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He In Us And We In Him

Jesus said, "Abide in Me, and I in you" (Jn 15:4). We need such an experience with our God—He in us and we in Him. "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Ezek 37:27). This experience begins at Calvary. When we are drawn to Calvary, our life becomes a heavenly one and a wonder to all. We have fellowship with Him and He with us. Calvary should change us completely —make us completely dead to the world and the lusts thereof and alive unto God alone.

If we are joined to Him, we are no more people of this world; we belong to heaven. Jesus gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world (Gal 1:4). We must always have the experience of being delivered and separated from this evil world. This is the first experience that should be found in us. Others must be able to testify of this experience in us.

We then come to the experience of revealing Jesus to the world fully. This is the second experience. In this experience we will be found standing with Jesus when going through all kinds of trials and temptations, and we will be found drawing to our side even those who rise up against us. This is the outcome of a close relationship with Jesus Christ. When we go through trials and temptations, the Lord watches and waits for us to come to a close fellowship with Him. So, when we are sorely beset by fiery trials, we should go still deeper into His love. We must renew our love, our faith, our hope, our consecrations, and offer ourselves completely as a sacrifice.

When we renew ourselves, the Lord will work mightily and everyone will be able to see the Lord with us. When Hezekiah ascended the throne, he cleansed the temple thoroughly and offered sacrifices to the Lord. "The hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king...And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation" (II Chron 30:12,13). We should have a deep experience with the Lord if the Lord is to send among us a mighty revival that will draw all men to the Lord through us. This should be our one desire. It is only when we completely surrender our ownselves that His glory will be manifested in us. It is our consecration that reveals God to those around us. And this will cause all people to join us—as in the days of King Asa. "They fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him" (see II Chronicles 15:9).

Let us go to Calvary. Let us feel afresh the great love the Lord has for us. Let the love of God, the love of Calvary flood our hearts, our life. When the love of God fills us completely, we can preserve the experience of clinging on to the Lord in all circumstances. This, in essence is the experience of "He in us and we in Him". o

By Faith

(Sl.No.14)

"They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country" **(Heb 11:14).**

People in the world do not want to leave this world because they do not know what will happen after death. But the people of God "say such things," that is, they confess they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They not only confess it but also live up to this confession. Knowing that the fashion of this world passeth away, they are not conformed to this world. Children of God can keep themselves away from worldliness only if they say such things. The God of heaven considers sin and worldliness equally. In II Corinthians 6:17,18, the Lord says, "Come out from among them and be ye separate..."Again we see in Galatians 1:4 that Jesus gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world. Thus, though we are living in this world, by maintaining a perfect separation and doing the will of God, we can abide for ever. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." So in these days our confession must be the confession of the saints of old because we know that we are of God and that the whole world lieth in wickedness. Jesus also once said, "The prince of the world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."

In Luke Chapter 16 Jesus speaks about a certain rich man and a beggar. That rich man was enjoying the world—not living as a stranger and pilgrim. He must have had no time to think about his future after death because of his riches. His end was very bad—eternal hell. But the beggar lived hating the world. His name is written in the Bible as well as in the Book of Life in Eternity. He received evil things in the world but now he is comforted. Dear reader, we must enter into the Kingdom of God through much tribulation (Acts 14:22). If you live as a stranger and pilgrim in this world, the world may not accept you and you may have to face much tribulation. But God will give you the grace to overcome this world and enter into the eternal habitation. Today, put an end to your love for the world and confess in all places that you are a stranger and pilgrim.

Secondly, those who declare themselves to be strangers and piligrims are seeking a country. That eternal country is prepared by God for them. "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb 13:14). This world which we can see is temporal and the invisible world to come is eternal. About this we read in Revelation 21:1,2: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem." Thus we can come to the conclusion that in Eternity there will be a New Earth, a New Heaven, and a New Jerusalem which includes Zion as we read in Hebrews 12:22. The saints who lived before us sought this country and died in faith.

New Earth **: All those who received only the experience of salvation, those who though they received the Holy Spirit did not wholly obey the doctrines given in the church and get ready for the Coming of the Lord, and those who are not worthy to enter into New Heaven, may be seen here. Here we can see the thief who died on the cross with Christ**

and also the Jews who are sealed for the Millenial Kingdom and their descendants. They will be led by the light emanating from New Jerusalem.

***New Heaven*: All the Old Testament saints, the martyrs of the Grace Period who do not make the Bride of Christ, and the martyrs of the Tribulation Period will be in this place.**

***New Jerusalem*: Here, the perfected believers and the servants of God perfected according to the standard of Zion will dwell with God filled with the glory of God. Revelation 21:3 says, "I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, ``Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God." That is why we read in Revelation 21:10 that, that great city, the holy Jerusalem is descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. The triune God will be with these saints throughout eternity. New Jerusalem is the best position one can attain in all Eternity.**

Dear child of God, as you are living in the Grace Period, by the grace God is giving you every moment you can go to the best place in the Kingdom of God. It's about this that Jesus said,...I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself: that where I am there ye may be also." Our Lord Jesus has entered into that Most Holy Place as a forerunner so that we may also follow His steps. Daily seek that blessed place confessing you are a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. o

Need, Greed and Deed

The 63rd Psalm was written when King David had fled to the wilderness of Judah, when his son Absalom attempted to replace his father as king of Israel (see title). The contents of the psalm however, display the qualities of a mature child of God, reacting favourably in adversity, fighting the "good fight", so to say.

Referring to the desert as a dry and thirsty land in the psalm (vs1), David however speaks of another thirst that superseded the thirst for water and the hunger for food in the desert—it was a thirst for God—my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee (vs1). Even when water is the immediate need, his soul expresses its longing for God! This indeed is amazing.

David was provided with sumptuous delicacies even in the wilderness by friendly allies (II Sam 17:28,29). This scripture also states that they were hungry and thirsty. But for David, God was his priority. God was his first concern in the morning (vs1), and his final concern in the night (vs6). What is our chief concern?

We are living in a time when thousands of prayer requests are pouring into churches expressing the increasing needs of people. Money, job, marriage, promotion, studies, healing, vehicles, houses, lands are only a few of the many needs of people today. These needs only show the wilderness they are in. While God is not so heavenly minded as to not supply our earthly needs, we must also check ourselves in the following—(i) Is my need actually a need, or is it greed? (ii) Even if the need is genuine, is God placed above it?

We read of an occasion in the Scriptures when the Israelites flew upon the spoil they obtained (I Sam 14:32). This is an expression of greed. What are we trying to do when we ask God for various things? Let us not jump to say that it is really a need. Let us examine our cunning, erring hearts. It might be greed disguising itself as a need. We may be wanting that something because others have it, or because it looks good, or because it is there in the market, or because what you have now is outdated, or because it might make you richer and hence make you feel secure. All this can be classified as greed, as flying upon the spoil.

Secondly, even if the need is genuine, our soul must rightly thirst for God above everything else, for He is our greatest need. Let us humbly acknowledge the fact that God is often set aside in our hearts when our other needs come into focus. These other needs become our chief prayer, our chief obsession. This is not the way of a Christian. He who has Christ has all else that he needs. He who has not Christ has nothing.

There is another lesson that we learn from David's life in this occasion. He prayed for God's power and glory to be manifest in the wilderness, just as he has seen it in God when he was in the sanctuary (vs2). He was linking his life with God in the sanctuary with his day-to-day life.

There is a sad cleavage between our church life and our practical life these days. The power and the glory—the visions, the revelations, the anointing and the presence of God that we experience at church every week, the word of God, the instructions and the warnings we receive from God every week seem to be partitioned and privatized to the church premises itself. The glory and the power is not seen. So church has become a source of some irrelevant philosophical ranting, while our world life is typically worldly. The theories of church sermons are not carried in the deeds of our daily life. So our deeds continue to be plainly worldly. Look at our business transactions—in methodology, in tactics and in content—we are typically world-trained, not Word-trained.

It is time we asked the Lord pardon and seek Him, thirsting for Him as David did. It is also time to ask the Lord to rectify our practical lives, our deeds, as David asked the Lord for the power and the glory of the sanctuary to be seen in his practical life. That indeed will be a life pleasing and acceptable to God. o

Pastor Don Spiers—A Shining Life

(Serial No.46)

"I will fear no evil"

Pastor Don had been through all kinds of situations and problems, and had proved God could be trusted to keep that which is committed to Him. He was a good soldier of Christ out in the battlefield, like a warhorse that has no fear of the noise of the battle. He says, "Many times I've been through wars. Thousands of bullets were whizzing past my ears, bombs were exploding, and people falling dead all around me, but I had no fear at all. For He hath said, `I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.' Once, they dropped a bomb right where I was. But it was `Hallelujah! Praise You, Jesus!' all the time."

When he went to Malaysia and Singapore for the first time with Pastor Freddy in 1969, there was much trouble in that land. The Muslims used to cut up the Chinese and lay their corpses on the streets. None of the believers came to church for three months. Pastor Freddy and Pastor Don went from house to house encouraging the believers. Seeing their bravery, one by one the believers started attending services.

Once the editor of a magazine went to Pastor Don and expressed his reluctance to publish a rather candid article, fearing the government's reaction to it. Pastor Don told him that fear should not hinder the ministry of the Lord. "After all, God has called us to pour out our life as a drink offering. We must be ready to die for the truth," he told him. This dispelled the fear in that brother's heart, and he boldly published the article. He vowed never again to think of compromising on the deeper truths, and decided he would do all he could to send the apostolic doctrines and truths to as many parts of the world as possible.

In this sermon Pastor Don shares how we can trust the Lord to "keep" us at all times, in all circumstances—financially, materially, physically and spiritually.

Jude verses 16_21 concerns the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." These verses tell you how to prepare for His Coming—not by buying stocks and bonds, not by buying gold and silver, but by praying in the Holy Ghost, building yourself on the most holy faith, and keeping yourself in the love of God.

The Bride of Christ is waiting for the Bridegroom to come. We're not concerned about the stock market and the price of gold. We're concerned about the clouds opening and our Lord Jesus coming. And until that day, He will take care of us. The Psalmist says, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death; Thou hast kept my feet from falling and mine eyes from tears." You can trust God in the worst of times. *I've been around this world for fifty years, very often not knowing anybody, not having any money, without any protection. I have been threatened by knives and swords, I've had guns stuck in my front and in my back, but I've never known fear.* Why should we be afraid when the Lord is with us? There are so many troubles all around so much injustice and iniquity, so much suffering. But with the mind of Christ we can meditate on heavenly things, and oh, what peace and joy that gives!

***When I was a missionary in Argentina, I got caught right in the middle of a revolution—airplanes, machine guns and army tanks all around. According to one unofficial account 10,000 people were killed around me.* The Bible says, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." We have nothing to fear because God will keep us. "Return unto your rest, O my soul, for God has dealt bountifully with you." That was written by David who went through all kinds of war.**

At one time when I was in a Muslim country I started distributing tracts. A group of policemen with long curved swords came and started shouting at me in Arabic. I smiled and gave them some tracts. And while they were trying to read them, God just had me disappear. And once in Argentina also, I was surrounded by a group of soldiers with machine guns. They were shouting something in Spanish. (I couldn't speak Spanish at that time). I smiled and gave them a tract each and while they were reading the tracts, I again disappeared. When we're doing the work of God, and when we are being witnesses unto Him, not a hair of our head shall perish, because God keeps us as the apple of His eye. Nothing can touch us, except it touch the very eye of God—until we've completed our work on earth.

II Timothy Ch.4 was written by the apostle Paul who went through many kinds of trials and tribulations. He had been on the sea and in great storms. He had also spent time in prison. People were falling on the left hand and on the right hand. He speaks of a time when even his co-workers had forsaken him. "No man stood with me, but all men forsook me...notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known..." (vs 16,17). Beloved, even if everybody forsakes you, the Lord will not forsake you. "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom" (vs 18).

We're not afraid of poverty—we have laid up our treasures in God. And He pays with great interest; He will pay throughout Eternity. That's where you are to make your investments—because where your treasure is, that's where your heart will be. Beloved, God *can* keep you and God *will* keep you. Nothing can separate you from the love of God. If you love God with all of your heart, and soul, and mind and strength, neither life nor death, neither riches nor poverty, neither fame nor famine, can separate you from God.

During a time of civil war in Sierra Leone, God wonderfully delivered our people in the capital city. God provided for His own, and no one was killed and no one starved to death. And they had a great revival—many, many hundreds of people came and were saved, and received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Two of our faith homes in the interior were quite cut off for many, many months. They were going through great persecution there, but in spite of all the threats, God preserved our people, and there too they were having a good revival. When the war came to Boe, an important city there, almost everybody fled the city. A neighbour of the faith home who remained was killed. Those who went out into the jungles, died from being bitten by snakes and poisonous insects. Our workers did not leave. Twice the rebels came into the faith home. The workers received them graciously and they left without violence. Then when the people started coming back into the city they had a revival there. Though hell had broken loose in that country, God was keeping His people and using them for His glory.

The biggest problem old people have is fear—fear of tomorrow. You have money saved up for your retirement, but you're afraid it won't be enough; you're afraid to spend it. It's a miserable condition. Some insurance company recently came telling me to buy a new life insurance policy. When I get to 75, I must buy another, when I get to be 80, I am to buy another, and when I get to be 100, I should get another! See, the whole thing is contrary to the Word of God. "But what's going to happen to me in my old age?" I'll tell you what will happen. God will take care of you. "I have never seen the righteous forsaken," the Psalmist says.

Years ago I talked to some young people in Australia. They were graduating from school, and they were troubled—What to study? What degrees to get? What job to get? "Pastor, pray for us. We don't know where the best economic advantage lies. I gave them a scripture that has been my guide all through my life—Proverbs 3:5,6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." When I went to Australia some twenty years later many, many of those people came to me, and I have received several letters since—"Brother, thank you for giving us Proverbs 3:5,6. We stopped trusting in our own wisdom. And we put our trust in God. God works in strange ways, but now as we look back, it's wonderful. God has wisely and carefully led us. And now we have confidence. We're not afraid of

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the future. We know that our God will be our guide even unto death, and we shall lack no good thing." My God shall supply all your needs out of His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel"

(Rom 16:25). God is able to establish you, rooted and grounded in Christ. Jesus said the winds will blow, and the waves beat on your house but if your house is founded on the solid rock, Christ Jesus, that shall stand. But if founded on the sand, just a little bit of shaking and the whole thing will fall. Christ is able to stablish you according to my gospel—according to the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the preaching of the suffering of Jesus, according to the revelation of the mystery. Yes, this is a mystery. And the wise people of this world cannot see it.

"Unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless
before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude vs24). In these last days there's a great falling away. But Christ is able to keep us from falling. He holds us in the palms of His hands. He said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me...they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand" (Jn 10:27-29). When we follow the voice of our Shepherd, we are safe.

"I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim 1:12). Every day we should commit our lives to the Lord Jesus. "Lord, I give You my heart, my mind, and my body. I give You my job and my money. I give You my weaknesses, my sufferings, my trials, my problems." When you commit everything to Christ, you will have peace and security. He always causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus.
Our wisdom now, is to know how to depart from iniquity, how to discern the times in which we are living. We are not ignorant of the devices of Satan. And we must know how to keep ourselves. God will keep us, if we keep ourselves—keep ourselves in the love of God, in the Word of God, in prayer, in the fellowship of the saints. In so many places the Psalmist says he keeps himself from the enemy. He hides himself from the enemy. We too must keep ourselves.

"God is faithful, by Whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ" (I Cor 1:9). Yes, God is faithful. No soul that ever put his trust in God was ever put to shame. None of those who trust Him wholly will be left behind at His Coming. Millions and millions are leaving the faith, but beloved, do not fear; it won't come nigh those who're trusting in God. o

Hiding In The Stronghold

It's a life fraught with perils and troubles that ours is.

So the Lord has many "strongholds" for us where we may

hide ourselves till our Morning.

The Holy Scriptures enjoin us to take heed to many things in our lives. The life of David is an apt illustration of one important facet of our spiritual life of which we have to take heed. We should take heed to be in hiding all the time. After being anointed king of Israel, for a certain period of time David had to be on his guard and be in hiding, lest evil pursued him and overtook him. Saul was hounding his life. However, because of Jonathan's intercession and the covenant between them, David escaped with his life. Jonathan counsels David saying, *"Now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself"* (I Sam 19:2). This had David to do in order to escape Saul's hand and to keep out of harm's way. There are two aspects that play a significant role in the life of every child of God— a Saul and a David. Saul signifies our flesh and David, our spirit. The spirit and the flesh war against each other (Gal 5:17). Saul tried to prevail over David when he knew that the latter had won the hearts of all Israel. In our lives too, we should not let
the flesh overtake the spirit. If we are to escape the hands of Saul, we should take heed to hide ourselves in the Lord.

Again, Saul can be compared to the old man and David to the new man in us. The old man has been crucified (by way of repentance and confession of sins with a determination to forsake them once and for all), dead and buried into the death of Christ through water baptism. Now by the baptism in the Holy Spirit we are made new creatures in Christ (II Cor 5:17). Though we live in this old body, we have to put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col 3:9,10). We should not allow any of the old natures to prevail in us. We are a people who go on from newness to newness. The Lord has removed the old heart from us and has given us a new heart. The ministry God has given us is the New Testament ministry. New Jerusalem will never grow old. All of Eternity will be always new. We should take heed to hide ourselves in the Lord lest the fallen natures of the old man destroy the new man formed in us by the Holy Spirit.

Saul may also be taken as a type of our self-will and David, a type of God's will. Saul was rejected by God because he did his self-will. He forced himself to offer the burnt offering and justified his act of disobedience to pass for an instance of prudence and piety (I Sam 13:12). Further, he disobeyed God in the matter of completely destroying the Amalekites. Saul did not do what he was expected to do but did that which he was not supposed to do. However, David was accepted of God because he did all the will of God and was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). He was chosen in Saul's stead. When we do the perfect will of God, we become people after God's own heart. The servants of God too are required to be shepherds after God's own heart, possessed with knowledge

and understanding to feed the people of God.*To mortify the deeds of the flesh and to live for Christ, we need to live a hidden life*. "My

father Saul seeks to kill thee", was what Jonathan had told David and counselled him to hide himself. Even so we should take heed to hide ourselves in the Lord that our old man with his self-will may not destroy the new man in us. When we minister to the Lord, we must be hidden. The more we are used by the Lord the more we should be hidden. We must decrease and the Lord must increase in us.

***To be kept in the plan of God, we need to live a hidden life*. Such a hidden life begins in us when we are dead and buried into the death of Christ in water baptism. "Our life is hid with Christ in God"(Col 3:3,4), says St.Paul. Only those who live hidden in**

Christ will appear with Him in glory. Sin, worldliness and the devil cannot harm those who are hidden in the Lord.*Jonathan asks David to hide himself till the morning*. "Morning" refers to the Coming of the Lord. If we remain faithful to our calling and election, taking heed to ourselves and to the doctrine and preserve the experience of being hidden in the Lord till the morning, we will surely be found ready for our final salvation, the redemption of our body.

In I Samuel 20:5 *we find David seeking Jonathan's permission to hide in the field in order to escape the hands of Saul*. There is a protection afforded us in our spiritual life if we are hidden in the field. When the birth of Jesus was announced to the shepherds, they were keeping watch over their flocks by night in the field (Lk 2:8). "Field" shows the fellowship of the church. It is in the field that sowing and harvesting takes place. The Lord has brought us into His field for harvesting. Our ministry of harvesting is the ministry of perfection. Our ministry is to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (Col 1:28). This ministry takes place in the true church of God where God has appointed shepherds to watch over us (Heb 13:17). So we have to submit ourselves in loving obedience to them. We are secure in the guidance, instruction, correction, reproof and the chastisement meted out to us by them (Psa 141:5). Our shepherds watch over us and guide us by day and by night, in times good and bad and in all trials and temptations encountered. So we should take heed to hide ourselves in the field, in the church of God.
To Elijah the Lord said, *"Hide thyself by the brook of Cherith that is before Jordan*" (I Kgs 17:3). This instance denotes a life of faith. Elijah hid himself in faith by the brook and God fed him there. Ravens brought him flesh and bread. For God to work out the impossible we must hide ourselves in the faith life God has given us. Only those who are consecrated can live a faith life. Faith life is a mystery. It is a life fraught with sufferings but there is a great joy in the midst of such suffering. A life of faith and a life of suffering are correlated and in such a life, we are given a great protection. If we have a mind to choose the path of suffering, the greatest suffering can become our fullest joy. No murmuring or complaining can escape our lips. We should hide ourselves in the life of suffering. It is up to us to choose such a life. Jordan signifies a life of "suffering and of death". While passing through the Jordan we are preserved because the priests bearing the Ark of God stand in the waters of the Jordan on our behalf.

Isaiah 26:20 reads, "*Enter thou into thy chamber, hide thyself and shut the doors"*. Entering into the chamber and shutting the door speaks of our prayer life. We must be hidden in our prayer life. Praying saints will always be preserved by the power of God. The main purpose why Jesus ordained His disciples is that they might be with Him (Mk 3:14). If we are a praying people God will hide us. All the saints of God hid themselves in the life of prayer. Daniel was one such person. Even when he knew that the writing was signed against him, he went to his house and his windows being opened

towards Jerusalem, he prayed three times a day. Windows speak of the vision the Lord has given us. When we open the windows, we see the habitation that God is preparing for us. When we renew our prayer life our vision of Zion and New Jerusalem will be renewed. The roaring lions could not devour Daniel. We should hide ourselves in the Lord by spending time in fervent prayer. Fervent prayer strengthens our inner man, breaks the devil's power and safeguards us against the manifold dangers of life.

In Isaiah 2:10, we read, "*Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust.*" This rock is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Dust" speaks of a repentant, broken heart. Job says,"I

repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6). We should not lose the broken heart which God has given us. A broken heart is a sensitive heart that knows its own state. A broken heart is a humble heart which helps us to realize our sinful, worthless self. When we keep our broken heart we will be hidden in the Lord. "Dust" also signifies our humility. When Abraham was pleading with the Lord to spare the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, he feared that he was unworthy to be engaged in conversation with the Lord and so instantly humbled himself saying, "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes"(Gen 18:27). God can preserve us if we hide ourselves in the life of humility. God protects the humble, gives great grace to them in their paths of humiliation and raises them to glory.
"*Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings"* (Psa 17:8), King David prays. "Under His wings" is a place of safety and rest and comfort. Here we are sheltered in God's care and His faithfulness towards us. When Ruth came into the land of Judah, she came trusting under the wings of the Lord God of Israel and to be sure she must have had a sense of Jehovah's care over her as she came in. If we put our whole trust in the Lord, we will find deliverance and rest and joy and greater blessedness than words can express. However, despite the comfort and safety provided us under His wings, there is darkness all around us. When sorrows and trials of life close in upon us, when things seem the blackest and the going is hardest, it is then that we should say like the Psalmist "He shall cover me with His feathers, and under His wings will I trust."

In Deuteronomy 32:11,12 Moses uses the metaphor of the eagle's tenderness and care of its young to describe God's kindness and concern for His own. The eagle's stirring up of the nest, fluttering over her young, spreading abroad her wings—all speak of how God goes before us to teach us and lead us in ways where His own purposes of wisdom and blessing would be manifested. None among the birds of the air can surpass the eagle in speed of flight. Even so, God is swift in delivering those hidden under His wings from the many calamities and turmoils of life. Truly, God is above our cares, our trials and our needs!

In the hiding place of God we experience God's faithfulness, and His tender care towards us, and when morning breaks, we shall be caught away with Him into glory. o

A STUDY On JOSEPH'S LIFE

(Serial No.59)

(Contd. from Sept'09 issue)

"And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house" *(Gen 43:17).*

THE GENTLE FORCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The ruler of Joseph's house did exactly as commanded. The ruler of his house can be compared to the Holy Spirit. He brought those people into Joseph's house. If Joseph stands for Jesus, Joseph's house is the house of God or the church. At the instruction of Joseph, the ruler of the house brought the men to Joseph's house. One day we were brought to the house of God because of the urging of the Holy Spirit. Unless the Holy Spirit draws us, none of us can come to the house of God. In the New Testament, we read of a man called Simeon who came into the temple by the urging of the Holy Spirit (Lk 2:27).

Joseph told the ruler of his house, "Bring these men home." It was not a plea or a request; it was a command. Some of us were stubborn people. But the Holy Spirit, at the command of the Lord, caught hold of us and brought us to the house of God. Some of us were not willing converts. Some of us were not willing to be changed. But the grace of God has a gentle force. None of us has come to the house of the Lord on one's own. We have all been gently forced by the Holy Spirit.

The ruler of the house would have observed earlier how Joseph called the men as spies, spoke roughly with them, put them in the ward, etc. But now, he was inviting them to his house and a great banquet was prepared for them. The ruler could have wondered at the change in Joseph's attitude. But still, the ruler obeyed him. This ruler can also be compared to the servants of God who are guided by the Holy Spirit. A true servant of God is one who obeys whatever Jesus tells him to do.

"And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses" *(Gen 43:18).*

WRONG IDEAS ABOUT GOD

The men were afraid to go to Joseph's house. Why? They were afraid because they thought they were going to lose everything. They thought that they were going to lose their money and their donkeys. That was what they feared. Some are afraid to come to the Pentecostal church for fear of losing all the pleasures of the world. But our ``Joseph'' has prepared an eternal and a royal banquet for us in His house. Fatted calves were slain and everything was made ready for them in Joseph's house.

They were afraid that the governor would take them as slaves. Why? They had sold Joseph as a slave and they were therefore, now afraid that they would be sold as slaves.

What we sow, we shall reap. But when we reap, it will be a hundredfold. If you have cheated somebody, you will always have a fear that somebody may cheat you. If you have deceived somebody, you will fear somebody may deceive you. If you have persecuted or harmed anybody, you will be afraid that the same will be meted out to you. What do we read about Cain? Cain killed his brother. Afterwards, he was always haunted

by the fear that somebody might kill him. In fact, he told God, ``Everybody (not somebody) is after me to kill me"(Gen 4:14). There were only a few people on the earth at that time. But he was afraid. So, when you have a guilty conscience, or a hidden sin in you, the reflection of that sin will be seen in your life. That is why, it is very important that we be forgiven of our sins and be cleansed.

Joseph's brothers had a very wrong opinion about the governor. Joseph was a great governor in the Egyptian Empire. He was next to the king. So he was holding a high position. But what were these brethren saying? They said that he was seeking occasion against them to fall upon them and to take them for bondmen, and their asses too. Now, their asses were coming from a famine-stricken land. So, these donkeys must have been only skin and bone. But here were these brethren, afraid that the governor was going to take away these donkeys! How foolish they were! Like the asses, they had no understanding! (Psa 32:9). They could not understand the mind of Joseph. Sometimes, we are like that. Like these brethren, some- times, we also have a very shallow and wrong idea about our Joseph. We do not understand how much our Jesus loves us and cares for us. Just like these men, we think that the Lord is going to take away our comforts, job, health, etc. Till Joseph revealed himself to them, this sort of unnecessary fear continued in their hearts.

There can be some sins that we keep in our hearts (it may be bitterness, or some carnal nature), which will cause us to have wrong ideas about our Lord. You will find God to be like the hard governor of Egypt. But child of God, there is only one reason for all this. There are some areas in your life that you do not allow God to touch and cleanse. We may be born-again Christians, Spirit-filled Christians, but in some areas of our life, we may be *touch me nots*. God has to, therefore, visit us in these areas through trials. o

- **What doyou think?**

Critics of the Bible try to point out a contradiction by saying that there are two different

genealogies of Jesus in the Bible (Matthew 1 and Luke 3). But it is obvious that Matthew 1 contains the genealogy through Joseph and Luke 3, His genealogy through Mary. The point to note is that Luke, in order to maintain the `male element' of his genealogy, replaced Mary's name with Joseph by an explanatory "as was supposed" within brackets.

God's Word is void of errors. Every apparent error has an explanation. So read it with the assurance that it is God's Word.

You Are A Cup

Alex's mother one day discovered some trash among Alex's books and files. She thought up a way to show him the effect reading junk would have on his life. The next day, when dining together, she asked Alex to serve everyone water. She took down some cups stacked in the shelf and began to hand them to Alex one by one. When Alex finally turned to take a cup to fill for himself she handed him an unwashed one from the sink. "But mother, that's filthy! You don't want me to drink out of that, do you?" Alex blurted out. "Of course not,

Alex," replied his mother calmly, "but since you don't seem to care what kind of stuff you put into your heart and mind, I didn't think you'd much care what you put into your stomach, either." Alex got the message. He went up to his room, and quickly gathered up all the trash and made a bonfire of them.

Young child of God, you are a cup; your heart is a cup, your mind is a cup, your life is a cup. Just as one cannot pour water into a dirty cup, if your "cup" is defiled, the Lord cannot pour His choice blessings into you; you cannot be of any worth to the Lord, of any use for any "good work".

The Lord has precious things to fill your life with. He wants your "cup" to be full and running over with "good treasure", with "good matter" (see Matthew 12:35; Psalm 45:1). There's His *peace*, the peace that passes understanding that He wants to keep in our heart and mind, to keep our heart and mind (Phil 4:7). He wants to pour His *love* into our heart—so we may always have a bright hope (Rom 5:5). He also wants to fill us with His *joy* by speaking to us (Jn 15:11)—to sweeten our wearisome life. And He has His *laws* to put in our hearts and minds—He wants the Bread that can nourish our lives and the lives of the famished millions around us to dwell in us richly (see Hebrews 8:10; 10:16 & Colossians 3:16). We are also to be vessels holding the excellency of His *power* (II Cor 4:7). There's much more the Lord has for us, but the Lord cannot put any of these treasures into soiled vessels, can He? "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour", says the Word (Eccl 10:1). Little specks of impurities would do to contaminate all the good things in your life, to spoil the pure joys and pleasures you can have in the Lord's presence, to cut you off from all the special favours He has for you.

The Lord has a beautiful plan for each of our lives. But He cannot carry it out without our consenting to it, without our yielding ourselves to it. So the Lord first seeks to reveal to us His grand plan, the "mystery of His will", the "good pleasure of His will". Paul says we are to be "*filled with* the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work" (Col 1:9,10). But we cannot, of course, if our mind is not clean and pure. And the Word of God says, ``the Lord is able to make all grace abound toward us so that we may abound unto every good work'' (II Cor 9:8). But for us to be filled with His grace and be "prepared unto every good work", we need to be "purged and sanctified" vessels (see II Timothy 2:20,21). You may be a vessel of gold or a vessel of silver, endowed with many different gifts and talents, but you cannot suit the Lord's noble purposes if you allow into your life things that taint your heart and mind.

The devil knows all this. So he is trying to get his slop, his garbage, into our hearts and minds. He has made stocks of pornographic material plentiful and easily accessible to all. He has managed to pollute much of the world's mass media. He has invaded the music world. And in many places he has even fiddled with school curricula. So dear youth, it's a very corrupt world you have stepped into. Every kind of evil imaginable is at your eye gate and ear gate seeking entrance into your heart and mind. Have you let any in?

Review your reading material, your pastimes, the kind of people you keep company with, the places you frequent, the music you listen to, and banish every APPEARANCE of evil from your life. Don't spare anything that isn't ALTOGETHER good. Keep a careful watch at the gates of your heart and mind.

Check every impure thought, every impure look, every impure desire. Then you shall be a "vessel unto honour", a cup of blessing.

A Sound Heart

There are millions of people in the world today with diverse kinds of heart diseases. We are hearing everyday about "heart-attacks," "heart-failures," and such like. In their pursuit to maintain a healthy heart, people resort to dieting, exercising, etc. But still heart diseases prevail in human lives. The state of our flesh (body) is in accordance with the state of our heart, according to the Holy Bible: "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" (Prov 14:30).

In this verse we see one of the strongest enemy of a sound heart and thereby causing maladies in the flesh—envy. Envy in the heart can go deep down into our physical system bringing rottenness to the bones. "Rottenness" is simply "decay." Many today are affected with a disease called "bone-cancer." This is nothing "but rottenness" in the bones. What is the remedy? Keep your heart sound by living a life free of envy. A sound heart is a healthy heart. Envy is a common vice found in and among human beings. This is closely related to material prosperity. When one person is blessed materially, the other one is envious of him. Look at the terrible results when the Philistines envied Isaac. Isaac was indeed blessed by the Lord and he became very great (Gen 26:12,13). But the Philistines envied him. They stopped the wells of Isaac's father and filled them with earth (Gen 26:14-16).This is the same thing we are also doing, when we keep envy in our hearts towards our brethren. We may not physically react as the Philistines had done, but in our spirits we do the same thing. We are wishing some bad to happen to the other party who is more blessed by God than we are. Remember, our envy is not against our neighbour, but primarily it is against God, because it is the Lord who blesses another. When Rachel envied her sister due to her barrenness, she was, in fact, bitter against God. God is not the loser, but we are, because envy is affecting our spiritual and physical health. Envy spreads as cancer all over our system sending its bitter roots all the way into our bones bringing rottenness therein. The evil worm of envy is no respecter of persons when it comes to sending its victims to hell. The evil of envy is lurking among godly families and religious circle as well.

Those who harbour envy in their hearts often think that they are the "winners." Not at all. Look at the story of Joseph and his brethren. Who were the losers? It was not Joseph, but his brothers. They paid a bitter price at the end. Their envy could not impede God`s plan concerning Joseph. Yes, momentarily they felt the winners. But better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof. Are you a person filled with envy like one of the brothers of Joseph? In your heart you know for sure the other person is going to be more blessed than you are going to be blessed. Maybe, you are thinking, in the future that person might be given some leadership role to which you would have to submit to. That envy is killing you. You are using all your "resources" to stop that person, by maligning, falsely accusing him to your seniors, criticizing, etc. Dear friend, know this; you are going to be the loser here on earth, and much more in Eternity. Therefore drop that ugly, deadly weapon of envy at the feet of Jesus, and receive a sound heart from Him, lest that envy bring eternal rottenness deep down even to your bones. Envy comes from the devil: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not...For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (Jms 3:14-16).

When others receive equal spiritual gifts as we have or even more than we have, it would be a noble nature if we can rejoice, instead of being envious. Only the meek is able to display such nobility. We read about Moses the man of God, who was the meekest of all the men during his time. But we see this beautiful trait in him—a life free of envy. When Joshua, the loyal disciple of Moses wanted him to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying, Moses, the meek wanted others to be blessed as he was (Num 11:27-29). What nobility! This is meekness in its "full bloom!"

When we see others are blessed equally or more than as we are, let us know it is because God has loved them, and in turn let us also love them, instead of being envious of them. The righteousness of the Bride of Christ should exceed that of Moses and the prophets of the Old Testaments. If Moses in the Dispensation of Law was able to display such envy-free life, we who are of the greatest of all dispensations—Grace— will be able to do much more than that.

A small problem of envy? Look how God rewards the people who are envious: "They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram. And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked" (Psa 106:16-18). Some were swallowed up alive by the earth while a fire was kindled among others. What a terrible judgment! This envious company were given the same judgment which would be given to the Antichrist and the false prophet—going alive into eternal doom! Let this be a warning to all those who work against the leaders of the Church! The Lord treats the "envy in the camp" (in the Church) very seriously, because it is one of the most terrible vices mentioned in the Bible: "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" (Prov 27:4). None can stand before a person who has sold himself to envy. It is saturated even deep into his bones.

It was because of their envy that the chief priests delivered Jesus to be crucified (Matt 27:18; Mk 15:10). Are you a person creating great "uproar" where you are? You are a man

given to envy (Acts 17:5,6). Look at the way this terrible envy manifests its ugly nature in human lives! Envy finds its place in the people who do not retain God in their knowledge, and in those who are of a reprobate mind (Rom 1:28-31). In the Book of Galatians 5:21, envy is closely mentioned along with "murder". Yes brethren, envy can lead to murder. We have seen enough of that in our life-time.

Envy may be called one of the armours of darkness. We as the children of light are called to put off the armours of darkness and to put on the armour of light, because the night is far spent and the day is at hand… Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness...not in strife and envying (Rom13:11-13). If we love our neighbour as ourselves, we will not think or work any ill toward him (Rom 13:10). Further, envy is one of the natures found in those who are "babes in Christ" (I Cor 3:3) and we know that all the "babes in Christ" will be left behind; they will have to go through the tribulation, and will have to die as martyrs for their salvation.

Let us be filled with the true love of God, in which there is not even a trace of envy: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" (I Cor 13:4). Let us be reminded daily that we were sometimes foolish, disobedient, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward us appeared, and according to His mercy God saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; and

therefore we cannot afford to give room to this evil envy (Tit 3:3-6). Now we are a people who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. In Him is no envy, neither was He envious toward anyone in the past, including His tormentors. Therefore let us lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings (I Pet 2:1-3).

A glorious time is coming on this earth. During the Millennial reign of Christ there shall no envy be found among God's people: "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and...Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isa 11:12,13). We are going to be the rulers of the world in those days. To be found worthy to reign with Christ in His envy-free Millennial Kingdom may we practice such a life now!