

#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.