

#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.