray that these thoughts will become a part of our thinking patterns so we can draw on what we have acquired. Even the Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance that which we have learned. Unless we walk in the Spirit our natural minds and spiritual enemies seem to find it easy to cause us to forget truth and spiritual lessons. God would have us use our renewed minds---cleansed and empowered by His Spirit---to study, learn and retain His truths and words.

On the other hand Satan, the world and the flesh would rob and take away truth from our mind that is not rooted and grounded.

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart" (Matthew 13:19).

It appears from the same chapter of Matthew that most seeds of truth sown in the human mind are not properly received and understood. You see, my friends, it is not understood for it lies on the surface of the mind and is not taken seriously into our lives. Satan, the world's system of thinking and our fleshly reasoning seem to do their utmost to keep seeds of truth from being received and acted upon in the heart (spirit). Not only does Satan attempt to prevent the Word from being received, he also blinds the mind to the Word by many methods.

"And even if our gospel is veiled (hidden), it is veiled in them that (are perishing) perish: in whom the god (Satan) of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them" (II Corinthians 4:3-4).

Even believers who have received much of this truth will be robbed if they allow the enemy to do so. The written words of God as given by Moses were commanded to be read day and night---no less required of us under the law of Christ to often read the whole Bible. We must draw constantly from His Word until by faith and submission to His will and Word that Word becomes a life changing factor. Thus our minds are renewed and we begin to think and act according to God's truth. The apostle Peter speaks to us of remembrance in II Peter 1:12-15:

"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, so ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet...to stir you up by putting you in remembrance...to have these things always in remembrance..." (KJV).

We do not eat one meal of bread and meat and then never eat bread or meat again. We do not say to someone, "I once ate a steak and potato dinner and loved it, but I will never eat steak and potatoes again because I know what they taste like." How absurd, we often eat again that which we find tasty and good for us. So with the Word of God---we eat it over and over again. The Word of God becomes a part of our very spiritual being as food becomes part of our living cells. Yes, our renewed minds will take those truths and make them (by the Holy Spirit) part of us. My friends, if we find more time for books, magazines and television, and yet can and will not find or make time for God's Word, we will surely remain stunted in our spiritual growth! If we do not make the study of God's Word and prayer our top priority, we will be robbed of much.

I dare say if the average professing born-again, Spirit-filled Christian spent even an hour a day in the serious reading and study of God's Word---with the intention of submitting to its teachings---that Christian would never be taken in by television, radio and pulpit charlatans. We must not only study the Word of God but apply it to our lives to bear fruit. If we do not find time for God's Word and yet find much time for self-entertainments and pleasures, then we had better heed the apostles' advice: to examine ourselves to see whether we are in the true faith. God and His Word must be our foundation above all other concerns.

Now the second dream of running up the mountain speaks to us of steadfastness. If we persevere and are determined, our spiritual walking and running become easier as we are faithful. Like physical exercise, it may seem hard and painful at first, but we soon learn it is easier to maintain as we persist in our discipline. Once the mind is set and moving in the right direction it is hard to stop.

All our victories and defeats are won or lost in the mind---the seat of the will where choices are made. Choices usually follow this course. First, temptation enters the mind as a thought or an idea. Second, that thought, if pondered and allowed to stay, will produce an outward action. Third, a habit is formed as we practice that action. Fourth, the habit becomes part of a lifestyle which reveals our character to others and ourselves. Lastly, that lifestyle is the fruit of that first thought and may well determine our destiny.

Good thoughts also follow this same general line. By submitting to them and letting the truth and Word of God take root we will allow them to grow and produce good fruit. Truly whatsoever we sow we shall one day reap! It is a true spiritual law that will work for our good or for our evil. We will often read in Scripture these words: "continue", "walk", "abide", "persevere" and many similar commands that signify a lifestyle and not a one-time act or profession. So much Scripture frequently repeats the same ideas and commands. We must read and reread and take in the truth until it becomes part of our practical living. Then we can truly say that God's Word will not return void but will perform its intended end. It is the grafted Word that brings forth fruit unto God.

## #89 THE DREAM.....

*I am talking with someone and retelling a sermon I heard years before. Though I do not remember the sermon well I do remember it was about the ox and perseverance. I also describe a previous dream I had about a yoke of oxen on a mountain top (Dream #56). I say to the person that these dreams and sermons must be for me to remind myself. Lastly, I say out loud, "I guess I am supposed to persevere."*

When awake I began to remember and to ponder the oxen---its symbolism and application to me. The ox, a strong animal used for labor, often symbolizes servitude in Scripture. It must be yoked and taught to obey its master---to live to please its owner. Before we are born again we are like the wild ox. Then, as we give our lives and the right to our lives to Christ, He takes it upon Himself to train and transform us. The apostle Paul knew this, and at his conversion Christ told Paul that it was hard for him to kick against the goads. We must learn that we have a new master and are no longer our own or able to do as we please. We are yoked with Him and must learn to follow Him as our lord and leader.

At first we may find it difficult to submit to this new master for we still desire to follow on our terms. This must be dealt with from the very beginning or we will not advance in our spiritual walk. Christ is gentle and shows great patience in His dealings with us, yet the time comes when, if required, He will use stronger measures to get our obedience and yieldingness. Very quickly we find to our displeasure that God's will and plans for us often do not correspond with our wills and plans. We start to complain or kick against His will for us. We will learn, however, that He will be Lord and will not conform to our plans. We begin to act as stubborn children refusing to do their chores---throwing tantrums and screaming and resisting (our resistance more in mind and attitude). We are soon taught our Master will not tolerate these actions and will deal with them swiftly.

Once while watching a friend's child I had this very thing to happen to me. In the middle of a supermarket that child began to scream and stamp his feet demanding some candy. Well, needless to say, this did not sit well with me nor did it move me to buy him that candy bar. Instead, it prompted me to deal with him in front of several watching people. Before that little darling had time to let out another high-pitched demand he found a hand quickly laid across his rear end. He jumped, turning red with embarrassment, and quickly became very quiet and accommodating.

Our Master also knows how to discipline and, because He has no bastards, will deal with us as needed. The ox that refuses to move under the yoke or wants to go in another direction will soon find a goad with a sharp point on the end pushed against its thigh. It will move to avoid that pain, if not out of willing obedience. With enough of this treatment that ox will soon learn to obey. It will also learn, as will we, that the sooner we learn to do what the Master wants the sooner we will cease to bring much needless suffering into our lives. The ox is taught that to obey is better than to disobey, and that there can be advantages to obedience. The ox finds in obeying that its master is kinder in his dealings, and even the work becomes easier when done to the master's liking.

As His workers Christ gives us His approval and pleasure, and that brings contentment and rest to our souls. God's Word expresses the fact that the Lord does not afflict the children of men willingly--He would rather have us obey His voice than to experience His goad. The sooner we are taught to obey the sooner we will move up higher in our spiritual walk. We, like the ox, will learn to obey for His approval. We move from the childlike attitude of doing enough to get by (for fear of punishment) to the maturer level of wanting to please Him for His love and approval.

Some will say He loves us no matter what we are like. True, but we will find as does that disobedient child that love can be hard on the rear end if the parent does not get the desired response!

We must learn perseverance, obedience and service. The double-minded and stubborn will find much needless suffering in the form of rebuke, reproof and discipline. We can not remain as children that romp and play doing what pleases them. We need to grow up and take on the duties of maturity. Spiritual life and spiritual duty go together. We must bear fruit in our character and in our labor for the Lord.

As we move up in our servant-attitude in ministry and obedience, we will find the goad being used less often. We will also find His ways and demands are not grievous and that our output is of better and fuller service. We thus learn not to labor against Him, but with the Lord, for which we will be rewarded.

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).

Now that is a good promise---not in vain. Our sowing for and in Him will be rewarded by Him. Christ pays good wages to His workers. Fruitfulness is profitable in this life and in our next life in heaven. Read I Timothy 4:8.

## #90 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*While sleeping I hear a voice speak to me and say, "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning."*

*Then someone opens a Bible in front of me and I am reading this portion of Scripture:*

*"I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD..." (Isaiah 45:2-3 KJV).*

This dream and those words of encouragement lifted me up from my weariness and caused renewed faith and hope to rise in my spirit. Yet a moment before I awakened from this dream I had felt a strong attack in my spirit from the devil. This, however, also encouraged me---Satan often gives his hand away by attacking at the wrong time. My attitude toward this attack was one of faith. God had encouraged, and Satan had attempted to disrupt. Satan overplayed his hand at which I rejoiced. At the darkest hours the enemy attempts to cause defeat for he can sometimes see the light coming for us. We must hold on in faith and hope, knowing the darkness does not last forever.

Weeping may endure for the night (Psalm 30:5). Yes, we all will have days or weeks or months when things appear very dark. Our prayers seem to hit bronze heavens and iron doors. This is the hour of discovery! We learn then what type of faith and hope we really possess. This is the hour when feelings, chills and lovely experiences leave us and we are faced with naked faith and hope in God's word alone. This is the fight of faith. God leads us into darkness. Unseen and unfelt, God almost appears dead, but He is there!

Job understood these experiences and yet could say, "Though He slay me, yet I will trust (or wait for) Him." Our Lord knew the dark hour yet He drank the bitter cup that the Father had given Him. Therefore Christ can and does understand our dark hours and will comfort and see us through them. We may feel hopelessness as if we have been forsaken, but the trial of our faith must go beyond feelings and emotions to simple trust. This trying is meant to perfect our faith, not destroy it.

The second portion of Scripture given in the dream tells us that God goes before us. Our Lord has experienced all human levels and therefore is our perfect shepherd. He sees the light and dark as one. What appears as crooked and twisted He can and will make straight. Bronze and iron speak of bondage and hardness which He will break for us as we walk in simple faith and obedience. Oh, our enemy and our lot may seem to build walls and iron doors which we find impossible to move, but faith tested and proved to be real will act as a laser beam. That beam will cut and burn through metal walls and doors---they will melt before us.

When those walls and doors are destroyed and opened we will find great treasures of darkness. At some periods of time we must go down into darkness to find the most valuable and priceless gems. We not only find great spoil in maturing and growing in the Lord, but we also find ourselves being made into hidden gems. We are jewels to the Lord, each of us being fashioned into a beautiful object to fill His temple forever. In our darkest hours He is refining and making us purer vessels for His use. His fire will act like that laser and will burn that in us which is fleshly, natural or selfish. Gold, silver and precious jewels will only be purified more by that great light and heat.

Let us ask for grace to go deeper into those dark mines where much treasure is discovered and produced. Let us have courage to go deeper and not stay on the surface finding only semi-precious

stones. Some of our gold crowns that one day we will receive are being made now in our earthly walk. Once we cross over, that joyful everlasting day will appear and all our conflicts will cease.

## #91 THE DREAM.....

*I am talking with a friend who tells me whalebones would make a good breastplate for our protection. I respond, "That is interesting since I have dreamed about whalebones." Then he says to me, "Maybe it is a sign to you that God will take care of you."*

Talking of a dream within a dream speaks to me of understanding hidden and deeper meanings. Whalebones symbolize great strength, whales being the largest of animals. A breastplate is for protection of the chest or front area in combat. The Bible tells us to use the breastplate of righteousness. This righteousness is imparted to us by Christ, but must be worn to avail us of His protection. It is a great defense against the enemy's fiery arrows. God's taking care of me speaks of His righteousness and strength in His provision. He has provided great help and power for us to walk and live in the spiritual realm.

I will discuss here that imparted righteousness must come out of us in practical holiness or we can well question whether we have the real armor. Those who harp on their position in Christ without an outworking of that grace or righteousness would do well to examine themselves to see if they really possess the righteousness of Christ. Mental belief and mouthing of a doctrine of grace is no proof. Christ stated a good tree produces good fruit. By their fruit we will know them---not by mere profession of some church doctrine or belief.

If you have come this far in this book you have surely come to understand that I do not put much stock in talk and mental assent of biblical teachings without a corresponding lifestyle. Be careful, my friends, the grace and faith that saves us can only be known as they are channeled through us in our practical life. This is why so many Americans claiming to be born-again and Spirit-filled have never had either experience. Why, there is a multitude of such souls filling our churches whose very lifestyles reveal they do not know God. Yet they say, "Lord, Lord." Christ changes lives---lives that do not bear fruit are not of Him.

## #92 THE DREAM.....

*I see only these simple numbers: "71:5."*

I assumed it was a scriptural reference so I arose to look it up in my Bible. At that time I was travelling and staying overnight with friends. As I was dressing that morning in their guest room, I noticed many pictures and frames on a table. I moved one or two to look at the pictures as I was reaching for my keys and wallet. There, hidden behind these pictures, was a placard imprinted with that very scriptural verse--- its book, chapter and verse: Psalm 71:5! Now some will say this was a coincidence---I prefer to believe it was a confirmation. The verse reads as follows, "For You are my hope, O Lord God: You are my trust from my youth."

When we are busy about His business God often will confirm and give us words to encourage us to keep moving on our given path. We can put our hope and trust in God for He is faithful and will walk with us. Trust and hope are our spiritual works in response to God's word and character. He will not trust and hope for us---we must unite our will to His grace.

### #93 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*This simple statement is spoken to me in my sleep, "Seek Me in the evening."*

A simple statement, but it relieved me of a great problem. This word came in response to my inquiring of the Lord as to the best time for my prayer sessions. Let me explain. For all my Christian walk I have been a night owl---that is, as to the time I spend in Bible study and prayer. Then I heard a man preach on the importance of rising early to seek God as did the prophets and believers. He influenced me to change, but with negative results. Each morning I would rise to pray and study but found I was not very alert regardless of all my efforts. Going to bed early, walking and pacing to stay awake, and other attempted methods did not solve this issue. I informed the Lord that I was willing and ready to change my time of study and prayer to mornings if He so desired, but I needed His grace to do so. Well after more times of trying to rise early to pray (and to no avail), I finally got this word one night as I slept, "Seek Me in the evening."

What liberty, what peace, what assurance! We often make the mistake of thinking just because God uses a certain method with other people that we are locked into that system also. We must be careful not to impose our method or duty on someone else. We must leave methods and such to God's will. Under the new covenant we are told by the apostle Paul not to be brought back under rules and restrictions concerning rituals and methods. We are told we are free from such, even to the observing of holy days, feasts or any other time-related matters. Those former things were to be a school master in our instruction until Christ fulfilled the patterns. Even Christians that feel bound to keeping Sundays are not walking in true freedom. We may keep that day if it is convenient and reasonable, but if God calls us to other duties we do not have to be brought into the bondage of day-keeping. We have entered a spiritual sabbath---which is every day.

Many may not have the mature spiritual knowledge that enlightens consciences, so we should not offend them needlessly. We have liberty in Christ and are free from those outward ordinances of the older covenant. Christians who do not have knowledge must walk by faith in the light they are given, but once enlightened by God to deeper truth they are freer before Him. If we are obedient to the Spirit He will guide us into truth and give us a clear conscience as to our actions. Of course, we are not talking about sins of the moral nature. These sins are always sin under both the old and new covenants.

In closing, I would remind you that "Seek Me in the evening" was God's word to me. Some may quote Scripture and say to me, "You must give God the first part of your day before anything else if God is to bless the rest of your day." I will simply respond, "My friends, the day began in the book of Genesis in the evening---each day being ended with, 'the evening and the morning being the first (second, third etc.) day.'" If Christ is Lord He owns all we have and all we are, including our time. We do not allot to Him---He allots to us as it pleases Him.

## #94 THE DREAM.....

*I am standing in front of several elevator doors holding a set of keys on a ring. I try each key in turn to open those doors. I find the right key---it is stamped with the number 121.*

The number 121 referred me to Psalm 121 which I had been previously studying, especially the verse that states, “The Lord preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth...”

I had been praying about some travelling plans and needed clearer direction from the Lord to proceed. The elevator doors symbolize avenues to advance upward in the Lord’s will or paths. The keys again speak to us of instruments that open doors or places unto us. To get from one place to another in our advancement we must use many keys. God’s gift of salvation by Christ’s righteousness is a key that opens us to the kingdom of God. Thus we enter the house (or church) of God by that key, but once on the ground level in that house we will find many doors that lead to other rooms and levels, each having keys to open them.

The prayer of faith and faith itself are keys, yet must also be used with other keys to get the door opened. Though faith is a foundational key it must be joined with the key of persevering, the key of the knowledge of God’s will, and the key of confirmation by God’s Word and Spirit. Faith also works with the keys of love and a pure heart. Many mistake faith for positive thinking, mental believing or presumption. Many today also are attempting to use faith as a means to satisfy every whim and covetous desire. That faith is evil and its source is not God but an angel of light. True faith that God gives is under God’s direction and submitted to His will.

We must not only possess the right key but must know the right timing as well---we need God’s wisdom and guidance. Only by submitting our life to God in a practical daily way will we find His wisdom in using His keys and gifts.

## #95 THE DREAM.....

Some time later another dream of elevators...

*I am on a swiftly rising elevator that comes to a stop. When the doors open I find in front of me a circular room with several openings. The doors to these openings have been removed from their hinges and are no longer there.*

This dream is a continuation of the previous dream. Once we get in one door it leads up to another level or to further insight. Sometimes when doors open we need no direction for it is plain what we are to do. God will open some doors and close others, thus making it clear to us. Sometimes several doors may open at once, and then we need wisdom to know which is the better door. The enemy will even open a door to attempt to mislead us if he can. When several doors open at once we should stand still and wait with an expectant heart for further instruction from our Master.

Faith does not presume to move when God has not given direction or a clear word. Faith also can wait and rest in peace, but still watches for the manner and way in which the Lord will lead. True faith is not blind faith as some teach. That faith is mere stupidity! Faith comes by hearing and hearing a word from God. It does not presume on God. He will lead forth with peace and go before us to make the crooked ways plain. Major decisions should never be made in a spirit of rush and haste. Let peace rule in our minds.

Faith moves by spiritual insight which is given by God. Many attempt to step out in faith when God has not given them direction or instruction. This leads only to failure and being misled. Satan attempted to get Jesus to jump off the temple to prove that God's angels would keep Him safe. Satan even quoted a wonderful verse out of Psalm 91, yet that verse did not apply at that time. For Jesus to have jumped would have been presumption, not faith in God's protection. Now if God had told Christ to jump, then Christ could have relied on God's protection and surely the angels would have caught Him.

Remember this! God opens doors and, when He does, it is easier to have more faith for the next doors. Only the wisdom and Spirit of God can show us which doors to go through, which closed doors to open and which doors to avoid. Let us trust Him in these leadings.

## #96 THE DREAM.....

*I appear to be reading or quoting the Lord's Prayer, but I find that I have left out this portion: "Give us this day our daily bread."*

The instant I awakened its meaning was clear to me. The Lord had been dealing with me for several days to begin a season of prayer and fasting. I had been procrastinating in my fasting and was still in a feasting mood. Oh, the flesh dies hard when it comes to food, does it not? Our daily bread can really mean whatever we have need of, yet to me it meant food---not as a need but as a desire. Since the Lord's Prayer is often called a perfect prayer, I assumed the Lord was saying to me that if I omitted the food petition it would be a perfect prayer for me, fitting my state during that period.

As we read the Bible we find symbols and symbolic meanings. At other times, however, the Bible is to be taken literally. For example, dreams, prophecies and visions may be either type---we need wisdom and God's interpretation to know the difference. Therefore we must not assume because something appears plain that it is not symbolic instead.

People often spiritualize Scripture when it is to be taken literally, especially if it is not to their liking. Fasting is frequently placed in this category. As a means of self-denial many will say, "Well, we should fast this or that or give up certain foods occasionally." When the Bible mentions fasting it means to go without food or to restrict food intake. Many take Scripture out of context to make it say what they please. We must rightly divide the word of truth. Most of professing Christianity is living in false teaching and doctrine as to Christ and His Word, for they have done just what Satan is master at---adding to or subtracting from the Word of God. We will get into trouble if we attempt to read into God's Word what we desire, or take from it what displeases us.

I marvel that many professing Christians claim that heaven will have streets of gold and be a place of happiness forever. I like that also! These same ones, however, will say hell is only symbolic and is not really a place of suffering. Fools are they who tamper with God's Word because it does not fit into their sentimental and earthly thinking. Because souls do not want the truth (regardless of their personal opinions on the subject) they will be open to further deception from the devil. Why, our churches are filled with preachers proclaiming their interpretations to be the Word of God.

The Word of God will divide not only the false from the true but the motives of the speakers and hearers as well. When we grow and mature in the Lord we will become very accurate at spotting false teachers (even those who teach good sound doctrine with wrong motives). For every teaching, vision or revelation there are several counterfeits standing nearby.

Jeremiah dealt much with false shepherds and prophets and false dreams and visions. Yes, sad to say, many are false shepherds and prophets today. Let us not be afraid of them but learn to discern them. Let us not be afraid of visions, dreams and teachings; let us instead divide them by God's Word and Spirit. Read these verses from Jeremiah 23:28, 32:

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully..."

"Behold, I (the Lord) am against them that prophesy lying dreams, saith Jehovah, and do tell them, and cause my people to error by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither do they profit this people at all, saith Jehovah."

Even those who teach the truths of God's Word can do so with a wrong motive. We proclaim God's Word because His love for the lost is in us, and we desire to please our Lord and fulfill His will and give Him glory. We are called and gifted by Him to do so. Any other motive is false---even if people are helped and blessed by those words or gifts; it will not profit the preacher or gifted one.

For example, a person needs money to pay a bill. At a prayer meeting he expresses his need, and one man comes forth and gives him the needed money. The person thanks God for it. That man may have been prompted by the Lord to help. This would be good and profitable for him in the long run. He may, however, have given it so those present would be impressed with his generosity. This would have been out of pride and a desire to be praised. The money still blesses the person, yet the giver will receive no reward from God. You see, God judges the motive and intent of our actions. If we do not deal with the desire to be seen and praised by men, one day when our works are judged we will not find the rewards we expected to be laid up for us.

I will give another example. Many television evangelists stand week after week proclaiming the Word of God, or should I correct myself and say some do? Even the ones who do proclaim the true gospel may not be counted for higher rewards in heaven. Many live for the popular opinions of men---to be praised and held in high esteem. So what if thousands come to the Lord by their preaching---God will honor His Word. That evangelist may have so much pride that he refuses to warn, reprove or rebuke for it will not be well received by his hearers.

You, however, may be a nobody as far as public recognition yet faithful to God's call on your life. You may never have led one soul to the Lord, but perhaps He has called you to prayer or giving to the needy. Maybe you are discipling individuals whom others ignore. My dear friends, it is not the numbers or the outward show but the obedience to God's call that is of utmost importance.

One day as you stand before the Lord you will find that saying of His fulfilled, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first" (Matthew 19:30). Yes, that great evangelist may find what he thought was gold, silver and jewels will be found of God to be wood, hay and stubble. Sad to say, many who proclaim truth for gain and greed will not find themselves in the kingdom!

Let me leave this section with this thought. The more popular a man is with world opinion or with worldly so-called Christians, the more likely he or she has compromised God and God's Word. The way is still narrow and few will find it. Let us buy the truth and sell it not.

## #97 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*These are the words I hear as I sleep, "Much prayer! Much waiting on God! Much, much intercession!"*

We know what the word much means. It simply means great in degree or quantity. The apostle Paul tells us we are to be given to prayer---it must have a greater place in our daily lives. We are all, if we are born again, part of the body of Christ with differing ministries and gifts. When we advance from drinking milk to eating meat we will understand more clearly our own callings and duties to the Lord. No matter what our place or calling in the body of Christ (the spiritual church) we must all learn about prayer. Prayer is communicating with God. It is talking, listening and learning!

The words prayer, waiting and intercession were given to me to stress their importance in my life. Since my calling deals more with the ministry of an intercessor, much more praying, waiting and intercession are required than for the normal Christian. Nevertheless, all Christians need to learn about prayer and listening to the Lord in order to fulfill their own particular ministries and callings. Reading and studying God's Word is of utmost importance to us, for the Word is the foundation on which all spiritual truths are built.

In the epistles, which deal much with the spiritual man or woman, Scriptures that encourage us to pray and be given to prayer far outnumber the verses on the study of the Word. God has not changed His methods and call to prayer to suit the American church. We live in a fast moving, rushed system, yet if we Christians do not make time and give prayer and study of God's Word top priority we will not grow to spiritual maturity. Many will say that their jobs, families and other responsibilities require too much time, and there is none left over. My friends, if you are bought with a price (the blood of Christ) you are not your own---you had better make time to place God first.

Let me say here, we often bring sickness and tragedy upon ourselves as we stray from putting God first in our lives and duties. The Lord permits affliction to bring us to the place where we do have time to seek Him. Much sickness and sorrow are simply reappings of a lifestyle of mental and bodily abuse, and others are sent by Satan (which we should reject and not receive). And yes, though most will not like it, some may be the result of some gross sin allowed in the believer's life. The apostle Paul implied saints became sick and died for not honoring the Lord's Supper in a proper way. Paul even turned others over to Satan to be struck with sickness for their sin.

The fact is if we were given to prayer and the Word of God, we would be able to discern these events, and at least come to peace of mind with God over our own particular case. Instead we have so many running hither and thither from meeting to meeting---claiming, naming and demanding health. If we obtained wisdom and the will of God for ourselves then we would know what to do in our situation. We need to hear from God personally to be able to accept our lot and deal with it properly, or know whether God wants our lot changed. Then we could seek for wisdom and faith to do so.

Now prayer is usually to be done much, and much in private. I have been to many a prayer meeting where some individuals pray so beautifully---you would think angels were praying! Then the wife or husband will say, "Boy, they never pray at home, just sit in front of the boob-tube all day." Yes, a person who prays much in public but not in private is a soul whose prayer is heard by people but not by God. Usually the ones who publicly pray the loudest and speak in tongues the longest are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Those who have the gift of tongues should be exercising it more privately, not only publicly.

Prayer and waiting on God requires time, much time. Waiting is just that. We can pray without always chattering every second. We can talk with the Lord, and then sit quietly pondering, meditating

and listening---He may have something for us. Praying and waiting often encounter warfare, so we must deal with the enemy in prayer when necessary. God speaks through his Word by His Spirit into our spirits. If our minds are not being renewed and conformed to His Word and ways we will not understand when He speaks to us.

In conclusion, remember that it matters not our station or calling in the body of Christ. If God's Word and prayer is not our foundation, all else will usually amount to wood, hay and stubble as far as our own spiritual profit.

## #98 A SPOKEN WORD.....

Over a period of several years this word was spoken or printed before me in various dreams.

*“The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it” (Proverbs 10:22 KJV).*

This verse from Proverbs concerns God’s providential dealings with us. Let us not run too far with a literal meaning of all Christians being made monetarily rich. The covetous “name it and claim it” teachers love this verse. True, the exception could be that some Christians will be made rich for giving ministries, but not for personal luxury living and self-gratification. There are more Scriptures given in the New Testament against wealth than for it. Those who find themselves with financial abundance are held to greater accountability---along with strong warnings against the temptations to covetousness and idolatry. Actually the Word says some who have misused their wealth will drown in hell because of the many lusts they entertained with their riches. Remember those who seek authority, the public eye and the riches of this world are usually not fit for them.

Most of the rich of this world are wicked and selfish. Are their riches a blessing? Far from it, they are a curse. God’s blessing adds no sorrow with it or, as some translate, human toil or labor is not required for its bestowing.

The same book of Proverbs also says, “Labor not to be rich.” The apostle Paul states that many Christians are poor in this world but rich in faith. This really blows a hole in the name it and claim it group. They say if you have perfect faith you will have riches and all you desire---Paul said no such thing! Even our Lord in Revelation 2:9 said to one church, “I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich...)” Poverty is no sign of God’s approval in itself, yet is noble when caused by persecution or tribulation. Some think taking vows of poverty is noble---far from it. Money has good use if controlled by the Lord. Riches or poverty in themselves are no proof or disproof of God’s approval---faith and obedience are!

Some may be gifted more with earthly abundance, but they will give account for the use of it, the same as you and I will give account for our gifts and ministries. Do not let jealousy, envy and comparison lead you into complaint and discontentment with your lot. Yes, we sometimes think the grass is much greener on the other side, yet remember their water bills may cost more! If we learn true contentment with our present lot in life, God is able to change it as He sees fit. If He does not, it will not matter to us for we will have accepted His lot. Read this verse:

“The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot” (Psalm 16:5 KJV).

God’s blessings are to bring joy and contentment to us and others. Do not covet and desire another’s gifts and callings. Be faithful to your own, remembering we all shall answer for what He has given us. The children of Israel longed for meat when God was disciplining them with manna. He finally gave them what they lusted and complained for and yet sent a wasting disease with it---He added sorrow with it. To covet or desire what God has not approved is deadly to our spiritual walk. To accept and be thankful for what He has given will bring blessings from Him. It is all the attitude of the heart and mind, is it not?

## #99 THE DREAM.....

*I am standing waist deep in the ocean in rough pounding waves. The under current is strong and is attempting to pull me out into more dangerous waters. Soon I see a large shark rapidly coming toward me. I quickly stand upright and keep my body and legs as still as possible hoping the shark will not notice me. The whole time I am being tempted with terror and fear of the shark's biting off my legs. The beast passes by, however, not detecting me.*

*I then walk up out of the waters onto the beach of an island of dense undergrowth. After awhile I find myself in a village that appears deserted. There I discover many sizes and grades of gold bars. While I am handling and looking at these bars a friendly man appears and gives me some gold to take with me.*

The rough currents and waters of the ocean in this dream symbolize the enemy's attacks and battles against us. He seeks to weaken our spiritual progress and walk by carrying us deeper into his territory. The shark also signifies the enemy as a predator seeking to devour and destroy us. The shark seeks to capture the weak, the sickly and the unwatchful---easier prey to obtain. While in the rough waters I was aware the current was attempting to lift my legs and feet, so my footing would give way and I would be drawn out into its depths. I was aware, too, that the shark was seeking to devour, and I guarded my legs foremost.

Our feet and legs speak to us of our spiritual walk and progression which the enemy seeks to weaken and cripple. It is difficult to use our sword, shield and armor while lying on our backs. If we can remain standing in conflict, our shoes (which speak to us of peace) will aid in defeating the attacks of fear and terror. No matter the battle, we are to remain standing to the end---"having done all, to stand." When the wind, flood and storm beat against our spiritual house it will stand as we rely on Christ and on His provisions.

The village in the jungle symbolizes a hidden place---hidden from the normal view and not trod by the common. In it was gold, a symbol of Godly purity and valued, lasting treasures. The gold came in different sizes and grades. These types speak to us of different rewards and degrees of treasure to be obtained. Pure gold is twenty-four karat---all gold with no alloy. Eighteen karat gold is three-fourths gold and one-fourth silver, copper or some other metal. Fourteen karat gold, the most common in American jewelry, is fifty-eight per cent gold. Gold is a reward or symbol of our treasures being laid up in heaven. The overcomer's crown is made of gold. The apostle Paul states that only our works done in the right spirit and inspired by God will be counted as gold, silver and precious stones.

When we battle down here on earth and overcome our enemies we are rewarded by our Lord. Much of our reward is for the next life, so we are laying up treasure now. Christ said that every cup of cool water given in His name to His children will not lose its reward. Every temptation resisted, every self-denial endured and every deed done for Christ with His approval will be fully rewarded one day. This reward will be forever and none can take it away. The book of Hebrews states that God is not unrighteous to forget the work we do in His name and for His children (Hebrews 6:10).

The kind man in the jungle giving me the gold bars symbolizes God's messenger being sent to reveal that we will receive rewards here on earth, too. We will obtain fruits of our labors here to encourage us that God delights in blessing us, and to show us our labors for Him are not in vain.

We determine the degree and quality of gold obtained by our degree of yieldingness and submission to God's will and plans. Our motives and intents will determine the purity of the gold being laid up. Many Christians will bear thirty-fold, some sixty and some a hundred-fold. One day we all as

true believers will stand before the Lord to obtain our rewards from Him. Let us go for the higher grade of gold.

## #100 THE DREAM.....

*As I walk I approach a man dressed in white garments who is seated. My eyes are drawn to his hands, hands that I know once knew great agony. Then I see the scars. I stand still, knowing this is Jesus and He is talking with someone. Though I could not make out the sentences I could every now and then hear, "and Father." Sensing a conversation of intimacy I quietly withdraw.*

Upon awakening I get an impression of that section of Scripture that deals with Thomas' requiring to see the risen Lord's hands. As I pick up my Bible, it opens at random to that very portion:

"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27).

This dream may have been in response to my pondering mood in dry seasons of intercession. Doubt and unbelief were attacking my mind taking advantage of long delayed answers. The Lord was allowing me to see and understand more lessons in prayer. We must be reminded that Christ has paid a heavy price to redeem us. He also by His merit puts us in good standing with God to enable us to treat Him as our Father. All our prayers and intercessions are channeled through Jesus and by His name unto the Father. Christ is our great intercessor as revealed in Romans 8:27 and 8:34:

"...and he (Jesus) that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

"...It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the

right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

When times come in which we have prayed "with all prayer" and can seem to do no more, then we must trust in Christ's intercession. He knows the Father's will very well. He knows our prayers and desires. He will edit our imperfect and often feeble expressions so that they will be consistent with the Father's will and plans. This is the time for us to wait and watch quietly for the Father's answers to come on His schedule.

## #101 THE DREAM.....

*I am signing my official name to a piece of paper, but instead of my last name being signed as "Pope" I change it to "Hope."*

When God declares one of His names it reveals much about His character and ways. Changing my name from Pope to Hope speaks to me of letting hope become a part of my character and description.

We are to put on the new man after Christ and part of that new man is hope. It becomes part of our spiritual character as faith and love do---these three will remain when all else appears to weaken. Hope is spoken of as a breastplate, as is righteousness. Though without faith it is impossible to please God, without hope in God's grace, good character and words we will find it difficult to have faith in God. Not only does faith ride on the chariot of hope, but patience and timing attach themselves as well. The graces of God often flow together and support one another. When naked faith seems almost lost in the dark and visible realm, hope will take control and ride us through. When one loses hope, one is at the lowest point possible in the spiritual or natural realm.

## #102 THE DREAM.....

*I am going up to a pulpit to give a sermon to a group of people. Just before I arrive at the pulpit I notice a ring on my finger with a large blue stone. I say to the people, "This blue stone speaks to me of God's grace, blue being a symbol of grace. Why, we live and move and have our being in God and His grace. The sky is blue, the oceans are blue---even in our darkest hours the stars seem to twinkle blue."*

Blue often symbolizes grace and is frequently called the heavenly color. Yes, even God's throne is spoken of as being like a blue sapphire, a throne of grace to us. Now the apostle Paul states that as Christians we live and move in God, His being everywhere by His Spirit. He fills the very universe, and we live and move in His gift of grace. God is love, and grace is the means of revealing that love to us mortals.

The blue sky and oceans are vast in scope and are large and unfathomable to us. God's grace is also large and limitless, beyond our understanding. We can experience grace yet not measure its full depths. The stars are numberless and vast distances from earth. They twinkle a white-blue color to us on dark moonless nights. Their blue light beams take thousands of years to reach our planet---radiating long before we were here. So, too, God has been gracious long before man ever came into being.

God's grace toward mankind has been summed up in the gift of Christ as a sin offering for us. He bestows grace and love for they are intrinsic qualities of God's very nature and being. The Lord's love and grace move Him to help even His enemies whose repentance delights Him. If they do not repent, it will not change the fact that God still loves, though it will change the destiny of those souls. When necessary, God can and does limit the display of His love and grace to the wicked and to the rebellious. Love is God's good-will and intention for the very universe and all His creatures.

Nevertheless, God has other attributes like justice, holiness and truth. These are not overridden by mere sentimentality as humans are prone to do. God still loves the most wicked person alive today as He does the most obedient believer, yet the former can not receive the manifestation of that love as can the latter. God has not changed. Man's attitude and submission will determine the manifestation of God's love to him. No grace or virtue of God will ever destroy another. They will work in perfect union for they are the very nature of God. Jesus even said that those who keep His words would have the Father and Himself manifested to them. Paul spoke of his heart's being enlarged to receive more of God.

God is always the same in love and character, yet we are the ones that grow in understanding and experience of Him. God is the great river that is not crossable. He would remove the scales from our spiritual seeing if we would trust and obey Him. Let us ask and trust God to open Himself up to us to a greater degree so we can love and know Him better. Though He has always been the same, we have not known Him fully. Only as we are enlightened can we know to a greater degree the love and grace of God toward us.

### #103 THE DREAM.....

*I am watching several children at play and observe that the Lord Jesus is playing with them while at the same time teaching them about His life. Then I find myself being transformed into a little child with Jesus standing near me. He is in white robes and appears so tall---as an adult would look to a little child. I become very self-conscious and wonder if Jesus is ashamed of me, but He looks down at me with such an expression of love and tenderness. He then leans over to me and presses His face against my face---cheek to cheek. The Lord proceeds to lift me up and place me on His shoulders and to walk with me. Even though I am bodily a child I still appear to have my adult reasoning. I do not like being up so high on His shoulders and gently slide down His back until I have my arms around His neck and am pressing my face against His as He continues to walk. There is a smile on His face, and again I sense a deep love and tenderness from Him.*

As soon as I awakened thoughts began to fill my mind. Jesus had come down to a child's level to teach about Himself. My being transformed into a child speaks of our becoming as little children to enter the kingdom of God and in our trust and belief in Christ. God was saying to me that I must be childlike in trusting in His love.

My self-consciousness and wondering about Christ's being ashamed of me signifies our self-awareness in the presence of God and His holiness. Because God sees and knows all it would be normal to wonder about His thoughts of us. Isaiah the prophet, although an upright man, felt very unclean in the presence of God. However, when we believe in the righteousness of Christ and have our sins forgiven, we can be at peace with God and not be ashamed. The Holy Spirit will assure us before Him. Though we have many infirmities and flaws we are counted as righteous with Christ as we walk in His light.

Christ's bending over and pressing His face against mine symbolize His gentleness and tenderness in accepting and confirming us in peace with Him. He removes our feelings of self-condemnation and lets us know that we are loved and accepted of Him. Jesus' lifting me up on His shoulders speaks of our being raised up with Christ in heavenly places, and our being placed in high positions in standing and ministry. Christ will elevate the childlike and humble and give them higher places of ministry. My not desiring the high place by sliding down His shoulders onto His back speaks of my wishing to be close to Him in preference to possessing high position in ministry. Jesus' smiling as I put my arms around Him and pressed my face against His reveals the Lord's approval of my choice of closeness with Him over ministry. His walking on as He carried me signifies Christ's carrying and controlling our spiritual places and ministries. There are times when we just rest in His love and peace, and with childlike trust allow Him to take us where He desires.

Again, let us remember that we must be childlike in trust and obedience unto our Lord Jesus. Remember that He accepts us and loves us tenderly and, if we desire to know and please Him, He will take us up and carry us to deeper spiritual levels. Though we may have deep spiritual understanding and wisdom, still we must live and walk before our Lord with simple childlike trust in His love and will.

## #104 THE DREAM.....

*I am walking down a city street at sunset. I look down on the ground and find a copper penny. I lift it up and read the inscription "In God we trust." I continue my walk as it gets darker around me, and I see lying on the pathway a pair of copper earrings. One of these is broken but I can read on both of them the same inscription found on the penny: "In God we trust."*

The approaching night speaks of darkness or of the time when things are not clearly seen. Sometimes it speaks of not seeing at all. The inscription "In God we trust" is repeated three times. That is to reveal its importance as a truth (in the mouth of two or three witnesses...). The copper of the penny and earrings signifies bondage and hardness. The earrings also symbolize our hearing. Their being copper and one's being broken speak of our often being hard and defective of hearing to understand or remember such truths as to simply trust in God.

When darkness comes to us and heaven appears as bronze or copper this is the time to trust. Trust in God is needed when we see no possible answer or way out. Trust deals more with our assurance in God's character than the matter for which we trust. If we trust God's character and promises, faith and hope come more easily. When our enemy causes us to doubt God's love or promises our trust will be weakened. Trust and faith in God's character must be the foundation on which we stand, or Satan will have a good chance of causing us to fall. Trust may not understand the problem or delay, but it can and must rely on the good character of God. Trust can wait with assurance and hope for God to open our eyes or, even as we are in the darkness, for God to grant us peace---knowing He knows best and soon will let the darkness pass into light.

## #105 THE DREAM.....

*I am walking, and up ahead I see the Lord Jesus seated in a casual manner. I perceive that He is waiting for me and wishes to talk with me. I approach Him; He seems to be looking in another direction, yet He is aware I am standing nearby. I then quickly turn around and walk away, as I do not want to converse with Him at the moment. I am thinking the whole time that I am somewhat disappointed with the Lord and His dealings with me. I feel He has failed my expectations.*

*The scene changes and I find myself busy about many things---working and serving to avoid facing the Lord.*

We can at different stages in our spiritual walk feel letdown and disappointed in the manner in which God deals with us, or in His methods and timings of answering our prayers. We begin to sulk and act as little children who have a way of letting you know they are put out and expressing their disappointment in you with their pouting and sour looks. We do the same with God as we grow impatient with His methods and feel we know better how to answer our own prayers. We assume, if only He would listen to us and take our advice, matters would be better for us.

Our problem is that God is perfect and not subject to the failures of human parents. We think by pouting and avoiding God it will cause Him to respond to our desires, but it will not. Our hurts and disappointments should not cause us to withdraw from the Lord's presence. This will only open us to resentment, anger and weariness with Him. Christ (as in the dream) is waiting for us to come to Him and discuss our problems. He may not, however, directly confront us for He knows we are not in a reasoning state. We must rise above self-pity and fault-finding with God's ways before we can listen to what He wishes to impart. We need to let our emotions and feelings rest so we can hear more clearly what He would like to say. Elijah, Jeremiah and David were among many who fell into these mental states, yet God at the right time comforted, re-directed and even admonished them as necessary.

If we do not forsake our complaining, bitterness and stubbornness these sins will cause us further defeat. We must again submit to God and be open and honest with Him and He will give us help and wisdom. Whining and complaining will never move God to act more swiftly in regard to answering our prayers. If anything, these sins will hinder the answer and cause us more needless sorrow. We need to remind ourselves that if our attitude toward God's delays is not acceptable it may reveal to us that we are not yet ready for the answer to be imparted. If that desire is not worth waiting God's timing then it is probably not good for us to have at the present time.

## #106 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am standing in a heavenly place. The area appears to be a large room with only a throne in it where I know God the Father is seated. Though I can see his majestic robes and form, I am unable to gaze at His face. I am awe-struck and make no attempt to look up at the Father. My head bowed in reverence, I peer to the side of the throne and observe Jesus standing there. I reason there must be some purpose I am here. Soon I notice another form enter the area and look to the room's other side to watch this person. The person begins to debate and is carrying on a contention which I understand concerns me. This is an evil spirit, and I am rather at peace knowing Christ is dealing with him and I am not being brought into the conversation.*

*While this debate continues I sense a Person's presence around me. I understand this is the Holy Spirit and am at deep peace. He fills my whole being, and I clearly hear His voice coming from inside my mind and spirit saying, "I give My gifts to whom I please." As I think about spiritual gifts and the conditions for receiving them, He speaks again, "The only thing you can do is to obey Me."*

This dream came at a period when I was praying and fasting about my passport coming in the mail. I had been instructed by the Lord to make a short excursion to Israel to pray and intercede, and had been given a deadline for departure. The passport was held up somewhere in the mail system, and I was aware during this time of seeking that the devil was hindering and attempting to prevent its arrival. It was the third day of fasting and praying that I received this dream. Later that day my passport finally arrived. Then I perceived that the debate in heaven concerning me was also over my trip to Israel and the passport's release. I also understood that at that time it was Christ's place to deal with the devil and that I could do nothing. Christ stands before God to act as our advocate. He is our defense and knows well how to plead our case before the throne of God.

Satan attempts to hinder and stop our progress and the carrying out of our appointed duties to the Lord. We know that Satan came before the Lord to debate over Job. We know that one of his high-ranking spirits withstood the angel Gabriel for twenty-one days attempting to keep Daniel from receiving the Lord's revelations. Yes, it was Satan that hindered the apostle Paul. The Bible does not say Satan stopped him, but that he hindered or delayed his mission.

We must remember that often before plans can be carried out in the natural earthly realm, obstacles must be moved in the spiritual planes. Our responsibility is to have faith and obey what we have been given, knowing God will send his angels and His Holy Spirit to move things which we do not see or understand. Great faith is often needed on our part. We may feel like pawns in a chess game, but we are needed pawns in the spiritual war being waged on planet earth.

When we move and submit to God in Jesus's name, Christ takes it upon Himself to be our defense. He then becomes wisdom and help to us in carrying out our appointed duties. We are not given the whole blueprint nor shall we ever be. Trust and faith must hold us in place. We need only to be faithful and obedient to the will and light that He has given us. He will then take care of the unseen things.

The second part of this dream may not appear to have anything to do with the first part, but it did to me. In my prayer and fasting time I had been inquiring of the Lord as to spiritual gifts and ministries. The Holy Spirit spoke to my spirit, the place where He dwells in us. He moves in us and works outward from the spirit to the soul and even to the body at times. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit often is spoken of as coming on and clothing a person. In the New Testament He is spoken of as abiding deep within our spirits and coming forth from us. He is, as Paul states, able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the Power that works in us.

The Holy Spirit's speaking the two statements, "I give my gifts to whom I please" and "The only thing you can do is obey me," was an answer to some questions on my part, and was not intended to include every scriptural teaching on the subject. The first statement we find somewhat in these portions of the Bible:

"But now hath God set the members (with gifts appropriate) each one of them in the body (spiritual church), even as it pleased him" (I Corinthians 12:18).

"God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will" (Hebrews 2:4).

All believers seeking ministries, gifts and answers to prayer must be in the will of God with the necessary faith and obedience to obtain them. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. God must begin the process in us. Only by daily obedience to His will and Word, will we be able to discern and understand what we are to pray for and how to obtain the answers.

When God calls us for a ministry or gift it is important that we know and understand our calling and duty. We are to be wise in this area and know the will of the Lord. Paul surely knew his calling, as do all who are clearly led of the Holy Spirit. God does not wish us to be playing a guessing game as to our place and function in the body of Christ. When one moves out of the baby-stage it is time to know our work and duties before the Lord.

Some suggest that we are not to seek gifts but to seek the Giver. It sounds very noble but is contradictory to God's will and Word. Yes, our motivations, motives and priorities must be right, yet Paul tells us to "desire spiritual gifts", "to covet spiritual gifts" and "to desire earnestly the greater gifts"---read chapters twelve, thirteen and fourteen of I Corinthians. These same chapters emphasize love and fruit with the gifts. We know that ministries and gifts and even proclaiming the gospel are of no value to us personally if we have not the love and fruit of the Spirit. God's love needs proper channels here on earth, and our lives and ministries are such channels through which the Lord blesses others.

Supernatural gifts and ministries are intended to be channeled through us by the Holy Spirit. Faith and love, without spiritual works and deeds to reveal their out-workings, can indeed cause us to examine them to see if they really are from God. False faith can be a positive mental attitude or a mere mouthing of words and promises taken out of context; false love is human sentimentality and emotion which lay aside God's will and words. True faith and love come out of a pure heart---a heart yielded to God's Word and Spirit.

This faith and love will produce real spiritual results. Be careful with all the talk on our position in Christ if there is no practical fruit and spiritual work to prove its reality. Profession of position is no proof one has it! We must also remember this fact. The greater or higher the callings and gifts, the greater the cross and death to self that the Holy Spirit will have to work in us. Deeper humility and selflessness must be worked in the soul that God intends to take up higher in ministry or fruitfulness.

The harvest may indeed be white and the laborers few. God desires to call more laborers into the field, but those workers must meet God's conditions to hold those positions. God would do much more with His saints if they would put themselves more into His hands to mold them as He sees necessary. It is foolish to assume God will use baby, novice and spiritually slow Christians to accomplish deep spiritual works. Paul states it is the sanctified vessel that is ready for the Master's use.

Many believers seek higher service and ministry yet the Holy Spirit can not give it to them as they are still on milk and not able to eat meat. They are not ready to take meat and the corresponding greater accountability to God for stewardship. The apostle James warns that many should not seek to become teachers for they shall come under a stricter judgment before the Lord. The same principle applies to all higher callings and ministries. Many who want higher service are not even faithful to the duties they have already been given. Many possess much pride and self-interest and refuse to deny themselves and take up their cross for the Lord and His work. Therefore God may restrict His giving of higher callings and gifts until the conditions are met.

Let us also remember that once God bestows a calling or gift we are henceforth stewards of that gift and held accountable for it. We will not be released from that call or gift except by promotion to a higher calling or by our own rebellion. That rebellion will cost us greatly. Even Paul talks about his call to be an apostle and preacher with this understanding, "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." When Paul speaks of the gifts and callings of God being irrevocable, one point is this: stewardship, accountability and faithfulness will be demanded from the Lord for His extensions of grace and gifts.

We have many examples in the Old and New Testaments of those who failed to fulfill their ministries and duties---such as King Saul and King Solomon and some of Paul's helpers. We often read of the consequences suffered---God never gives warnings if He does not intend to carry through with them. Let us learn to be faithful in the little we are given so that we will be ready when God calls us to higher or newer fields of service.

## #107 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*This word is spoken in my sleep: “Do not make the mistake of just seeking for discernment. Seek for the gift of discerning of spirits!”*

In my prayer sessions the Lord had been impressing me of the need for discernment as to what spirits were motivating some teachers and so-called prophets. I was thinking more along the lines of the discernment, wisdom and knowledge that come through a study and understanding of God’s written Word. The Lord, however, was referring me to the supernatural gift of discerning of spirits. Now “discerning of spirits” is mentioned by the apostle Paul as one of the nine supernatural gifts found in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians. Discerning speaks to us of distinguishing or being able to tell the difference between the types of spirits influencing a person’s words or work.

First we will discuss biblical discernment. Hebrews 4:12 reads:

“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

This discernment is learned by a study of God’s Word. God’s words will reveal truth and error and give us sound doctrine, and expose that which is false. This discernment, like wisdom which comes from God’s Word, will be able to judge and expose truth from error as far as doctrine and biblical teachings are concerned. This discernment comes by maturing in the Lord and in the knowledge of His written words. Read Hebrews 5:13-14:

“For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.”

This type of discernment can judge or distinguish good from evil by the truth and the outworkings and fruit of a person or ministry. We see this in the statements: “by their fruit you will know them” and “a good tree produces good fruit and an evil tree produces evil fruit.” Many television and radio preachers could be judged by their works in their methods and misuse of Scripture to obtain support. If most Christians studied and obeyed the Word they would not be so easily taken in by the wolves.

One does not need much discernment to read behind the motives of some of these ministers who live in great luxury and pomp, yet will still beg and bargain with the simple and ignorant to send them more money---of course, for the promotion of “the Lord’s work” (pure and one-hundred percent baloney!). My friends, if these charlatans would spend all their wealth on their own ministries, at least they would be a step further in the right direction. If any person or ministry can not use their own stored monies to help in the furtherance of the ministry, surely it is not worth your donation.

Now let us examine the “gift of discerning of spirits.” It is somewhat different from what we call normal discernment. It is supernatural in that it is not acquired learning or knowledge. It is given for the moment to uncover a false teacher or prophet, or to perceive the spirit moving a minister or person who may even be using the Word or a gifting of God---but for an evil or wrong motive.

Discerning of spirits is simply a gift to enable one to distinguish a person's motivating spirit---whether from God, the human nature, or demonic in origin.

As time goes on pastors and elders, along with any who govern the church, will need more often the discerning of spirits operating in their midst. With greater false teachers and shepherds arising we will need greater discernment in order to warn and instruct the sheep, especially those that are babes and novices in God's Word and ways. Discerning of spirits as a gift deals more with removing the outward to expose the heart or motive of the one teaching or expounding to us. My friends, it does not take much discernment to realize the motivating spirit when someone is bouncing all over the floor screaming at the top of their lungs. It is either an evil spirit or a poor, demented soul!

It is the exposure of wolves in sheep's clothing that often requires the gift of discerning of spirits. Many wolves will even proclaim the gospel and teach its truths yet their motive is to obtain money from the flock. They are motivated by spirits of covetousness and greed, not by the Lord's Spirit. Even ministers who counsel and advise and use correct scriptural verses may have an adulterer's heart and even attempt to seduce sexually the women or men they are supposed to be helping. Yes, Jesus told the people to listen to what the priests and teachers of the law said for they sat in Moses' seat, yet He said they were not to act like them. They taught much truth but were greedy and proud, and laid aside the truth they did not like.

Again, discerning of spirits reveals the source of the spirit which under normal conditions could not be otherwise known. I'll give an example. I once listened to a minister who claimed to be a prophet. He taught a wonderful scriptural sermon, yet I discerned him to be a false prophet without any outward proofs. For several years I would not listen to this television evangelist-teacher and many told me I was being judgmental. Well, after awhile some dear believer decided to write down all his prophetic words including his predictions. Every prophecy with dated predictions never came to pass. Now, how could he be a true prophet if these prophecies proved false? Yet some of his teachings were good. Do you get my point? Unless one knew of these false utterances one would be unable to discern without the gift of discerning of spirits.

Another example would be ministers who raise funds to send out missionaries with the gospel. They use every biblical verse to encourage you to give, but when the money is collected they use it to build more and bigger homes for themselves at your expense. If this gift of discerning were more prevalent in our assemblies today, the flocks would be less plundered.

This last example will surely upset some. When it comes to exercising the gift of "speaking in tongues" pastors and authorities need both the discernment learned from the teachings of the Bible and the gift of discerning of spirits for more subtle counterfeit situations. How often in our pentecostal and charismatic churches have we allowed much fanaticism and wild fleshly displays for fear of quenching the Spirit. My friends, we quench the Spirit more by allowing this disorderly conduct without proper correction. Pastor and ministers are often more afraid of offending their flocks than of offending the Lord!

Paul gives a good outline of how and when to allow tongues and prophecy to be used. Anything that goes against what he taught is not of the Spirit. Few actions disgust me more than to be listening to a good sermon or teaching and then have some emotional, shouting person stand and interrupt---ranting on for several minutes without any kind of order or interpretation. Sadder and more disgusting is the minister who stops his preaching and permits this fleshly and spurious display to continue. By the time he returns to his sermon one can sense the anointing has departed. Why so? Because that pastor or minister is accountable to the Lord for not maintaining order and dealing with the fleshly outburst.

I believe there is a time and place for tongues, yet those in authority or leadership must judge and discern timing and proper order. Let us be practical, friends, only one person at a time can address a

group of people. Everyone can not decide when and how he or she will speak or perform. Authorities and leaders must make these choices. Being led of the Spirit and moving in accordance with God's instructions by His Word are the proper methods.

Sad again (I believe this to be true), most speaking in tongues at public meetings is nothing more than an emotional outburst which proceeds from the lower nature. I believe in the true gifts, but we should not allow the false. The gift of discerning of spirits will enable us to distinguish true and false gifts and even the misuse of proper gifts. Those who are given to wild emotional spasms and shouting are usually also unteachable in correction and instruction. The one in charge must reprove or rebuke when necessary. We should honor and fear the Holy Spirit more than we fear offending proud and unteachable souls. We also should not allow such to disrupt our orderly fellowship.

Finally, remember this. Though most displays of so-called gifts may be fleshly and not of the Lord, the true gifts do exist. Let us accept the true gifts when manifested and not fear them because so much has been fleshly.

## #108 THE DREAM.....

*I am flying in an airplane high up in the sky. I have a metal object in my hand with several rods protruding near one end. I seem to know that this object is called a "sensing rod." I begin to walk back and forth as if searching for something or someone. Soon I come across a coffin that appears to have been hidden beforehand. The coffin's lid is closed. I approach the box and point the sensing rod at it. The lid quickly springs open and out jumps a fiery looking evil demon. It has a murderous expression and intent, and proceeds threateningly toward me. I think of the word "destroyer" as I watch this creature. At the moment it almost reaches me I become invisible, yet I can still observe the demon roaming the plane.*

Moving up in the spiritual realm to war with wicked spirits we must have scriptural discernment and be open to the gift of discerning of spirits. Because we appear to fly high as eagles is no reason to assume the spiritual battles are far below. If we move higher in spiritual knowledge and warfare we deal with higher ranking and stronger spirits.

Though we come to deeper peace and rest as we move closer in the Lord and His will, we must not allow ourselves to ever become relaxed and casual in our vigilance of the enemy. We sometimes sadly deceive ourselves after a spiritual victory. Our adversary may seem to have fled and left us alone to bask in our victory. We may think we have arrived at a higher level and will no longer be bothered by this enemy. Yet our foes are clever and have only withdrawn to plan another maneuver, giving us time to lower our spiritual guard.

Now he will attempt to invade our minds with thoughts to puff up and produce pride of attainment: "You are really spiritual now...You are a special vessel and God really needs you...Would that other Christians were as faithful as you are." On and on he goes and, if we are not discerning this attack, we will soon fall into his trap and suffer a great defeat. If this strategy does not succeed he will then try to deflate us. He ever appeals to the natural man or to the fleshly ego, for pride grows best therein.

Now as to the dream, the airplane speaks of moving in the heavenly places in growth or warfare. The sensing rod with the many projections symbolizes having discernment to recognize the enemy---the projections being the words and teachings of Scripture. The Holy Spirit opens the Word of God to us and reveals how to use it in spiritual warfare. We begin to see and hear in the spiritual realm, having our senses trained to discern between good and evil. The coffin with the hidden demon in it signifies death, the demon being our evil enemy whose desire is to destroy and work death in us. Even as we are flying in the heavens the enemy is still around, but may be hidden awhile---he works best in darkness. His dwelling place is the place of sin and death. It is the little sins or foxes that spoil the great vines. These come in darkness hoping not to be detected so they may eat and destroy while we sleep.

When we discern by the Word and the Spirit our adversary's real presence and work, light floods in on him. He hates the light and must then cast off his camouflage---he may launch a frontal attack. Once the enemy has done this, God often makes us invisible to him concerning the methods the Lord will provide for his defeat. The Spirit of Christ gives us boldness, wisdom and counsel against which our foe can not prevail---he will soon be forced to flee. "There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the Lord" (Proverbs 21:30).

It is wonderful and gracious to have the Holy Spirit in us and giving us His secrets. This same Spirit is the One who sees all, knows all, and is always far ahead in plans which none can fathom. None can take Him by surprise and none can defeat us as we walk and live in His presence. Oh, this is a providence and security that can not be outdone! God delights to take us to higher levels of spiritual life

and service so that He can through us destroy the devil's kingdom and work, and thus bring Christ's kingdom and life to earth.

## #109 THE DREAM.....

*In front of me is a horse which has begun to go into labor, soon to give birth. As the colt begins to come forth, only the nose and mouth protrude at first. For awhile the birth appears to be at a standstill. I am waiting for the complete delivery of this colt. Up in the sky I notice several angels hovering and darting back and forth with great excitement at the birth about to take place.*

The horse has no special meaning in this dream other than giving birth. The birth speaks of a new beginning, spiritual newness or a different phase of service. The colt's protruding nose and mouth signify that the birth is near at hand. The waiting on the delivery is just that---a waiting for what is to be brought forth.

The labor's stopping or standing still for a period tells us that some things must not be rushed. The birth will come on time, not too early or too late. The angels' darting about in excitement speaks to us of their interest in God's dealings with His church and of their perception in the heavenly or spiritual realm of what is about to take place here on earth. They often are the messengers sent by God to bring forth these events.

God will give us a word or promise to stimulate faith and expectancy in us. This hearing of His word to us is the foundation of our belief and trust. We must then learn to wait on God and for His appointed time to bring forth His promises. To wait is to watch with faith, knowing it will come to pass at its appointed time---the time set by God. Frequently believers are given vision and faith from a word of the Lord, yet they give up far too soon and do not exercise patience, steadfastness, hope and waiting to receive what God intends to bestow. As we wait before and on the Lord His Spirit will give us wisdom, discernment and words of comfort and encouragement to fight the fight of faith. We must learn to submit all to God's will, and He will then grace us to have the faith that can "call those things that are not as though they are."

The Scriptures teach us how and what to pray for, and what conditions must be observed in order for the fruit of prayer to ripen. God quickens our spirits and confirms His words or promises so we can have a faith that will produce its desired ends. The Lord begins and finishes any real spiritual work, and He uses His believers as vessels and channels of His power. These vessels must be prepared and yielded in order for Him to use them properly. We are His tools to bring about His purposes in the church and on the earth. We are the messengers, ambassadors and ministers He intends to use. God knows what vessel He desires for a work. Ours is to be ready to be whatever vessel He chooses for us. We need to submit to Him and allow Him to place and use us as He wills.

If we desire to do big things for God and be great in His eyes then we must learn a plain lesson or two. To be great in service is to be willing, available and submitted. In Matthew 18:1-4 when the disciples asked the Lord, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?," Christ did something very simple. He called a little child to Himself and, when the child came, placed him in the midst of all. Christ then speaks to the disciples, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Why did He call this child humble? Why, it is very evident, yet profound if we will hear it. When He called the child, we know by reference that the child came to Him in response. In our case, we might have asked many questions of the Lord: "Why do you want me to come? What will you do to me or for me if I come? Do I have to come now as I am rather busy?" So we rattle on. That child performed one small but significant action---he came to the Lord at His call. We must learn the all-important lesson to come when He calls; He is Lord!

The child responded to Christ in yet another way. When he came, Jesus set the child in their midst. The child permitted himself to be lifted up and placed on a rock in front of the others. Christ called that child humble because the child came when called and allowed Christ to do with him as He pleased. Now we might have said to the Lord: “Lord, what are you going to do with me? I don’t like this rock. Can you not put me somewhere better? After all, am I not a King’s kid?” Yes, so simple but so needed! Come when He calls and allow Him to do with you as He pleases. This is true humility and self-denial. As we are faithful to where He places us, He is able later to give us more insight and take us up higher in spiritual service.

As we end here on birthing, let us remember this Scripture:

“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” (Isaiah 66:9 KJV).

## #110 THE DREAM.....

*I see three rivers before me. One proceeds down from the north, and another up from the south. They meet and join to form a third river. I know the names of the rivers---the northern is called "Book," the southern "Flower," and the river formed by their joining is named "New Table."*

Awakening from this dream I immediately understand the symbolism of these rivers. The Book River comes from the north which speaks of the area where God symbolically dwells. Thus the name Book refers to God's Book, His Word or the Bible. His words come down to us from heaven and are bread for us---the bread of life. The Flower River symbolizes ourselves as believers. We have life in us from God yet we grow up out of the earthly plane. Thus this river represents us as believers who are filled with God's spiritual life.

Our life appears for a season. God's Word is life to us. The flower is pretty and gives off a sweet, pleasant smell, yet does not exist for its own end. One day the flower must give up its own life in order that fruit may take its place on the stem. Yes, cherry and apple blossoms are beautiful, yet in themselves incomplete. God's aim for us is not pretty blossoms, stalks and leaves. They have their time and season yet must live to produce fruit---as we live to produce fruit that bears the likeness of Christ. When God bestows spiritual life, it causes change in us. His Word by His Spirit transforms our natural life into spiritual life. The flower must consent to death of self in order that the transformation can take place. It can not produce fruit if it remains a flower; it can not feed the hungry---only fruit can do this. The fruit will not replace the flower by force but only by consent.

The transformation only comes when that flower joins to the Word of God and submits to its Master---then it will cease from its own beauty and life. Each time a blossom drops from the stem of those fruit trees, a piece of fruit takes its place and grows. Only by death or the cross does life come forth. When the flower (the believer) and the Word merge, new life is brought forth. This is union of the divine and human. The two rivers, Book and Flower, merge to form the river "New Table." Table to me symbolizes a level: thus that river is newer, better, and of another level in the spiritual realm. God will then bring forth beauty for ashes, a new man for the old. It is the new man in Christ that is spiritual and fruitful. The same Holy Spirit who works death and the cross in us will also work life and spiritual fruit in us.

For God to use, God must bruise;  
For God to fill, God must kill;  
For God to make, God must take  
To be made into instruments of gold.  
Down I must go this I am told.  
Then He reaches down into the ditch,  
Up He pulls a vessel rich.  
I must not fear sorrow or pain---  
From its ashes a new life is gained.  
Let Him use the staff and rod,  
For they can bring us close to God.  
One day I shall look back without remorse.  
Treasures we'll find when we finish our course.

R.F.H.P.

## #111 #112 #113 #114 THE DREAMS.....

The following four short dreams will be placed together here for they are similar in content. They came over a period of a few years.

*First dream: I find twenty coins which I pick up. I then am referred to Lamentations 3:25-26.*

*Second dream: I see before me a combination lock, and am aware that the numbers to open it are five and twenty.*

*Third dream: I see a dart board with only the numbers five and twenty on it.*

*Fourth dream: I find myself looking among books on a bookshelf where I find a large Bible containing some paper markers. I open the marked pages and find that the markers are old bills of money. One is a five dollar bill and the other a twenty. Later in the dream I return to the Bible and find another marker I seemed to have missed the first time. It is shaped like an arrow.*

Many people, including myself, believe the number five often symbolizes grace. Twenty is a number that reminds me of a time of waiting. Jacob waited twenty years before he obtained his wives and flocks and was freed from his conniving uncle. Thus five and twenty in the dreams speak to me of grace to wait. We need God's grace to wait His timing and not lose faith.

The combination lock symbolizes a hindrance or door that must be opened, but is yet closed. Grace and waiting are the means to open that lock. The dart board with five and twenty signifies grace and waiting being the goal or aim of our faith. The Bible in the dream speaks of God's Word inspiring faith and encouraging us to wait with His grace. The marker shaped like an arrow again refers us to the dart board or the object of our faith. A dart and arrow are one in symbol. The Scripture given (Lamentations 3:25-26 KJV) reads:

“The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation (help, deliverance) of the LORD.”

This verse needs no comment.

The five and twenty dollar bills being old has a good symbolism. Old speaks of the past or, from the dream's point of view, matters that need repeating. We may hear the same words from the Lord often for we need to be reminded often. God may repeatedly give us the same promise or word---and sometimes nothing new. It may be necessary for us to hold to these promises for years. Waiting takes time, and time frequently wears us down. We need grace and help to sustain us through the mundane and long lessons we must learn.

Though we may have read and reread many times the written words of the Bible, we need to continue to study and remember them. God can give us freshness and spiritual stimulation in what we already know. Waiting on and for God needs much grace and inspiration, especially if the time of waiting is long. We need to let the Holy Spirit remind us and bring us back to our foundations frequently, for then we will be building on solid ground.

It takes great courage to wait and persevere when the years and circumstances wear us down. Grace and faith with hope will one day realize their goals. Let us wait with a watchful and expectant heart for God to bring about the promises in His time and place.

## #115 A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.....

*I am sitting at a table with two or three persons seated with me. I begin to tell them of a dream that occurred shortly before as I was sleeping with my head resting on the table. In that dream I heard a rhyme. It is very difficult to remember, but finally the words come to me. I write them down and read what I have written:*

*“Life”  
Those who live in this life well  
Must be faithful or they’ll find hell!*

Why a dream within a dream? It is a symbol of double or deeper meaning. Two dreams, yet one within the other---two to confirm, two to go to another level. I appeared to be teaching those at the table and, even though I read the poem to them, I did not tell them to whom it was directed. God may do likewise with us. He may tell us a matter but conceal part of it. We may not be ready to hear it then or to understand it. Those on milk can not understand meat; those on meat can understand milk.

The telling of the dream to those at the table caused me to think of this portion of the Bible from Jeremiah 23:28:

“The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.”

If it is from the Lord it must be given, whether a true prophetic word, dream, message or sermon. Now preachers and teachers (evangelists and exhorters included) usually enjoy giving words and sermons that cause their hearers to be lifted up and pacified---no fault with that in itself. When that same minister, however, is called to deliver a negative word---a word of warning, reproof or rebuke---he must be just as faithful to that task, for he is ever to proclaim God’s truths and not his own. The messenger’s main duty is to be faithful to deliver the message he or she is given---not to do so reveals a rebellious and sinful heart. The fear of man or the desire to be liked has no place in the messenger’s heart.

The poem was entitled “Life.” Its simple meaning concerns our earthly life. The first verse, “They that live in this life well,” speaks of the well-to-do or those who have an abundance of riches or wealth in this present earthly life. The first portion of the second verse, “Must be faithful”, means what it implies---faithfulness as a steward of those riches. We are stewards of all we have and are, and Christ is Lord of all we are and have. If we do not understand this from the outset we are in trouble.

Concerning earthly prosperity or riches---in almost every case in the New Testament riches are spoken of in a warning manner. Jesus tells us how difficult it is for the rich to make it into heaven. The apostles Paul, Peter and James (among others) also have strong words on the subject of being rich. To be fair to those who are rich, the Bible also puts the wise and the mighty together with them. Paul tells us to look at our calling (the call to salvation), that not many rich, wise or mighty are called. I must assume that among Christians this will be true, yet the Bible did not say, none of these is called.

I will not alter or water down what Christ said about few of the rich making it into heaven. Rich believers need to realize that all they possess is a trust from the Lord to whom they are accountable. If wealthy Christians live in luxury and spend much on self-gratification they already reveal that they are not good stewards. If God allows them to keep their abundance, they must submit those riches to His lordship.

Let me bring up another point that may offend some rich people. Many professing Christians tithe and give much, but they squander the rest of their money as if it belongs to them. Scripture states

that God gives us all things to enjoy---yet not to abuse. Moderation is the key. You could give ninety-nine percent of your income to the Lord's work, but still be greedy and covetous with the one. Is God then pleased? The Lord always searches the motive and intent of why we act a certain way. We may pacify ourselves or others---we will not fool Him.

Let us examine two rich men mentioned in the Bible. The first is the rich young ruler who was very moral and a keeper of most of the basic law as far as we can ascertain. When he told the Lord he had kept the commandments from his youth, Christ did not reprove him. I am sure he was generous and full of good deeds. Christ then asked the ruler to sell all he had and follow Him. God's words have a remarkable way of piercing to the heart of a matter. The Lord does not stop at the branches, but goes all the way to the roots. Sorrowfully, the young man went away rejecting Christ's command.

Jesus then said how hard it was for the rich to inherit heaven. Now that young man could have said, "Well, Lord, if I give away ninety-nine percent, can I keep the one percent for myself?" "No", our Lord would have responded. Riches were an idol (coveting is idolatry) to this young man and Christ knew it well. Christ always attacks the idols in our life for these will keep us from Him.

Now let us look at the second rich man, Zacchaeus, a tax collector hated by all Jews. Jesus spotted this short fellow up in a tree desiring to see Him, so the Lord invited Himself to supper with Zacchaeus. The tax collector was delighted for he could well afford to entertain Christ and His disciples. He comes down from the tree and, without the Lord's prompting, makes a very interesting statement, "...Behold, Lord, the half of my goods, I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Luke 19:8).

Why, my friends, I like to believe Zacchaeus was that rare tax collector who was not a crook, because he says "if I have taken any thing." Now he knew what people thought of him, yet Christ never mentioned money. Zacchaeus does do two wonderful things---he gives away half his riches and offers fourfold to those who can prove he has stolen from them (the law required a fourfold payment from thieves). He gives half of all he possesses---what a wonderful fulfilling of the second of the two greater commandments, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus then calls Zacchaeus a son of Abraham or a true Jew (today we would say a real Christian). The Lord states that salvation came to him that day. Jesus never told him to sell all. Why? Because He knew the heart of that man and that money had no hold on him---Zacchaeus was trustworthy as far as riches were concerned.

So my friends, there will be some---a few wealthy Christians---that God will be able to trust with the stewardship of riches. I have heard some with wealth say, "God does not care if you are rich if you are willing to give it up," yet most of these prove by their lifestyles and selfish accumulations they are mere talkers. Denial is often at the root of many sins. The drunkard (a term I prefer to "alcoholic") refuses to see he is just that---a drunk. The covetous does not see himself as greedy and materialistic. Yes, most sinners do not see themselves as sinners! Sin is a deceiver. Truth will open the eyes of those in darkness, if they will allow it and not flee from it.

In conclusion, let us remember that one can be covetous and poor as well as covetous and rich. Likewise, one can be poor and proud and as well as rich and proud. Most of the poor of this world are envious of the rich. They themselves would love to be rich, yet are not. God deals with our hearts and attitudes. Let us ask for grace to be faithful in the station or lot where we are placed, for we all shall one day give an account before God.

## #116 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*A person dressed in white, whom I discern to be an angel of the Lord, approaches and speaks to me, "Give God three hours a day. Do it for Jesus."*

This was an answer to prayer as I had been asking the Lord how much time He wanted from me in prayer and waiting before Him. I understood this was not meant to be a binding rule for me, but applied for several weeks only. In this simple statement the angel, as God's messenger, was instructing me in the amount of time to be given and in whose name and service I was to accomplish it. God may give us instruction at different times but later withdraw the method. He does require at various periods more discipline, self-denial and sacrifice as the preparation or work demands.

Every ministry has its required duties and responsibilities. Ministries and gifts do not excuse us from Bible study, meditation and a practical daily prayer-life. The called preacher or teacher must still labor in the Word of God and prayer so that the Holy Spirit can further perfect and anoint him and his ministry. For God to perfect and cause one to excel in a ministry or gift that soul must spend more time before God in waiting and listening to the Holy Spirit.

It is not enough to say that we pray all through the day, or to say that we pray without ceasing. That is all good and well, but God demands our personal time, and much of it--time which must be undivided and alone. Many are used of the Lord to win hundreds to Him through their gifted evangelism, but they themselves are shallow and babes in really knowing the deeper things of God or in knowing God deeply. The Lord will honor His Word for it is truth. Even false and backslidden souls have proclaimed the truth and benefitted others, yet it will not profit the proclaimer whose heart is not right with God. Solomon was the wisest of men, truly gifted of God, yet his end was unpleasant and a reproach to God. He had wisdom but he did not heed the wisdom with which he had been gifted. This is why we must stay before the Lord in His Word and be subject to the searchings of His Spirit.

Many Christians fall under these two categories. One, they are so busy about God's work and ministry that they falsely assume this is their main priority. Two, they are not right in their personal lives before God, yet work and serve much, avoiding serious contact with the Lord lest He deal with their sin and selfishness. The first group really loves the Lord and desires to please Him, but often places God's work before their relationship with God. The second group tries either knowingly or unknowingly to appease God with their service and work, rather than obeying Him. We know that this is unacceptable to Him. Thus those good works become wood, hay and straw. They may bless others but will not profit themselves spiritually.

I wish to share here an event that happened to me many years ago when I was a young believer. I went to a great evangelistic meeting with thousands attending. Many came to God through this one man's preaching. Of all the sermons and activities that night, I remember a statement made by this evangelist that the Holy Spirit locked into my spirit. I never forgot it, nor do I now. Paraphrasing, he said something like this, "I have no respect for Christians who spend so much time in prayer yet do not win souls. Let them get out and work for God!" This did not sound good to me, yet the masses clapped their hands.

Four or five years later, this same evangelist was exposed for having an adulterous affair with his secretary, which had been ongoing for several years. If he had been spending more time before God He may never have given himself over to this gross sin. Many came to Christ by the preaching of this man. Did he think all those souls won and his many years of service would pacify God? Far from it! This man will live and die and go to hell unless he confesses and repents of his sin. Yes, many shall stand

before Christ proclaiming all their good words and deeds, but He will say unto them, “Depart from me ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:23).

The world’s system may hold the false assumption that, if there is a God to whom one day they will be accountable, hopefully their abundance of good works will outweigh their bad. A false belief indeed! Without Christ and His righteousness they will have no foundation at all. It is not man’s good works that make him righteous and usher him into heaven. Greasy-grace religion with its fire insurance and license to sin will not work either. Talk is cheap and professions are shallow if fruit is not forth coming. True faith and true righteousness will produce true spiritual works and a practical holiness to prove they are real.

So, my friends, our relationship with Christ must take the foremost place before all work or ministry. Otherwise, we too may be deceived and falsely assume we are pleasing to the Lord.

## #117 THE DREAM.....

*I am standing on the shore of a large body of water. I can see the rough waters and they move up quickly to cover my feet and lower legs. A wind or some unseen force appears and seems to sweep the body of water completely away. In its place is now seen a beautiful green valley.*

*Then I am standing on a bridge and perceive that the previous sight is but a vision of future events in this dream. I have seen a storm coming, afterwards followed by a peaceful valley. As I stand on the bridge I seem to return to my conscious state. I notice over the land and waters several tornados coming within a large storm. I feel the winds blowing and see the darkness beginning to fill the skies about me.*

This dream was a true prophetic foreseeing into my soon-coming spiritual state. When necessary, God warns or prepares us for approaching events. The waters from the distance covering my feet and lower legs speak of the enemy's attempt to hinder my spiritual progress and walk. The wind or unseen force symbolizes God's power to change and sweep away the storm and tribulations to bring forth peace and beauty. The green valley signifies new life and growth and pleasantness and tranquility. The bridge speaks of a place of crossing---crossing from one place or state into another.

The Bible is written not only to give truth but to prepare us to live in that truth. God will equip us for certain future ministries and events. It is written in the book of Amos that the Lord does nothing unless He reveals His secrets unto His prophets. In the New Testament Christ also warns and reveals events to His church, and tells us the Holy Spirit will show us things to come. Sometimes tribulations may be coming upon a local church or the church in some nation. On the other hand, God may be ready to bring about a revival or move of restoration, and wants Christians informed so they will make preparations.

Now here we are not talking of fortune-telling and peeping into the unknown for personal and selfish information. Prophecy as a prediction or forecasting is given at God's timing and in His manner. When this form of prophecy is given it moves through a believer by God's will and manner. It can not be drummed up or given at the will of the believer. Fortune-telling has to do with demonic spirits who are often sought without the inquirer's realizing that this is of the devil. Even what is sometimes called personal prophecy given to believers must be checked out closely. If God desires to inform us of a matter, it is still to be to His glory and for spiritual work and ministry. God does not give personal prophecy to gratify self-seeking ends.

Now "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation" (II Peter 1:20). This does not mean that God can not give personal prophecy. Personal prophecy may and will be given to confirm one's calling or ministry. God may speak through others to inform of the location or timing of certain spiritual works or service, yet all must be in harmony with God's written Word and be subject to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Let us remember God performs the out-of-the-ordinary when needed. He does not, however, move to satisfy the carnal or curious seeker. God's gifts and ministries are to honor Him and build up the spiritual body of Christ---not a means to satisfy men's fleshly and selfish desires.

The early church knew of persecutions, famines and even when and how they would come. God still informs His people of much, if they are open to it. Prophecy as prediction may be conditional or unconditional as God determines. Whatever form, it still must conform to the Bible's authority and instruction.

## #118 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*This statement is spoken while sleeping, yet awakens me. The voice speaks quietly in a soft whisper, "Abandon to God! Then you will more clearly understand."*

Sometimes I have found the Lord will speak words to me that I normally do not use in my vocabulary. Thus "abandon" caught my attention. The night before receiving this word I had been praying and asking the Lord about some problems and situations, being analytical and desiring to know the whys and how comes. We want to know the whole blueprint before we build.

To me abandon means to yield oneself unrestrainedly. God wants us to trust Him and yield ourselves even when we do not know all the answers to our questions, or even if He decides not to answer some questions. However, to abandon our wills to the Lord places us in a deeper state of peace, and eventually we will be given understanding. Understanding may be to simply trust and rely on God's wisdom without having to have matters explained to us. Often the wisdom from above is of this type. Though we do not like it, God may answer us but with replies such as: "trust Me", "wait", or "not now."

In the supernatural realm we may find that spiritual experience precedes understanding. Many are born again because they are convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit and confess Christ as Lord of their lives, yet these same souls may have no understanding whatsoever concerning the spiritual and legal ramifications. Even in speaking in tongues, we speak in mysteries and our understanding is bypassed. When we abandon our wills and questions to Christ, we are able to have peace of mind and soul---we are then trusting in God and His wisdom to do what is right when it is right. In being led of the Lord we must be careful to move as He directs whether we have understanding or not. Peace and the Holy Spirit's witness may be our only guidance, yet when understanding is needed we can be sure He will give it.

Let us abandon our all to Christ, and ask for grace to trust Him when our mind and lot appear to have so many unanswered questions. In so doing, we will find rest for our soul.

## #119 THE DREAM.....

*I see ladders extending from the ground to the sky. I am climbing one of these and notice another person climbing also. This person, who is almost level with me in elevation, begins to struggle as the steps of the ladder start to break loose. The person hangs on for awhile, then falls from a great height to the distant ground below. In panic and fear, I grab my ladder tightly, afraid of falling also. I soon regain my composure and continue climbing the ladder.*

In our spiritual walk we move from one degree to another in advancement. In a sense we are climbing ever upward toward higher heavenly levels. This dream speaks to me of the fact that some will fall from their spiritual state to find themselves in defeat and failure. Each of us has a road, a hill or a ladder to climb. On this path are many pitfalls and dangers of which we must be aware. The way is narrow and rough at times, but with the Lord's guidance and help we are able to stay on the right path.

Many start out well on this journey but after awhile begin to fall away and are sidelined. Yes, I have known some of this type---real Christians (I believe)---who bear fruit and go deep with the Lord, but somewhere along the path are distracted and lured away. The apostle Paul tells us to take heed when we think we stand lest we fall. We must be ever watchful to stay close to the Lord and allow Him to lead us safely to port. It is not the beginners but the finishers of the pilgrimage who are called overcomers. We must always remember that as long as we are in human flesh that we are Christ's soldiers engaged in a spiritual war. No one climbs so high in heavenly places that he or she is beyond defeat and failure. Actually the higher one climbs in spiritual heights, the further his possible fall. Some fall to be recovered later; some fall and never recover from defeat.

Many a time God has given me this warning which I take seriously, "Better than you have fallen!" Better, yes, and I see those who are---better in yieldingness, better in knowledge of God's Bible, more perfect in love and kindness and service and works. If the wisest of men, Solomon, fell away from God in his latter years, who do we think we are? His wisdom and knowledge were not his problem. His problems were similar to ours at times. He had knowledge but did not heed or obey the knowledge he possessed. Remember, it is not the hearers of truth but the doers of truth that are fruitful and faithful.

God is very gracious and forgiving of those who fall into sin. When sin is confessed and forsaken, the Lord will restore and lead us onward. However, God can not and will not put sin aside if it has not been dealt with according to His Word. That once wise Solomon wrote these good words---we would do well to heed them:

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper (succeed): but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"  
(Proverbs 28:13 KJV).

Yet this same Solomon continues to rebel against God in serving idols set up by his heathen wives. He is left in rebellion to the end of his days. I know some like to take a few of Solomon's statements to explain that he finally recovered. No, my friends, Solomon's wisdom remained with him to the end, yet no Scripture refers to his repentance in old age. Furthermore, he is fighting the one whom (because of his rebellion) God has chosen to take over ten of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Sin deceives all who court it. It is part of the mystery of iniquity. Sin practiced and permitted to thrive will pervert the mind's understanding of spiritual matters. It causes some to believe lies and be damned. When men refuse to submit to truth, they open themselves to lying spirits and teachings of devils. We must love the truth and allow it to reprove and instruct us into paths of righteousness. Christ

said that many will not come to the light to be reproved. We who are His should delight in His light and the light of His words, for it will cleanse and change us. We should be like moths, drawn to the light and fluttering in its presence. Let us not be like roaches who run from the light and flee to darkness!

## #120 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I am talking with a friend on the telephone and desire him to visit me. He states he wants to come, but then begins to give many reasons and excuses as to why he may not. I finish talking with him, hang up the phone and walk away. I ponder to myself how good it would be to have the fellowship, but become discouraged at the unlikeliness of his visit. A voice speaks to me and says, "Why don't you make God your close friend?" My heart somewhat convicts me, for after this word is spoken to me, my thoughts are these: "God's close friendship may be too exacting or costly---God will want the friendship on His terms---will He really be a close friend to me?"*

The next day I receive a letter in the mail to call this friend of whom I have just dreamed. I call and, to the word, he repeats our phone conversation from the dream. Thus I knew my dream was prophetic, and walked away from the phone discouraged. I did not ponder the rest of the dream till several hours later, but knew there was a message for me. My heart had revealed my inner thoughts about a close friendship with God. When the question "Why don't you make God your close friend?" was asked, I knew the reason. So did God! God will often ask us questions (to which He very well knows the answers) to indirectly cause us to think and question ourselves.

Yes, God will deal directly when needed, and he will deal indirectly also. Now look at Adam and Eve after their fall. God's first question was, "Where are you?" God knew where they were---not only locally, but spiritually. He was giving them time to acknowledge their sin. If the Lord asks you a question you can be sure He knows the answer, but is desiring a response from you.

God called Abraham and Noah His friends. They were friends in a special way. All of us as children of God (if we are born again) through Christ are God's friends at some level. We are also His children and servants. Many of whom we call friends are no more than acquaintances. The term "friend" does not take on the closeness that it did so long ago. With close friends we can share our innermost feelings, desires, joys and sorrows. We know they are interested in us and can be trusted, and we are at ease with them. Because we know and are familiar with this type of friend, on occasion we can assume and impose on our friendship. We have the privilege of calling on them when needed without fear of rejection. Sad, but true, many live and die and never have such a good friend.

King David had such a friend in Jonathan. David in mourning over his friend's death states:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women"  
(II Samuel 1:26 KJV).

Their love was a deep friendship. David had a few wives at this time but we are not told if he had friendship with them. It is grievous that many married couples have not learned to become friends. Romantic love is no guarantee of friendship. Solomon makes an interesting statement:

"...Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found"  
(Ecclesiastes 7:28 KJV).

Not surprising, Solomon seems to have sought only romantic and sexual love, yet none of his several hundred wives appears to have been a friend to him. He makes the statement that among men it is quite

rare also. His statement covers faithfulness which is a good descriptive word for a friend. He seems not to have been able to trust many---what a sad state.

Indeed, God desires us to become close friends with Him. Yes, at times it will be costly. The apostles (especially Paul) knew what it meant to pay a price for the intimacy they shared with the Lord, yet none appears to have complained. They found that intimacy to be well worth any cost on their part. Let us fervently desire and put forth every effort to allow God to become our closest Friend.

## #121 THE DREAM.....

*I am sitting in a large auditorium listening to a preacher speak as he rides a unicycle back and forth. He behaves clownishly and his preaching is filled with foolish jestings and much slander against ministers of the gospel. I also notice that this man is very obese and that he has much material wealth. I depart quickly.*

The unicycle, a one-wheeled object, symbolizes the preacher's one-track mind and motive. Repeatedly he proclaims his same gospel, the end being to make money and grow fat off the people. Through foolish clownings, jokes and slander of true ministers who proclaim the unadulterated words of God, He makes himself rich and fulfills his covetous desires. My friends, there are many out proclaiming the gospel (often a false gospel) for gain and evil motives!

Clowning and entertaining performances have no place in proclaiming the Word of God. God puts no clowns in His pulpits. Christ demands soberness and seriousness in those who minister for Him. This does not mean joy and peace are not present. Performers and clowns receive a jester's reward from their often worldly and carnal professing believers. They are not taken seriously.

Ministers that speak for gain, fame or selfish reasons can be very cunning and deceitful in their performances. At any expense they will attempt to keep their followers for self-gratification. These are the wolves in sheep's clothing. They truly come not to feed, but to feed upon the sheep. Wolves are relentless hunters---their goal to fill their bellies.

God's sheep must be able to discern the real shepherds from the false. We must use the Word of God to discern those on television and radio and in our pulpits. Look for these clues and you will be able to tell the difference between good and evil shepherds. Do they preach for fame? Do they court the attention and approval of the people, or do they seek God and His truths? Do they always speak a positive word and never reprove, rebuke or admonish in their sermons? Do they pacify and make you feel comfortable when you know you are not right before the Lord? Do they slander the ministers they think are too sober and gloomy in their preachings? Do they appear very prosperous in high living while they beg, demand and quote Scripture to solicit more money from you? Do they make most every sermon and speech a money-seeking adventure while promising you material rewards from God for giving? Do they appear proud in their speeches and lacking of any real humility? Shall we go on further? I think not, for if you can answer yes to any of the above, you may well have found a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Yet do not be surprised, for these most likely went into the "ministry" not because they were called of God but because they saw it as a profitable profession. Our pulpits are filled with ministers of these types---deceived and deceiving, whose end shall be according to their works. Let us take God's warnings seriously:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears..." (II Timothy 4:3 KJV).

"...some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils..."(I Timothy 4:1 KJV).

We are wise to stay in God's Word and walk humbly before Him, for only then will we have eyes to see the difference between what is true and what is false.

## #122 A SPOKEN WORD.....

*"Happiness is found in holiness."*

After awakening I ponder this word "holiness." For if happiness is to be found therein, then I want to understand the practical side of holiness.

The word holiness or holy is used with or refers to God in the Bible more than any other word. To be holy is to be pure, righteous or whole. We as Christians have Christ's righteousness imparted to us yet we see its substance only as it flows out of us in practical holiness. If faith is truly alive with practical outworkings so too righteousness is revealed when evidenced by our holy living. Christians who have true faith and righteousness will of necessity have works and holiness to confirm their presence. A tree is known by its fruit, not by its profession of fruit.

Even God's love is grounded in His holiness. Holiness is the sum total of the fruit of the Spirit in us. Why, it is the very nature of God Himself.

Now happiness is a word that occupies everyone's thoughts. Worldly happiness depends solely on our present circumstances. If all goes well and our desires and wishes are fulfilled, we are happy. Temporal happiness depends on temporal pleasures. Happiness for the Christian has more to do with the fruit of joy and peace. The kingdom of God is joy, peace and righteousness in the Holy Spirit. Yet that joy and peace are only ours as we walk in His righteousness in holy living. Yes, for us, happiness is found in holiness.

Christian joy coexists with sorrow, suffering and affliction; worldly happiness can not. It can only live as certain moods, emotions and pleasures are present. Christian joy can rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. It lives because Christ is present. For the joy set before Him Christ endured the cross. He was a man of sorrows yet He had joy. This joy does not depend on pleasant surroundings and fair weather. It draws from a different well.

Worldly happiness has simply found its own way and life, yet will forfeit both later. Godly joy has given up its own way for Christ so enjoys His life now and forever. Worldly happiness can not count it all joy when it falls into many temptations and trials, only when they pass. It has no strength to endure so must wait for circumstances to change.

True spiritual happiness comes from knowing and learning of God. We find our joy in pleasing Christ and being in union with Him. In pleasing Him now, one day He will say to us, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord"---a joy that will have no sorrow or suffering for these will have passed away.

## INTRODUCTION TO CARDINALS

The following several dreams will each contain references to cardinals---the songbirds often known as redbirds. To save time and much needless repetition, I will explain their symbolism in this section and how it came about.

It was several years ago when God first brought cardinals to my attention. One morning I was awakened from my sleep by a strange noise outside my bedroom window. I lifted my head and looked out the window onto a rock patio. There about five feet away was a bright red cardinal sharpening his beak on the patio's stone work. I got up from my bed and proceeded to the main part of the house (where I was staying with friends) to tell one of them of this experience. My friend was leaning back on a sofa reading an article from some book or paper. I asked about the item being read and the response was, "It's an article on redbirds or cardinals."

Now I assumed this was not coincidence and these two experiences must have significance for me. These occurrences along with later dreams caused me to use cardinals as a personal symbol to mean, "God keeps His words." Thus anytime thereafter when cardinals would come to my attention (from many varied sources), I was reminded that God does keep His words. God's keeping His words refers to His written words found in the Bible, His promises, prophecies and any words that speak to us of His character of being true and trustworthy.

We have symbols and objects that remind us of experiences and happenings in our lives. A gold band may remind us of marriage, a cross of the death of Christ. Some symbols are known to many and some may be personal as cardinals are to me. Seven states of our nation use cardinals as their state bird. Many use them at Christmastime as decorations. My point is, that as language reveals words to us, so symbols and objects can also speak to us.

We can also use other symbols and objects to remind us of matters important and useful to us. We use references of chapters and verses to help us remember where certain portions of Scripture are found. (Some may not know this, but the chapters and verses found in our Bibles were not originally placed there by the apostles. These chapters and verses which we find helpful and useful in our study of Scriptures were added hundreds of years later.) Personal symbols often remind us of a period of time or an event which we need to remember.

Keep in mind in reading through these dreams that the symbolic meaning of the cardinal is: "God keeps His words."

## #123 THE DREAM.....

*I am walking with a cage in my hand that contains two cardinals. Someone comes up to me and asks if I will ever let the birds fly free. I respond, "I am afraid if I do the cats may get them, so I must protect them." As I continue to walk along a large vicious dog attacks me. The animal bites into my hip but only gets a mouthful of cloth and no flesh. I fall to the ground as this dog continues to pull and rip at my hip area. I then see he is tied to a rope and can not approach any nearer. However, another dog attacks while I am on the ground. He lunges for my neck and, at the instant I feel his mouth hit my neck, I awake from this dream.*

The enemy will attempt to destroy our faith by attacking God's Word or His words to us. Whether it be a promise or prophecy, it is of utmost importance to him to try every means to destroy it.

The dogs were leashed on ropes so their distances and limits were set. God likewise sets our limits (as He did in Job's case) and will protect us as long as we move within His will and path. The Lord puts up the hedges, but at times for our spiritual maturity will allow the adversary entry to try and test us. Even Christ, after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, was led quickly by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by Satan.

We must hold in faith God's words to us, yet there shall be the test or fight of faith. The cage speaks to us of protection, so we must protect or guard our faith in God's words. Remember, if permitted, the devil comes as a robber and steals the word sown. My carrying the cage and walking with it symbolize the two are to be united---faith in God's words and our walk of faith.

The two dogs speak of evil, devouring enemies who seek to destroy our faith in God's word and our walk of faith. The hip symbolizes that body area which we use for walking and resting, our legs and feet being connected at the hip---the strong muscle area. As we walk by faith so must we rest in God and His words by faith.

The first dog attacked the hip to cripple my walking as the enemy attacks to cripple us spiritually, preventing us from moving on in faith and victory. The second dog waited for me to be down on the ground struggling to escape the first dog before he made his move. His desire was to go for the neck which, if broken, can cause cessation of life. This enemy seeks not only to cripple or hinder my walk of faith, but seeks to destroy it altogether if he can.

My waking at the moment the dog lunged for my neck signifies God's intervention at the right or proper moment. God knows when faith has been brought to maturity, and will deliver us and keep His words when He has finished all His purposes. The trying of our faith is not meant to weaken and destroy us; it is meant to cause us to mature and become practical overcomers in this present life. Let us remember this: great faith will come under great trials, yet great will be the victories if we allow God to thus mature us.

## #124 THE DREAM.....

*I see a cardinal off in the distance. It is just barely discernable as a bird as I strain my right eye to observe it. In doing this, my eye begins to act in a fashion somewhat like a telescope. The cardinal is quickly brought to view at about twenty times normal size, and I am able to study this bird very carefully---examining every detail. When I finish, my eye refocuses back to normal, and the cardinal again appears far off in the distance.*

My eye focusing as a telescope on the cardinal (God keeps His words) symbolizes “the eye of faith.” Faith looks to God and His promises or prophecies that may be far off in time and outworking, yet the eye of faith brings those promises into the present. Faith is the substance of things hoped for! We hold by faith those words given to us, though hope and time must have their place. This is also like looking at a distant mountain peak we desire to climb. We can see it but have not yet experienced the accomplishment of it in the natural. Faith will climb from hill to hill in getting closer to the desired peak, yet on that journey we may pass through darkness and paths that appear to lead us away from the peak instead of closer to it.

We must then hold with the eye of faith all that God has given us by His Word or revelation. In so doing faith will one day bring that promise into conscious reality.

## #125 THE DREAM.....

*As I stand near a shore's edge, I raise my right hand outward and upward. A fat cardinal flies and lands on it. I then look out over the shore, and waters (rushing beautiful waters) flow in to the shore moving under, over and between the rocks and caverns. I perceive the waters to be pleasant, peaceful and refreshing.*

This dream's meaning is simple and short to me. The cardinal's fatness symbolizes God's words and promises to us are rich, full and ripe. My hand's reaching out speaks of our reaching for the promised words by faith. I saw nothing, yet reached upward. It was then the cardinal landed on my hand. Faith is what connects the human side to the divine side, producing the fruit of faith.

We must ever stand at the shore and be watchful across the vast waters, waiting for the waters to move once God has stirred them. As I watched, allowing the cardinal to rest on my hand, the waters came rushing in quickly with all their blessings and fulfillments. As the waters in the dream began to cover the rocks and to fill the caverns and coves, so will God's blessings overflow us once faith has run its course and its time is ripe.

## #126 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I appear to be high up on a mountain top. I am tired and lie down in my weariness. I am lying on my side about to fall asleep when a cardinal flies over and lands on my fingers. This cardinal is small and bright red and very active in his desire to get my attention. He flies in and out between my fingers. I grab this bird but let it go. I feel the flutterings of his wings and the nibblings of his beak on my fingers as he keeps returning to get my attention. Each time I appear ready to fall asleep, he again begins his fluttering and nibbling. Then, at the moment I am awaking, I hear this word, “staggered not in unbelief.”*

The mountain speaks of the lofty levels of faith we are to acquire in Christ. My lying down to sleep in weariness speaks of the temptation to fall asleep and cease watching with faith. The cardinal symbolizes God’s keeping His words or promises to us. My grabbing the bird signifies our need not to sleep, but to hold to and not let go of the promises God has given us. The bird’s constant returning and nibbling my fingers reveals God’s words and promises are alive, and desire to draw and keep our attention. They are to keep us from falling asleep and giving up in our faith and expectancy. God is ever ready to stir and prick us with His words of faith and hope. We can be certain that God will do His part (and more) to insure we will obtain the promises.

The phrase “staggered not in unbelief” referred me to this Scripture:

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Romans 4:20-21 KJV).

When we receive God’s promises and good words on a matter we then begin our climb of faith. By faith with patience, hope, waiting and watchfulness we will come to the top or end of all we are able to do. We reach this stage by God’s grace and Spirit united to our yieldingness.

As long as we are active and moving we feel that something is being done in the spiritual realm, but this is not always the case. Surely we must do all that we are given to do in trusting and obeying the Lord and in keeping the conditions of the promises. However, there will come a time when we have done all we can and we must then wait on God for deliverance. To do more is simply to move in mere human labor which will add nothing to spiritual concerns. This period is the most difficult time in faith’s battles---to simply stand still and wait. Now time will test our faith to its utmost, even to the breaking point. We need not break or grow weary---we need grace to await God’s timings.

This is the hour when Satan will come to attack with all types of lies and words. His goal is to cause us to weaken and give up in despair, and miss God’s best. He attacks us with spiritual laziness and would lull us to sleep. This is not the time for slumber but the time to watch and wait with expectancy. We must hold and grasp the promises if we can hold to nothing else. We are to grasp tightly and not let go. If we have small failures and naps, God will be gracious to stir us with His word and promises if we permit Him. God desires us to grab and hold firmly to Him and faith in this time of seemingly endless nothingness. We are to throw out our anchors of hope, let the storm rock our ships of faith, and hang on until it passes.

Yes, in some matters it may take years to bring to ripeness the fruit of those promises. We may have failures and falls but we must rise up and not retreat. Surely we will be very disappointed if we think we can simply turn around and go back down that mountain believing that God will always snatch

us by the collar and drag us back up to victory. No, indeed! Though it will grieve God for us to miss out on what He desires to give, He will allow us to be defeated if we cease our fight of faith.

We must resist self-pity and willful refusal to regain lost ground, or we shall forego many good blessings. This is indeed a sad state of affairs if we abort now and miss what has cost us so much time and warfare. Even to start again after much wasted time in defeat is grievous for we will have suffered a lot of needless loss. We may forfeit altogether the intended promise, if God has set a definite time and place for it.

Let us, however, arise with faith and be willing to wait with and for the Lord. He then can bring about what we both desire. Let us be strong in faith and glorify God by allowing Him to do as He pleases in us.

## #127 THE DREAM.....

*In my dream I see a young cardinal which appears sick and weakly. I approach this bird and feed it well until it begins a transformation. As I watch, this cardinal changes into a beautiful butterfly. It seems I am standing in a large place that has many rooms. I sense that I am to help guide this butterfly from room to room. I do this by going ahead and switching on lights in each room as the butterfly enters and turning them off as it leaves. The light draws and guides the butterfly through these rooms.*

We allow at times the promises and words of God to become weak and sickly by our discouragement and unbelief. The words are not strong to us and we do not put a premium value on them. We must then feed these given promises and words by taking courage in Christ and reminding ourselves that His promises and words to us are true and sure. We must reread, meditate and ponder repeatedly His words and promises to us until they are again renewed and made alive in us.

The words of God being fed by these methods will, like the cardinal, take on new life and outlook. Butterflies speak of resurrection and transformation. The promises and words of God will one day take on new life and transformation that is the reality of that for which we have hoped. These promises will one day become real in our experience and we will hold them as such.

The rooms symbolize different levels of our walk and ministry through which we must pass. Guiding the butterfly by going ahead and lighting each room speaks of God's guidance of our realized promise by His light, which is His Word and the lordship of Jesus Christ. Once the promise has become reality in our lives, we are responsible and held accountable to Christ in how we use His gifts. We must be faithful stewards in these matters.

All good and perfect gifts are from our Father above and, though they are given to us, we are still accountable as to how we use or misuse them. God does not give any gift to be used selfishly or for mere self-gratification. We may use and enjoy them within the bounds of Christian love and duty. It is a great danger and mistake to ever assume that any blessing given by the Lord (whether spiritual or natural) can be used simply as we please. This is totally contrary to the life of self-denial and submission to the practical lordship of Christ.

All we have or are and all we ever will have or be is always under the lordship and ownership of Jesus Christ. This attitude of true practical lordship will keep us in a state dependent on and in Christ, and will cause us to hold very lightly to all things before God. He is to be in full and complete control! Any desire or hope of keeping anything solely for ourselves will reveal only a covetous and self-seeking attitude. Let us therefore take care, and always submit all God's blessings and gifts to the light of His Word and the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

## #128 THE DREAM AND A SPOKEN WORD.....

*I find myself sitting on a grassy embankment that slopes steeply down to a body of water. I am gazing out over this water searching for something when a person walks over and sits down next to me. I am in a somewhat melancholic mood. I perceive that this person is of angelic origin. He is dressed in ordinary pants and shirt such as I would wear. Without looking directly into his face I quickly glance at him to acknowledge his presence. I then return my gaze to the waters and observe them to be very calm without so much as a ripple. The angel speaks this one word, "flow." The calm surface of the water now appears to be flowing very smoothly. I am aware that the angel knows of my sad, moody attitude, yet does not desire to directly confront me about it. He now speaks these words to me in a very soft and gentle voice, "This is a rough life. God can make it smooth for you."*

*I am still watching the waters when I notice out in their midst a flag attached to a pole. As I ponder and look at this flag I am made aware that it is a banner with great detail of color and design. There are four large bands of white running horizontally (I sense that the number four is important) divided by three thin blue stripes. On the second white band is an ensign of two small cardinals resting on a green leaf-covered branch, and on the third an imprint of a single large cardinal. While observing the details of this banner, I notice that the tide is rising slowly and smoothly and that the flag begins to spread out evenly over the surface of the rising waters---so smoothly it appears to be melting on the surface. When the third white stripe with the large cardinal imprint touches the surface, I perceive before fully waking that the colors of the seven stripes are the same as those of the state flag of Israel (white and blue).*

Before giving the meaning of this dream I will reveal my spiritual and mental condition to which this dream was a response. I was somewhat discontented with my present lot, and life seemed rough and hard. I understood it was the Lord's plan for me, yet I was not counting it all joy to be passing through fiery trials. My joy would come when they ceased! I was not pleased, either, when I learned that my lot would not be changed as I had certain lessons to learn.

My sitting and gazing out over the waters speaks of looking or waiting for something, yet looking in a wearied or unhappy state. The angel is not only a messenger, but one sent from an unexpected direction. I was searching the waters for an answer, yet it came from a presence beside me. We must look to God as our source and let Him determine the method of choice. My not gazing at the angel's face is a sign that we are to keep our eyes upon God and not be side-tracked by the methods God may use to answer our prayers. I was aware that the angel did not seek to distract my focus as I observed the waters. His not wearing white robes but ordinary attire reveals that the messenger was to communicate, yet not draw attention away from the ongoing event.

It also reveals that God can send messengers that appear ordinary, and answer prayers in down-to-earth ways. God may send an angel or messenger to reveal certain matters to us at different levels or stages of our walk. We must not elevate any method He uses beyond its place or He may change that method. We are not told in Scripture to seek for dreams, visions, prophetic words, angels or any particular method or revelation in answer to prayer. He is God and Lord; let Him be that in all things.

Those who are always looking for out-of-the-ordinary or supernatural experiences rarely find them. On the other hand, those who never expect such will usually not find them either. To limit the Holy Spirit in His methods is only to limit ourselves and further blessings. Some souls have much head knowledge of God's Word yet do not appear to have a living, personal, practical walk with the Lord. We should not be afraid of the supernatural, but should prove its source and take that which is good and ditch the rest!

The letter of the word, without some experience of the moving of the Holy Spirit, can be a dead, lifeless walk. One is not spiritual simply because he can quote the Bible well and possesses a fine mental grasp of its contents. Remember, even demons know the Bible and know it well. We need the foundation of God's written Word to be able to judge all spiritual concerns, yet we need the Holy Spirit to rightly reveal and unfold the Bible as not mere head knowledge but also living vital experiences.

It is not safe, either, to be always seeking thrills and wonderful and supernatural experiences. We do not live by these; we live by the Word of God and its principles. Those of this type are often led astray by false visions and revelations, for they place feelings and thrills above truth. Again, let God give to us as and when He pleases; then we can enjoy all things proven to be from Him.

In this dream the angel first spoke the word "flow" to draw my attention to the rising and smooth, flowing waters. Then he spoke, "This life is rough. God can make it smooth for you." Our spiritual walk is not always a state of happy, easy and undisturbed tranquility. We have blessings of joy and we have trials of sorrow (I want to clarify here that happiness depends on outward circumstances while joy is a fruit of the Spirit, which can also dwell with sorrow). The apostle Paul spoke of periods in which he even despaired of life for he was under such warfare and attack from the devil, yet God does give grace and joy in our sorrow though we may not be happy in our circumstances. He graces us that we can endure affliction and hard times.

I was comforted by the angel's relevant message for me. Life was rough at that time. I was glad he did not say, "Be happy, it's not so bad!" God does know where we dwell bodily and spiritually and is well able to help in times of need. Christ knew of sorrow and affliction and therefore is a gracious High Priest able to help and have compassion for us. How wonderful to know that God will change matters when the time is right, and is able to make the rough ways smooth. Ponder the following verse:

"Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways shall be made smooth..." (Luke 3:5 KJV).

Yes, He will remove that grating grain of sand from your spiritual nerves, either by complete removal or by simply deciding to make a beautiful pearl instead. If He does not take us out of the furnace of fire, then He will surely be with us in the flames. If we must drink a bitter cup, we can be sure that He will cause some sweetness to come from it in the end.

Now the banner-flag in the dream symbolizes a standard to be carried into battle. Banners and flags were and are used in most earthly conflicts among peoples and nations. Christ is our banner to which all other banners must submit. As believers we may have banners to describe our ministry, position and rank in His army, or we may carry particular banners to remind us of certain lessons (such as a banner of faith or banner of love). The banner I beheld in my dream was to accompany me into spiritual battle.

The banner's colors of white and blue are the same as those of the Jewish prayer-shawl (the origin of the colors chosen for the flag of Israel). White speaks of grace and faith which we obtain and hold as Christ imparts them to us. Thus I knew prayer, grace and faith were to be part of the banner I would carry into conflict. The white stripes, being four in number, signify that which is of the earth---four in the Bible often speaks of earthly concerns. Thus we need grace and faith here below to carry on our spiritual walk and warfare. When we cross over into heaven we will need no battle-banners, for all will be peace. The three blue stripes also symbolize grace from heaven, and joined with the four white

stripes make a total of seven. In Scripture seven speaks of perfection and completion. Thus the Lord gives us perfect and complete provision to wage war here on earth and emerge victorious.

The ensign of the two small cardinals refers to God's keeping His words and promises in our day-to-day spiritual walk. He will give us our daily bread---His grace is sufficient. The small size of the birds confirm that nothing is too small for His concern and care. The emblem of the larger cardinal reveals that He will provide and keep His word to us in promises that are large or important---ministries, callings and promises that are of vital and major concern to ourselves and others. Some requests may have been prayed and believed for over a span of years and may appear impossible now. These are no harder for God to answer than His meeting our daily needs.

The rising tide, flowing so smoothly, and the banner-flag spreading out on its surface symbolize that promises carried in faith and by His grace, though roughly tried, will one day become reality and bring forth smoothness. Faith is a battle and a trying one at times, yet it will surely bring forth the desired end.

Let us march forth with the banner of Christ and all other lesser banners provided, knowing we are not fighting in vain but are fighting to win crowns, victories and great spoil. Each battle won will give us new insight into further battles and victories. Let us not fear the giants in the land; let us in faith look at these giants as mere food for battle. Let us take on the strong enemies and spoil their house, there to obtain treasures of darkness.

May God find in His army men and women who are willing and ready to become knights of valor against all spiritual enemies. He is looking for more than footmen; He is looking for spiritual captains, colonels and generals to take possession in His name. The King is waiting and searching for those who will say with faith and obedience, "There are giants in the land, but we are well able with our King's graces to defeat and make them our food!"

## #129 THE DREAM.....

*I see a map of the United States of America over which many lines or markings are drawn. I look closer and observe these lines represent the paths, flights and journeys of cardinals.*

When I ponder this dream I understand I am being led to move to another state to begin another phase of ministry. God is telling me that I will travel to many states (or to all of them). At the time I am not given complete understanding of the literal schedule. The cardinals symbolize that He will keep His words to me as I go out by His will.

The last section of this book will deal with that phase of ministry. I did move to another area of our nation and there began a time of much intercession, waiting and seeking before the Lord. During this period of several months I was being prepared for further instruction from the Lord.

## INTERCESSION FOR AMERICA

After I had moved and settled in my small apartment in a rural town in the Rocky Mountains, I began a period of seeking the Lord. For a few months I received no particular mission or charge from the Lord, so I used the time to pray and wait before Him.

However, on Thanksgiving Day of 1985 I had gone down to the river in the woods to spend some quiet time meditating and talking with the Lord. Because it was Thanksgiving Day I began to pray for our nation and to ask God to bless America. I prayed, giving thanks for His past blessings and mercies to our nation. Soon it seemed that a spirit of prayer rose within me and I surely felt a burden of prayer for America. I prayed earnestly that God would raise up many Christians to intercede and pray for our nation. I sensed a real burden and need for such intercession, knowing a time of judgment would one day come upon this nation if true repentance was not forthcoming. However, I perceived judgment could be delayed or postponed if there were those who would stand in the breach. Having prayed and interceded for quite some time I then ceased my supplications and proceeded home.

Four months passed in which I kept my duty of waiting on the Lord and seeking to find His will for me in this new area. Then one evening as I was praying, the Lord gave me a clear word. He burdened me to begin to pray daily for this nation. State by state---all fifty of them---I began praying for each government and its leaders. Day by day I lifted up true Christians in those states, keying in on those whom God has called and will call to intercession.

For five months I prayed for the nation and its states during which time the Lord gave me several revelations in dreams concerning these states. The Lord was opening my ear to hear His directions and will in these intercessions. Then these verses became so real to me.

“For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction...” (Job 33:14-16 KJV).

Often I would see the names of states spelled out, or maps of states laid out before me. Thus I went to these states in prayer through intercession---asking, pleading and supplicating the Lord to keep extending mercy to our nation, knowing judgment was ripe for the picking.

In those days I was given this dream which I will now share. This was one of several dreams of the same type that I received over the next few years on America.

## #130 THE DREAM.....

*I see lions hunting many people on the nearby shore.*

*The scene changes and I am a servant in the large house of a wealthy family. The owner has a wife and several children who are roaming all about the house as he sits at a great dining table covered with food. He is eating quietly, unaware and unconcerned of the whereabouts of his wife and children. Then I find myself standing at the door of this dining room with its large table. My heart begins to beat so hard that I can hear its pounding above all else. I seem to discern that the lions are in the house, and even know the paths they will take. They are coming to devour this man and his family. I warn the man to take refuge in a safe place. With serious and true concern I urge him and his family to quickly take action to save their lives. They all seem to ignore me and purposely pretend not to hear what I am saying nor to heed my warnings. The lions are fast approaching, and I am able to do nothing for they will not listen to me. I know what will soon happen, and my heart beats violently in fear for them.*

My friends, I understood as I awakened that the dream concerned America---a “house” rich in materialism and abundance of God’s past blessings, and privileged in availability of God’s Word and opportunities for service.

America’s so-called Christian church has been and is presently very worldly, carnal and lukewarm in heart. Not only has our country refused to yield to God, but those who profess to know Him have failed to submit to His lordship. Instead this church has compromised and mixed so well in the world’s systems that it is no longer a lighthouse. America and the American church as a whole are given over to pleasure, self-seeking and godless avenues that are leading to judgment from God.

The church has so adulterized itself with the world’s systems that it appears no different from the world, yet still professes God as its Lord and gives Him much vain lip-service---having a form of godliness and power with no real life from the Lord. Every kind of vice and pleasure-seeking is not only indulged but even encouraged and justified. The lukewarm church is blind and thinks all is well and will be well for all. Christ has no part in this church---He is on the outside knocking for entrance into its deceived heart.

We may indeed have entered a time like Amos the prophet foretold.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12 KJV).

Yes, millions are very busy running from meeting to meeting hoping to hear a word from God, yet, sad to say, will not find it. Oh! There is an abundance of teaching and preaching from the pulpits and airwaves. Few, however, are hearing the words of the Bible and putting them to practical application. Many will starve spiritually not from lack of Bibles or words from God, but from lack of submitting to the Lord of the Bible.

America’s children (its people) are busy about their pleasures, and close their ears and eyes to any interference. Thus the devourer Satan and his legions have taken over their minds and hearts and are destroying them in sin. I must warn, as others called by the Lord must warn and admonish, for if

these people do not turn to Christ and act righteously before Him they will die in their sin and this nation itself will come to nought.

At the end of five months of praying daily for the nation and its fifty states, the Lord gave me a charge or mission. I was informed by Him that

I was to travel to each state capital (and the U.S. capital) and pray in their governmental buildings where possible. Though most of my intercession had been completed, I still was to go in person and pray some short simple prayers. I was given a time period of two years to finish the mission which was to be completed before the 1988 presidential election. During these years much warfare and opposition came in the spirit realm, yet by God's grace and provision I was able to complete my charge as instructed.

On separate occasions I was joined by two Christian friends for my visits to thirty of the fifty-one capitals. Thus I had good fellowship and encouragement, not only the blessing of their presence but their financial blessing also as they were led to cover the necessary costs of food, gasoline and lodging. Other Christian friends were led to provide me with the free use of their telephone long-distance charge cards and monies for vehicle repairs, lodging and airline tickets to Hawaii and Alaska.

The reason for mentioning the above is to show the Lord's faithfulness in providing for my needs that I might accomplish my charge at that time. None of us are islands unto ourselves in the body of Christ. We all minister and are ministered unto, each fulfilling our own callings. Thus we all will share in the rewards of the ministries we encourage and help.

My main prayer and intercession could be summed up in these two requests: First, I was to pray that God would extend time to America, and thus hold off judgment for another period of time. Second, I was to pray constantly that God would stir up His mature and spiritual saints to intercede for their states and nation. My friends, only these have God's ear and can wage effective spiritual warfare against Satan's kingdom. Only mature believers can stand in the gap to plead and move God's hand on earth. When the church travails, spiritual birthings take place and the Lord is moved to call into being what He has planned and purposed. God delights in mercy and would avoid judgment when persons or nations turn from their evil ways unto Him.

The babe in Christ is precious to God, yet he can not wage strong spiritual warfare in these deeper matters. Those who are able to move the spirit realm have the spiritual discernment, knowledge and wisdom necessary to engage in battle. My friends, one spiritual Christian that knows God's will and moves in prayer and intercession is worth thousands of babes as far as effective warfare. The babe will maintain his or her standing before the Lord, but they are not trained and matured to move deeper and do battle with spiritual foes in high places. It is the princes of darkness that hold power over states and peoples and nations that must first be dealt with in the spiritual realm. The prophet Daniel understood this well.

Regardless of God's predictions of judgment, He can delay if people or nations will change their hearts and minds and turn from their sins to Christ. God has stated that, if at any time He purposed judgment for a nation and they changed their course, He would repent of that design. He also stated that, if He had purposed good for a people or nation and they began to do evil, He would repent of the good He had intended to do them. God does not change! A man or nation simply gets off one path that leads to good or evil and proceeds to another path which has its appointed end.

### #131 THE DREAM.....

Another dream came to me in late 1985 in which I was given this:

*I am flying in the back seat of a private plane. I look to see who is piloting the plane and it is Gorbachev, Russia's leader at that time. I am made aware that I am to watch this man's activities and observe his movements.*

Then I did not clearly understand this dream but, since the recent changes in the eastern bloc and within Russia itself, I now understand that Gorbachev was to be a major catalyst in significant world changes. God can and will reveal future matters so that we can make preparations.

Much is moving in world governments today. Much is spoken now of peace and safety, yet we must not forget when peace prevails sudden destruction may come upon the earth. Let us hope that as believers we will be able to discern the signs of our times. Even if the peace is a false peace or short in duration, let us prepare ourselves before the Lord. In so doing we will not be shaken by earth-moving events that one day may cause terror and fear among the nations.

It is wonderful to think of a "catching away" for believers, and we should always be watchful and prepared. However, we need to make sure that our daily walk is one of self-denial and submission to Christ, for then it will not matter whether one is raptured or whether one crosses over by death's river. If we live daily before Christ we will be ready for either. Why, my friends, if one is looking for escape from all those terrible things to come, yet does not walk in the Spirit of Christ, that soul may be in for a disappointing surprise when left behind unprepared!

Yes, my friends, many are talking of a new age and peace for all mankind. One day Christ will bring about such an era, but not before many unpleasant world events take place. Remember, the Jews were looking for the outward kingdom of God to be set up by their delivering Messiah, but they misunderstood that He would come first to suffer and die for the sins of man. Let us not make the same mistake about coming spiritual events. In this present year let us be ready and yet prepare for the coming years. Whether we have months, years or even decades our mission is to be busy about our Master's concerns and occupy till He comes. Thus we can live in peace when gross darkness covers the earth. Yes, His glory will be on us to prepare us to live for Him or to die for Him. It will matter little, for He gives grace to His own and they shall be overcomers in this present evil world.

May God through Jesus Christ the Lord give you perfect understanding of His will. May we each desire and seek Him as our all and all in this life. May His grace and Holy Spirit sustain and keep us in His perfect will. Amen!