

Glorious Gospel Publication



Editor: Jack Davis
796 N. St Paul * Wichita, Kansas 67203
316-943-4190 or 942-5468
www.gloriousgospel.org
Email: ggospel5@juno.com

Published Monthly, No Subscription Price



Contents:

Thanks Gift

Jack Davis 1

A Good Report

Paul Lynn 4

The Last Days

Anita Clark 5

Romans – Ch. 15:16-24

W. J. Franklin 9

Moderation - Part 6

Doug Delhay 12

Trip to Israel - 2006

Bonnie Richards 16

Watch

Debra Isenbletter 19

Encounters

Corina Medina 23

Thanks Gift



THANKS BE UNTO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

2 Cor. 9:15

Jesus Christ

The greatest of all gifts from the greatest giver. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.” James 1:17 & 18.

God foretold of the gift of his Son in many Old Testament writings. His birth, life work and reason for His coming here, strikes the hearts of those that believe in Him with joy and unspeakable awe. He wondrously reached out to man, in **HIS BIRTH, LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION, INTERCESSION AND RETURN TO HEAVEN AND HIS COMING BACK TO REIGN, FILL OUR HEARTS WITH HOPE AND PEACE AND JOY.**

Thank God for what Isaiah was inspired to write in Isaiah. 9:6 & 7 some several hundred years before. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of

host will perform this.” Rom. 8:32, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

Much of prophecy concerning Israel’s future has been fulfilled, and yet what remaineth is moving so very swiftly upon us. The church is expecting to be taken away soon and the bridal company even sooner.

Most of us fail to grasp what all we are given to be thankful for, take and lay hold of, or make claim upon. Oh, what wonders the Scriptures offer. There is indeed of wealth of love, joy and peace to be realized in the thankful human heart. Let us appreciate and appropriate in daily living, putting to practical use upon a winning course of life. As Paul says in I Cor. 15:10, “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”


“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: **be thankful unto him**, and bless his name.” Psalm 100:4. Good advice. “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and **be ye thankful.**” Col. 3:15. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift, it is precious beyond telling. God so loved that He gave His indescribable, inexpressible, Gift of grace. The greatest Gift keeps on giving, even the Life that keeps on living.

In our appreciation of this giving of God’s grace. 2 Cor. 9:8, the least able are enabled what we allow His grace to work. 2 Cor. 12:9, “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...”

by J. D.

**“...the gift of God is eternal life through
Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 6:23**

God's Gift



He did not use a silvery box,
Or paper green and red;
God laid His Christmas gift to men
Within a manger bed.

No silken cord was used to bind
The gift sent from above.
'Twas wrapped in swaddling clothes
and bound
In cords of tender love.

There was no evergreen to which
His precious gift was tied;
Upon a bare tree on a hill
His gift was hung . . . and died.

'Twas taken down from off the tree
And laid beneath the sod,
But death itself could not destroy
The precious gift of God.

With mighty hand He lifted it
From out the stony grave;
Forevermore to every man
A living gift He gave.

A GOOD REPORT

THE STRENGTH OF MY LIFE

David wrote: “The Lord is the strength of my life.” Ps 27:1. These words took on more meaning in July when I was diagnosed with lymphoma-cancer of the lymphatic system. Treatment was to require twelve rounds of chemotherapy involving five or more hours of infusion each. Midway through treatment it was determined that only six treatments would be needed.

Treatment was not easy. Many days there was hardly any physical strength. These days were spent in bed. He became more and more “The Strength of my life,” even for the most simple things.

The pastors and saints at Grace Chapel, Carbondale, Ks., were much in prayer for us, as were many others. God was ever faithful. Several months later, I’m grateful to say my health is returning. Whether the return of strength is an event or a process, God deserves the glory. “...Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death,” Phil 1:20. That’s the place to which each of us must come.

There is still a ways to go, but God has been faithful and the saints have been so wonderfully supportive, giving us hope for whatever may be ahead.

We appreciate all your prayers and ministry to us. We can joyfully say with Paul: “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.” Phil 1:3.

Paul Lynn

THE LAST DAYS



Anita Clark

“ ...I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more...I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish His kingdom. I will be his father and he shall be my son. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul...And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.” II Samuel 7: 10-16.

There are many references in the Bible concerning the establishment of the David's throne forever. God had a perfect plan in choosing Mary, a direct descendant of King David (Note: Luke 3:23-38, Mary's genealogy). Joseph, who was Jesus' step-father is also a direct descendant of King David (Note: Matt.1). God chose specific people to fulfill His plan for the Redeemer to make His entrance, and fulfill the prophecies. Isaiah 9:6,7, tells us, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder...Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." God has fulfilled, and will yet fulfill His divine will for all future prophesied events.

Jesus Christ will reign upon the throne of His father David. That is yet future. Israel will once again have a king, Christ the Lord, their Messiah. Some teach that Israel has been totally set aside, but Apostle Paul makes it plain that God will again deal

with Israel and establish the monarchy of the Beloved Son of God. He will reign in righteousness, and complete equity. In Revelation 4, we see Jesus Christ taking His throne just before the tribulation of seven years that is soon coming on the earth. We are looking for that time with great expectancy. That is our aim and delight - seeing Jesus, as Job says with our own eyes. We can hardly wait, but we must. We must now keep on doing the will of God for our lives, but at the same time keep on longing for Him. He is our Beloved friend and Bridegroom.

We can see Him working out His divine plan on the earth. He brought Israel back after 2,000 years of exile. That alone should make the unbeliever realize that God's Word is true. Never before in the history of the world, has there been a nation destroyed and sent into exile all over the world, even losing their spoken language, and then coming back to their land and regaining their long lost language. According to top demographers, "For the first time since the first century, there are more Jews in Israel than in any other country, and within 30 years the majority of Jews in the world will be living in Israel." We know that we might not have thirty years until Christ comes and sets up His kingdom. The Lord is drawing them back to their own country. Amos 9:15 says "And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert Makes Concessions – Anything for peace. Olmert has offered a complete withdrawal of troops from Gaza, and dismantling of settlements in the West Bank if the Palestinians will cease fire, and renounce violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and give up demands to allow refugees from the 1948 War of Independence to return to what is now Israel.

Whether they will do this at this time or not, remains to be seen. But, we are close to the time of the treaty with “death and hell (Isa.28:15; Dan.9:27)” which Israel will be willing to sign for peace. Peace will come, but only after the tribulation, when Israel will suffer untold tribulations and sorrows. The Bible says their suffering will be worse than any time before (Dan.12:1). Hamas will no doubt use a cease fire to replenish its arms stock of rockets and other weapons. This war with the Islam is not over; it will continue until finally, the Moslem World will come full tilt against Israel to annihilate them. That is the cry now. Can you see how near we are to the coming of Jesus? The rapture of the bride will take place, then false peace will be proclaimed throughout earth, but soon there will be a terrible war against Israel from the north, Gog and Magog (Ezk.37,38,39). We are so near that time. We are trusting to be ready for that upward call. Are you? You can be? He is making us ready as we yield to His divine working.

Russia Sells High Tech Air Defense Missiles to Iran – Despite outcry from the EU and the US, Russia went ahead with these sales. Russia is causing unrest among its World Trade partners, by its insistence of arming Iran. Russia has been selling arms to Iran for some time. They also, sold enriched uranium to Iran, unheeding the protests from the United States. We know that this alliance with ancient Persia (Iran) just fits exactly in the prophecy. These great signs show us how near the coming of Jesus is. The Bride of Christ will be taken out before the war against Israel of Ezekiel 38,39.

Pope on Delicate Turkish Mission – Despite angry Muslim crowds protesting his arrival, Pope Benedict XVI will arrive in Turkey on Nov. 28, ‘06, to improve relations with the Orthodox Christians, who separated from Rome nearly 1,000 years ago. One of the long-term aims of Pope Benedict is to try to help heal the wounds of the bitter theological differences

that have separated the two groups for so long. The Roman Catholic Church has 1.2 billion followers. This proposed unification and other compromises with other religious groups will finally bring into being one world church. Sounds good to the flesh! Bigger is better, isn't it? Jesus said that narrow is the gate and straight and narrow the path that leads to life in Christ (Matt.7:14).

Let us continue in faith, trusting the working of the Holy Spirit to make us ready to rule and reign with Jesus Christ. He is drawing those who will give their all to Him, and let Him prepare them for that special place as His bride. It is wonderful that the call is still going out, and the preparation is still going on in yielded hearts. He will do the work in you, if you let Him.



BE STILL MY SOUL

Be still, my soul,
And wait for God;
He'll come for you;
He'll not be late.
Though dark the way
The day will
Soon be dawning—
Be still, my soul,
And wait for God.

—Beula Clark

ROMANS

W. J. Franklin

Chapter 15:16-



PAUL'S MINISTRY

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost”—V. 16. Paul was God’s minister to the Gentiles even as Christ was God’s minister to the Jews. Paul was acting for God as a priest to bring the converted Gentiles as an offering or sacrifice. See Isa. 66:20 for a sidelight. See also Numbers 8:11 where the Levites were also offered to God as an offering. The drink offering accompanied the altar sacrifices, so here, the offering up of the Gentiles is sanctified by the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT PAUL BOASTED IN

“I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God”—V. 17. Paul could glory or boast that, even as God had chosen Moses to bear a message to Israel, so He had chosen him to carry a message to the Gentiles. Heretofore, the Gentiles had no message from God, but had to become proselytes of the Jewish religion. Now they have the precious message of grace. The Gentile is no longer an underprivileged proselyte, but a full fledged member of the church of God by simple faith in Christ.

“For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed”—V. 18. Paul had simply stated

the truth of the matter, and he did indeed have a right to boast or glory. However, he did not boast of other men's matters, even as he did not build on the foundations of other men. See 2 Cor. 10:15. Paul boasted only of the things God wrought through him. Because of the mighty signs and wonders, the Gentiles became obedient to the doctrine of the Gospel.

“Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ”—V. 19. With signs to back his claims, to serve as his credentials, Paul was able to convince men that his message was of God. With Jerusalem as a starting point, he had fully preached the Gospel of God unto Illyricum, a place approximately one thousand miles from Jerusalem. We can but marvel at his zeal and constancy. He not only fully preached, but successfully preached the Gospel of Christ. Certainly it is a compliment to those early workers that, in their time, the Gospel went to the known world.

“Yea, So have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation”—V. 20. The word “Strived” carries the thought, to be ambitious, to exert one's self to accomplish a thing, to use one's utmost efforts, or endeavour earnestly. Paul wished to establish his own congregations with the pure message of grace that God had given him. He was not content to water what other apostles had planted. Though “Watering” was, and is, a necessary ministry, it wasn't what God had called Paul to do.

“But as it is written, To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand”—V. 21. By Paul's taking the course he did, Isa. 52:15 was fulfilled. Again, we call attention to the fact that we Gentiles have our own message from God and do not have to become as a Jew to be saved.

PAUL'S PLAN TO VISIT ROME

“For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you”—V. 22. Because the field God gave Paul was so very large, he had not been able to realize a fond desire. That is, to visit Rome. See Acts 19:21; Rom. 1:10. However, he had now preached to the eastern part of the Roman empire so that his thoughts and plans could turn westward.

“But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you”—V. 23. He had no further opportunity nor was he needed to pioneer new fields in those parts, he could leave the watering to other hands. There were no important places in those parts where the Gospel had not gone. This is a marvelous testimony to his evangelistic zeal.

“Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company”—V. 24. There is no sure evidence that Paul ever visited Spain. He went to Rome as a prisoner. We do not have convincing evidence that he was ever released from his Roman prison.

He had hopes of a refreshing time of fellowship with the saints at Rome. He knew many of them. No doubt, many of his converts had found their way to that city, to which all roads led.

to be continued



*God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto
the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
1 Cor. 1:9*

Moderation

Part 6

Doug Delhay

Philippians 4:5 - *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” – Galatians 6:14-15. As we explore the topic of moderation and the statement that **the fact of Christ in us changes everything about us**, we have reached the point where our hearts must be settled on the desire of God to transform us as completely as possible into the new, spiritual being that we are called to be in Christ our Lord. As Paul has unveiled, and as we have been compelled to contemplate, nothing known to man matters so much as the glorious work that God desires to perform in us.

Paul continues to declare his own testimony and logic in Philippians 3:7-9. He summarizes the only appropriate effect that the revealed will of God should have on a Christian’s view of their life and firmly couches it in the doctrine of the two creations. As stated in the verses from Galatians 6 above, what really, only matters is not that we are religious, but that we have a new creation that is born of the Spirit in which the mind of Christ can be formed. The old creation cannot be conformed to the image of Christ and the new creation must be given precedence in all matters in order for the fullness of the life of Christ to be manifest in it. In verse 7, Paul states that the things

that were gain to his old creation caused him loss in the things of Christ. The word “loss” means to experience damage, to injure, or suffer detriment. This verse makes no sense outside of the doctrine of the two creations. Clearly, Paul was stating that what brought him benefit in the matters of the old creation conversely brought him detriment in the new creation. He could not know this or discern this unless he had both natures present at the same time. The old creation with its needs, desires, and demands would of necessity have to be continually held subject to the purpose of God in Christ in the new creation in order for the transforming work of God to be realized in his life.

It is this guiding principle that carried Paul forward into the next verses. *“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:”* Paul’s choice of words reveals that he vigorously deemed the act of knowing Christ in the realm of the new creation to be far superior to any benefit that could be had by the old creation gaining anything of this world. And this conclusion that he had come to was not just something ideological or theoretical, but, as the last half of this verse indicates, was the direct result of having practiced this same principle thoroughly and consistently in the past. In order to win (which is the same word as “gain” in verse 7) Christ, Paul declares that the exercise of giving preference to the purpose of God in Christ over the practice of gratifying the longings of the old creation was a necessary judgment that he had to make. The path to gaining an actual, intimate understanding of the person of Jesus Christ is carved through the continual preference given to the will of God over the compelling interests of the old creation. And if this does not seem extreme enough, Paul goes on to state at the end of verse 8 that he had come to equate the things

that were gain to the old creation with “dung.” This word is used but once in scripture and it refers to that which is to be refused for human consumption, but is acceptable for dogs. This should not be confused with what we now consider to be dog food. It does not refer to a scientifically designed, age and breed appropriate, well-balanced diet for a pampered lap dog. Plainly and simply, it means garbage.

Compared to the “*excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus*” our Lord, the most prime living conditions, income, career accomplishments, friendships, relationships, possessions, public acclaim, or human goodness outside of the direct purpose of God is waste. It is the waste of time, the waste of money, the waste of energy, and the waste of the most precious thing available to mankind, and that is the opportunity to walk with God by faith. As we have considered earlier, the Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. To give our highest priority to the pursuit of the satisfying of the old creation’s fickle lustings or seeking to establish the self-serving appearance of a godly reputation among man (thinking that either could possibly be more advantageous to us than walking honestly before God), is to diminish the holy desires of the Almighty God. There is no middle ground. We will either give ourselves to serve God or garbage.

But Paul’s main emphasis through these verses is upon matters of both being and living right in God’s sight. With his former life as a “Hebrew of the Hebrews” in view, as well as the Spirit-wrought Christlikeness (or “moderation”), Paul declares in verse 9 that it is his utmost desire to be securely nestled in the “*righteousness which is of God by faith*” in Christ. He lays no claim to being made acceptable to God as a result of his own religious endeavors. To be weak in himself and utterly

dependent upon the redemptive work of Christ is a far more assuring fortress for his sin weary soul than the most glorious facade of self-righteousness that he could build through religious endeavor. With a single, discerning look, the best efforts of man are brought to nothing in a moment by the Almighty God unto whom “all things are naked and opened” (Hebrews 4:13). Certainly the Lord fully knows what is wrought by the Spirit and what is “dung.”

As we set Paul’s life before us as an example, we quickly learn that it is not enough just to know what is right, or what is good, or what sound doctrine is. We are brought to understand that we are called to be active participants in those very things one decision at a time. We are called to walk uprightly before God holding the calling of God in Christ before our spiritual eyes as a constant guide. The Lord has ordered our steps and we are constantly being beckoned by the Spirit in the way that we should go. The Spirit rewards our responsiveness to His leading by opening our eyes even further to the glory set before us. We press forward in the calling of God in Christ intentionally, not by a fluke or accident. Ours is a determined direction taken at determined pace driven by a heart determined to please Jesus according to the Spirit’s leading. Like Paul (II Corinthians 5:14-15), the love of Christ compels us to make deep, sincere commitments to the Savior of our souls and His desire toward us in this world. One day we will see with absolute purity of vision how truly glorious our lives in this world were. It will be evident how the riches of this world weren’t worthy to be compared to the true treasures of eternity. We will have no confusion between God and garbage. Do we really have any confusion about it now?



Trip to Israel – 2006

By Bonnie Richards

Election Day in Israel was quiet. There were no incidents, rather the people seemed apathetic about the outcome.

The tour today took us to the Israel Museum and the Shrine of the Book, where we saw the original Dead Sea Scrolls. Next was the Holocaust Museum. It was traumatically graphic with video testimonies from some of the survivors as well as the recounting of atrocities by the German perpetrators themselves. Artifacts, personal journals, letters, jewelry, family heirlooms, mounds of shoes from victims, clothing, artwork, and much more that had been taken from the Jews who were slaughtered was on display. It was a very large museum and became more difficult to grasp the reality of it all as we progressed through. Many people turned around or exited before going very far.

Another large room displayed the names of Children who were killed, while a recording gave the audio (very quietly) of their names. Names are being added as records are received from families involved. The enormity of the holocaust was emotionally draining.

Satan has targeted the Jews for destruction over the millenniums. God had given them great promises and great responsibility. He provided for them miraculously over and over, but their disobedience and lack of faith in Him has cost them untold suffering. **Deuteronomy 28:58-68** foretells the curse of unbelief and disobedience. I'm so glad to know they will have an experience as a nation (made of individuals) who will be born again. They will enjoy a place as the head of the nations. Their Messiah will bring them great prosperity and great peace. This is the ultimate answer to the prayer we have **“pray(ed) for the peace of Jerusalem.”**

We visited the Southern Wall excavations, the Damascus Gate, Lamb's Gate (used by Jesus), and the Golden Gate (which some Jews believe the Messiah will come through). The Western Wall or Wailing Wall is the closest to the site of the Holy of Holies the Jews may come. Because of the restrictions imposed by the Muslims, even this area is being jeopardized. Muslim women patrolled the area to guard against any "profaning" of their holy site. Some of the women in our group were accosted for not having the sleeves of their clothing long enough to be in the area. This occurred in the pavement before the Wailing Wall — where the Jews are "allowed" to pray. Because of Muslim insistence the women have an area separated by a curtain, where they can approach the wall with petitions to leave in it's crevices. The Muslim presence is in every area and they are actively trying to obliterate every vestige of the Jewish heritage in the land. No Muslim will tell you that they have the same God as the Jews.

Next we headed into the desert to the Dead Sea area. It does appear 'dead,' but it is very rich in minerals and a source of great industry for the bordering countries. (One of its many products is potash, so important for ammunition in the world's feuds.) The Dead Sea is the lowest spot of earth, far below sea level at 1,350 ft. deep, 31 miles long and 11 miles wide. In recent years the Dead Sea shoreline has receded very far due to lack of rain and diversion of the Jordan's water to other countries.

We stopped to swim in the Dead Sea. It is true that you cannot sink below the surface, even if you try very hard. The water left your skin feeling very soft, rather than brine-like as ocean water does.

We took the cable car to the top of Masada even though there is a tortuous path called the "Snake Path" which people were climbing. The ruins which have been excavated, tell an amazing story of the Jews in rebellion to Rome after 70AD. (But so tragic an end of the story.) Sitting on a flat 32 acre

mountain top 1,300 ft. above the Dead Sea it had been built to be a palatial fortress for Herod if the Jews rebelled against him. He considered it to be impregnable. It had huge cisterns for water, granaries for people and horses, and elaborate palaces for himself. After his death it became the place the Zealots occupied as they fled from the Romans in 73 AD. Nine hundred sixty men, women and children held out for 3 years using Herod's grain, water and elaborate palace accommodations. The Romans besieged it with 10,000 troops and built a ramp to the top. They finally took it only to find 960 bodies. The Jews had chosen death to slavery. Two women and 5 children were found alive hiding, and told the story of what occurred there.

Because it is against the Jewish culture to commit suicide, the Zealots were not favorably regarded until modern days. Today the oath "Masada shall never fall again" is used when being sworn into the Army of Israel.

Qumran, the area where the *Dead Sea Scrolls* were found contains **hundreds, perhaps thousands**, of caves. God used a Bedouin boy throwing a rock into a cave opening to lead to the discovery of the Scrolls. They contained the book of Isaiah with chapter 40:8 "**The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.**" Again giving proof positive of the truth of Scripture. Finding them at that precise point in time is believed to have been a God-given sign to encourage the people coming back. Copies of almost eight hundred manuscripts were found hidden in eleven caves in cliffs around Qumran.

The *Negev* desert is colorful, fearsome and lovely; the site of many wonders such as the Ramon crater. It is believed to have been created by earthquakes and erosion over many millenniums. The wealth of Strata and fossils draw archeologists from around the earth to study it.

to be continued

WATCH

By Debra Isenbletter

“Therefore, let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.” I Thess. 5:6-7.

Paul is admonishing these saints to “watch” and not to sleep, and the sobering thought is that there are those who are asleep.

The first point about sleeping is who is sleeping. Sleepiness is not a word used to describe the sinner, for he is already “dead in trespasses and sins” - Eph. 2:1. Sleepiness is a word used to describe saints who are not watching, who are unaware of what is going on in the real world. Sleepers cannot see, cannot hear and cannot move, but when they dream, they think they are doing all of those things. It is just the same with sleepy saints, they may not even be aware that they are asleep. Their dreams give a sense of reality to all they do. There may be a lot of activity and they may even think they are serving the Lord, but there is a difference between carnal activity and spiritual activity.

The second point about sleeping is when it occurs. Paul says, “they that sleep, sleep in the night.” Night is a time of darkness, a time when light has departed, a time when people slow down, lay down and finally sleep. It is the morning light that wakes us and energizes us.

The admonition Paul gives is to watch, and it is to saints who are not asleep, and who are not in the night. Paul tells these saints in Vs. 4, “But ye brethren are not in darkness.” Darkness is the absence of light. *They are dwelling in the light*, they are awake and not asleep. *They have received that light*,

walking in that light and walking in full obedience. *They are shining as lights*, as beacons for others to see and in the end they will reflect the fulness of the glory of Christ.

Paul warns of “that day” which is a *day of darkness* and a *day of judgment*. What makes the day dark is that there is a loss of light as the night progresses. During that night there were four time frames or watches beginning at sunset and ending at sunrise. The night watches were divided into the following four watches: 1st Watch: sunset -9:00 PM; 2nd Watch: 9:00 PM-midnight; 3rd Watch: midnight-3:00 AM; 4th Watch: 3:00 AM-sunrise. Those watching watched the light as it departed and sounded an alarm when the next watch began.

In a spiritual sense, what makes the day dark is the loss of light and who is the light in this world? It is the Lord Jesus Christ and it is His saints. John spoke of Jesus and said, “...light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than the light...” - Jn. 3:19. Paul tells the Thessalonians they are “children of the light” - I Thes. 5:5; he tells the Philippians they are to “shine as light in the world holding forth the word of life - Phil. 2:15-16; and he tells the Ephesians they are “light in the Lord” and to “walk as children of light” - Eph. 5:8. It is our light, which is the life of Christ, that hold the darkness back. What will make the day dark is taking the saints (lights) out of this world. Paul told the Corinthians that in the resurrection we will each reflect a glory, either that of the sun, the moon or the stars. We each have different degrees of light and growth that are seen in us as the life of Christ grows. Yes, there will be a glory seen at a later time, but right now there is a glory that is hidden, a light that is Christ in us that is holding back the darkness. What happens when some of that light is removed? It begins to get dark.

There are *watching* saints and there are *sleeping* saints. It is these saints who are awake, who are not in the night that will lay hold of the admonition to watch and be sober. They are

watching during the day, they are watching before the sun sets. They are watching before the 1st watch begins.

These four watches could picture different periods and even different groups of saints during the seven year tribulation period. The tribulation is a time of darkness (night) and there will be degrees of darkness until all light is gone. The question is, what is it that brings on this darkness or absence of light? Night begins with a departure of light, and it is a gradual departure and night ends with the return of light. If the saints are lights in this world (and they are) and if each rank of believers reflects a different degree of light, they we can see what brings on this darkness. It is the departure of the saints. When one rank leaves (translation or resurrection), then there is a loss of light and the next rank wakes up and begins watching. The loss of light, the taking out of that light by translation is a wake-up call that will awaken those that had been asleep. When one rank leaves, light departs, the sleepy wake up and begin to watch and the same pattern follows until all the light is gone.

Paul is writing to a group of saints who are *already watching*, they are not asleep. They are the first group to be watching and they watch while others are asleep. They are watching during the day for the light has *not* departed yet, the sun has *not* set. They are that light that must depart before it begins to get dark. They are those that shine with a sun glory and as long as they are here, the darkness and the night are held back. Remember the first night watch begins at sunset, When the night begins. There will be a group of saints, the Bride, the first rank, the full-covercomers, who will be taken out (by translation or resurrection) before sunset, before the first watch begins, while it is still day. It is *their departure*, the loss of their light which will begin the 1st watch (sunset-9:00 PM) for the sun has set, light or saints have departed. It is the departure of this first group that will be a wake-up call for those left to

watch and they will begin the 1st watch. When they are caught up, others will wake up and begin the 2nd watch and the pattern continues until all the watches are complete.

Though this group of saints, taken out first, may be small in number, they will manifest the greatest amount of light. It is after their departure that the tribulation, the time of great spiritual darkness begins, and the darkness increases as each rank of believer is taken out. During this time “a man of sin” will be revealed, and the world will believe “the lie” - 2 Thess. 2:3,11. It is a time of great deception, of great darkness.

Each rank of believers will reflect a *glory*, a degree of *fruit* and a *fellowship* with the Lord; but the degree of glory, the amount of fruit and the depth of the fellowship is determined by their love for the Lord and their submission to the Lord. Paul describes the glory of this first rank, this group of saints whose departure brings a great loss of light and whose departure begins the first watch and wakes others up. Their glory is the glory of the sun (I Cor. 15:41). One definition for glory, besides just brightness, is the “unfolded fullness of all that Christ is.” This group will fully reflect all that Christ is, they will have come “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13). Their fruit will be 100-fold fruit (Mt. 13:23) or “a full corn in the ear” (Mk. 4:28). All the growth will have taken place, they are not just a blade or a stalk, but there is a complete and full fruitfulness in their lives. This group has overcome because they have held their “first love” and done “the first works” (Rev. 2:4-5). The relationship they have to the Lord is that of His Bride, His wife, who “hath made herself ready.” (Rev. 19:7).

Let us lay hold of Paul’s admonition to “watch and be sober,” to look with longing and love for the Lord’s appearing. Let us watch now, while it is day!

ENCOUNTERS

by Corina Medina

Isaiah 6:1-8, “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.”

Isaiah had an encounter with the **Lord God, the Holy One of Israel**. And how did Isaiah respond? With *humility!* He recognized unworthiness in himself “woe is me for I am undone for I am a man of unclean lips.” He acted with humility, saw himself as unworthy but also acted with willingness, “***Here am I send me.***” Isaiah responded with *humility and willingness.*

In Jeremiah 1:1-10, “The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of

his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month. Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”

Jeremiah had an encounter with the Lord the **source of his strength and his enabler**. He responded with obedience.

Mark 5:1-20 is the story of a very pitiful man. “And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.” He was a demon-possessed man. “And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs, and no man could bind him, no, not with chains because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces, neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.” (He was very self-destructive). “But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.” (Jesus of course cast out the demons). “For he said unto him, Come out

of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, what is thy name? And he answered, saying, my name is Legion for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting and clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him and all men did marvel.”

Here is whom he encountered: Jesus the **Savior, Deliverer and the Restorer**. His mind was restored to him. In Ps. 19:7 you see the perfect restoration of the soul, “The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.” Ps. 23:3, “He restores my soul.” How did He respond? He saw Him as the **Savior and the restorer of his mind**. He responded with *gratitude and a desire to serve Him*. Yet he *submitted* to God’s will in verse 19 and 20 and did what the Lord sent him to do.

more encounters next issue