

FAITH^{AND}VICTORY

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Church of God Servant

Unto Him shall the
gathering of the
people be.

GOD IS
LOVE

YE SHINE AS
LIGHTS IN
THE WORLD.

JESUS
SAVES

The night cometh,
when no man
can work.

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GOD STILL LIVES AND HAS CONTROL

*Bro. Charles Taylor delivered this message
at Guthrie, OK, on March 9, 2003.*

Edited and condensed for print by W.E.M.

The burden that's on my heart tonight that I would like us to consider as a subject is "God Still Lives and Has Control." Let me read some definitions for the word *control*. The dictionary says *control* means to exercise authority over, to command, and the word *command* means to give orders. It also means to regulate, which means to govern and rule. Control also means to adjust, which means to decide how much.

Now satan, the enemy of all souls, does not want you and me to believe that God is in control. As we look out over this dark, sinful world and we see all the corruption, the wickedness, the ungodliness and the sin that is abounding on every hand, satan wants you and me to believe that he is in control, that he is the one that governs and rules things. But that is not so, dear ones. Regardless of how things may look to the natural eye, God still lives and is in control.

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THE NEED AND VALUE OF BEING SPIRITUAL

By Bro. Leslie Busbee

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, introduced to Nicodemus something that this ruler of the Jews knew nothing about. In John 3 we find Jesus speaking of a spiritual birth. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Greek meaning here is "be born from above." This indicates a spiritual birth, a new life that lifts man above the fleshly and earthly realm into which he was born the first time. It is a spiritual birth into the kingdom of God, a birth that is made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit, along with the Word of God.

The real kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. Jesus said in Luke 17:20-21, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show):...for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." This means that it is inward, that is, in the inner spirit part of a man. It is not something that is outward, although the effects are seen outwardly. But it works in the Spirit of God in the spirit of man. Paul said in Romans 14:17, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Praise the Lord for this wonderful kingdom that we can have reigning within us! Jesus said in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

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The real temple of God that He wants to inhabit is not a literal temple of wood and stone. It is a spiritual temple in the hearts and lives of men. The Lord said in Isaiah 66:1-2, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, (in other words this is the place I want to dwell,) even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Paul said in II Corinthians 6:16, "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Paul also said in Acts 17:24-25, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."

This shows us that the real worship that God is pleased with from us is spiritual worship, not with literal instruments nor in houses built by the art and device of men. Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4:23-24, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Prayer must be more than words spoken by the outward lips. It must be in the Spirit—a spiritual communication with the inward man of the heart. Paul said in Romans 8:26 that "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Jude 20 tells us to build up ourselves on our most holy faith, "praying in the Holy Ghost." Paul also said in Ephesians 6:18 to pray "always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." Prayer must be spiritual, praying with the spirit and with the understanding also, so that others can hear and be in agreement with us. (I Cor. 14:15.)

The real warfare of the Christian is not a carnal warfare with tanks and guns and bombs, etc. It is a spiritual warfare. We must learn to use the weapons that are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." II Cor. 10:4.

Paul describes the weapons and armour of a real Christian soldier in Eph. 6:10-18. These are "truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God."

The riches we should seek are spiritual riches, not money and financial gain of this world. Paul said in I Timothy 6:10, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things (the love of money); and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (spiritual riches)."

To be a real Israelite that God owns and blesses today, a person must be one spiritually. Paul said in Romans 2:28-29, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly (spiritually); and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

A person needs to be born of the Spirit and then seek to be sanctified and filled with the Spirit. This is an experience God has provided for us in the New Testament plan of salvation. Paul said in Romans 8:6 "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Paul also said in Galatians 5:16-25 that we should live and walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other, and you cannot live to both of them. He named out the works of the flesh: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness and several others, saying that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Then he shows what the fruit of the Spirit is—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance." Oh, what a contrast!

Let us seek earnestly to be filled with the Spirit of God and be led by the Spirit of God in all that we say and do. It will mean eternal life to us, for the scriptures declare as Paul said in Galatians 6:7-8, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."



GOD STILL LIVES AND HAS CONTROL

(Continued from page 1.)

Turn with me to Mark, chapter five, and read verse 1-10. "And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. 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. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped 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. 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."

Here, dear ones, was a man in a most miserable and wretched condition. This man had given place to the devil. Satan had taken up his abode in his heart and in his life. This poor man was in the tombs night and day crying and cutting himself with stones and he wore no clothes. It seemed like his case was hopeless, that nothing could be done for him. Oftentimes they had taken him and bound him with fetters and chains, but the power of satan was so present in him that it just broke those fetters and chains asunder. But Jesus of Nazareth passed by his way. This man's heart began to reach out to the Lord and the Lord began to deal with satan, the enemy of all souls. He commanded satan, "Come out of the man thou unclean spirit." Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "My name is legion, for we are many." Folks, Jesus just spoke the word and told them to come out of the man. Satan had to surrender. He had to yield. He had to give up his place. He had to release that soul and let him go. The scripture said that man was clothed and sitting at the feet of Jesus in his right mind.

Many of us, as saints of God, have loved ones that are bound by the powers of satan, bound by

habits, bound by spirits and bound in sinful darkness. Satan will tell us that this soul belongs to him and that their case is hopeless. Satan will tell that individual that there is no passage out from their dark domain. But God wants you and me to understand that He still lives and has control, regardless of how our loved ones may be bound and regardless of how things may look from the natural eye. Through prayer, God can bring individuals to a crossroad where they can make a decision for themselves. If they want to go for God, God will cause satan to release them, to turn that soul loose and let them seek God and be saved. No matter what satan may say and how the picture may be painted, God still lives and He has control.

In Isaiah 28:16 and 17 it says, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."

The hail, God's Word, will sweep away the refuge of lies that satan is hiding behind, claiming that he is in authority, that he is the one who governs and rules. The waters will overflow his hiding place. The spirit of God will come down and begin to work. It will flush satan out into the open so that you and I can understand that he doesn't have the power that he's claiming to have. Our God still lives and He has control.

In song number 412 let us read verses 4 and 5. It says, (*Evening Light Songs*) "He is able to deliver thee, O, sinner." If you are bound in sin, I want you to understand that God is able to break its power.

"He has quenched the fire of yore." That is showing the authority of God. King Nebuchadnezzar set up a great image in the plains of Dura and he commanded all his men who were rulers to come and bow down and worship the golden image that he had set up. But there were three young men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who would not bow to the golden idol. So they were brought before King Nebuchadnezzar. He said, "I'm going to give you one more chance. If you bow down, well, and if not, you'll be cast the same hour into the midst of the burning fiery furnace, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand." They said, "We're not careful to answer

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This publication teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21, and manifested by the apostles and believers after Pentecost. By God's grace we teach, preach, and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ-the same gospel that Peter, John, and Paul preached, taught, and practiced, including divine healing for the body. James 5:14-15.

Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men; the restoration and promulgation of the whole truth to the people in this "evening time" as it was in the morning Church of the first century; the unification of all true believers in one body by the love of God. Its standard: Separation from sin and entire devotion to the service and will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God, and no test of fellowship but the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Through the Free Literature Fund thousands of gospel tracts are published and sent out free of charge as the Lord supplies. Cooperation of our readers is solicited, and will be appreciated in any way as the Bible and the Holy Spirit teach you to do or stir your heart. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Read Ex. 25:2; I Chron. 29:9; II Cor. 9:7; and Luke 6:38.

Freewill offerings sent in to the work will be thankfully received as from the Lord. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Faith Publishing House. All donations are tax deductible.

A separate Missionary Fund is maintained in order to relay missionary funds from our readers to the support of home and foreign missionaries and evangelists.

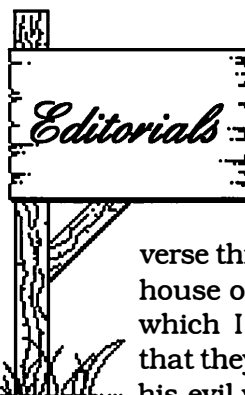
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The 36th chapter of Jeremiah, relates how the Lord told Jeremiah to write in the roll of a book the words that God had spoken against Israel and Judah because of their sins. In verse three it says, "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin." Jeremiah had Baruch to write the words of the Lord and told him to go read them to the people in the Lord's house upon the fasting day. When the words were read to the princes it says, "they were afraid both one and other." They said they would tell the words to the king. When the roll was read before King Jehoiakim, he took a penknife and cut it up and threw the pieces in the fire and let it burn. Verse 24 says, "Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words."

We can see from this passage of history how merciful the Lord is to man. He is faithful to tell them what will happen if they continue living a sinful life. The consequences are so terrible it should cause fear to grip their hearts and they should repent and turn from their sin. Yet it is sad that many do not regard the warnings and counsels of the Lord to change, and they trample His mercy again and again. There are many who have scoffed and jeered at the notion that they should be careful how they live. It is even popular to wear clothing with the slogan "No Fear." But the day will come when sin will be given account of before the righteous God of the universe.

While Jehoiakim destroyed the roll that contained the words of the Lord, he did not destroy the Word of the Lord. The Lord gave His words to Jeremiah again and added many more with it. The Lord prophesied that Jehoiakim's end would not be mourned and that his body would have no better treatment than an animal. (Jer. 30:6, Jer. 22:18-19.)

In the song "Have You Counted the Cost?" the words of the poet say, "There's a line that is drawn by rejecting the Lord, Where the call of His Spirit is lost." Sadly enough, there is a point where the wicked will cross the line of God's mercy and fall into eternal destruction. God's

Word is going out to people today saying, "...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." II Cor. 6:2. It is time for people to consider their condition before the Lord. They should allow the Word and the Spirit of the Lord to point out areas of their lives that are lacking and then take action to correct those things now while life and opportunity are ours. Jesus paid an extremely high price to redeem us from the destruction that is awaiting the lost. Today we have access to grace and forgiveness that can cause sinful things in our life to be purged away leaving us happy and free. The life of a Christian is a joyous life, a triumphant life, free from guilt and the weight of condemnation and filled with bright hope. "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he* is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor. 5:17.

Beautiful Way papers and the *Bible Lesson* quarterly are big projects that must come together in the month of March. The Lord blessed that we were able to get them printed and in the mail again. The *Beautiful Way* Sunday school papers were mailed March the 13th and the *Bible Lessons* quarterlies were mailed March 17th. The theme of the second quarter *Bible Lessons* examines the lives of those who rejected the counsel of the Lord and allowed sin to have dominion over them. The titles of the lessons are: The Wicked Way of Cain; The Destruction of the Wicked; The Man Who Despised His Birthright; The Hardhearted Pharaoh; Balaam and the Unrighteous Reward; Mighty Samson, Strong but Foolish; King Saul Rejected Because of His Disobedience; King Saul Who Played the Fool; Wise Solomon, a Prey to Folly; Ahab, Champion of Wickedness; The Last King of Babylon: Foolish, Reckless Belshazzar; Judas Iscariot and His Fatal Purchase; The Israel Who Rejected Christ Jesus. If you would like a copy they are only \$1.00 per quarter or \$4.00 per year. Call or write us and we would be glad to fill your request.

Our hearts are made sad because of the violence, destruction and loss of life taking place in the conflicts of our world. We feel great sympathy for those who are grieving over the loss or injury of their loved ones. This is a time when many (who may have never prayed before), are calling on God for mercy. Let us, who possess the treasure of salvation, take advan-

tage of this window of opportunity and share the good news of the gospel with those who are seeking comfort and solace in these fearful times. When people call on the Lord, and that is what He wants them to do, He comes closer to them. Likewise, the Church of God, who are His people should be moved by the same spirit and be reaching to those in need also. Renew your consecration to the Lord and see if there is something more He would have you do.

As Easter draws near and our minds begin to reflect over the events that occurred in the life of Jesus, we are filled with sadness as we consider the shameful treatment He suffered from the hands of man. But then as we think of how marvelously God brought His Son out of the grave and resurrected Him with a glorified body, it causes the sadness in our hearts to transform into a warm glow of hope. That hope continues to grow into exuberant joy that permeates our entire being and causes us to burst forth with rapturous praise and thanksgiving as our ears of faith also hear the voice of the angel say, "... Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead;..." Matt. 28:5-7. Jesus, years later, revealed Himself to John on the Isle of Patmos and said, "...Behold, I am alive for evermore,..." Rev. 1:18. This is a joyful proclamation that resonates in the heart of a Christian. To a child of God, our Savior's resurrection causes Easter to have such delightful meaning.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey
wemurphey@yahoo.com

A wise old bird sat on an oak,
The more he saw the less he spoke,
The less he spoke, the more he heard;
Lord, make me like that wise old bird.

Anonymous

—Submitted by Sis. Audrey Carver

Sis. Lydia Bennett has a burden for the children in Honduras. She will be going in June and is seeking the Lord to provide the means to fulfill her burden. Those who feel directed of the Lord to assist her in this endeavor may correspond with her directly. Her address is: Lydia Bennett, 14650 NW 13th Rd, Miami, FL 33167.



LA—Dear Faith Publishing House: May the Lord bless everyone in every way is my prayer. I am sure thankful for the way the Lord holds me up. As you know, my eyesight is dim but I am thankful I can see as well as I do. Remember me in your prayers.
—Sis. Velma Mancil

MO—Dear Bro. Willie and co-workers: I am asking for prayer for my son who was in a car accident. He was in ICU for six days. God spared his life. Remember him soul and body.
Christian Love,
—Sis. Nelva Stanley

NC—I sincerely solicit your continued prayer for me and my two sisters. Betty Green has a breathing problem, and arthritis: Mary Toliver has heart problems, high blood pressure and Alzheimers. I have been having problems with my heart out of rhythm, stenosis of the spine and diabetes. Also remember my grandson. I know God is able to help. It is Christian people like you who keep me inspired. May God continue to bless and keep you in His care. In His Holy name,
—Sis. Winnie Robinson

NC—Pray for us. We have a need only the Lord can supply.
—Sis. Lura Wingler



Standing Prayer Requests

Bro. Jon Busbee
Sis. Mamie Butcher
Bro. Hubert Corteway
Sis. Waneta Creel
Sis. Elaine Dunn
Sis. Evelyn Fredrickson
Bro. Troy Gentry
Bro. Jeff Gutwein
Bro. Lee Hilton
Sis. Melba Powell
The Lounds Sisters
Sis. Ruth McMakin
Sis. Anna Severs
Sis. Catherine Shaffer

MEETING DATES

Miami, FL (Spring Meeting)—March 30-April 6
Wichita, KS (Spring Meeting)—April 11-20
Enterprise, AL (Spring Singing)—April 19
Boley, OK (One day meeting)—April 20
Oklahoma State (Guthrie, OK)—May 23-June 1
Holly Hill, SC—June 1-8
Tulsa, OK—June 8-15
Green Bank, WV—June 13-19
Jefferson, OR—June 13-22
Alcoa, TN (Sisters' Retreat)—June 20-22
General Southern
(Loranger, LA)—June 29-July 6
Fresno, CA (Camp Meeting)—July 4-13
National (Monark Springs, MO)—July 18-27
Myrtle, MO—Aug. 1-6 [Note date change.]



MEETING NOTICES

WICHITA, KS, SPRING MEETING

Lord willing, the Wichita, KS, Spring Meeting will be held April 11-20. Both Sundays we will have three services. Monday-Friday we will have two services at 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to come. We are looking to God to send ministers of His choosing. If you can't come, please pray that the devil will stand rebuked and the Lord will have the right of way and bless in every way as He sees fit. The church address is: 1701 N. Ash St. The phone number is (316) 267-9582.

You can contact Bro. Emmanuel Gracey at (316) 778-1848 or Bro. Theodore McCray at (316) 682-5132.



ENTERPRISE, AL, SPRING SINGING

The congregation of the Church of God in the community of Enterprise near Warrior, AL, invites you to a singing on April 19th at 6:30 p.m. Activities will begin Saturday morning. On Easter Sunday there will be regular services with dinner on the grounds.

The chapel is located two miles west of I-65 at exit 289. (Approx. 30 miles north of Birmingham.) For further information or accommodations, please call Bro. Roy Herron at (205) 647-7869 or Bro. Marshall Whitson at (205) 647-6325. Also, several motels are located in nearby Cullman, AL. Come with a song! Everyone is welcome.

OKLAHOMA STATE CAMP MEETING

The 69th annual Oklahoma State Camp Meeting of the Church of God will be held May 23-June 1, at the campground located east off of Sooner Road on Lake View Road, which is a little over four-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of South Division and Sooner Road.

As is customary, the first service will be held Friday evening, May 23, at 7:30, with three services daily thereafter. Early morning prayer services and youth meetings will be held as announced.

An invitation to attend is extended to everyone. Your presence will be appreciated. Provisions will be made for those attending.

The meeting will be operated by freewill offerings. If you would like to make a contribution, you may do so by sending it directly to the state treasurer, Sis. Brenda Wilkins, 1023 E. Prairie Grove Rd., Guthrie, OK 73044.

For further information contact the pastor, Bro. Stanley Dickson, (405) 260-8822.

GREEN BANK, WV CAMP MEETING

The annual Camp Meeting of the Church of God in Green Bank, WV, will begin on the 13th of June and extend until Thursday, the 19th of June. We welcome everyone to attend this meeting. The Lord has been faithful in the past to bless us, but we ask you to please pray that the Lord would send the ministers of His choosing and that those attending would be ministered to by the care of God's people and the power of God's Word.

The first service will be on Friday the 13th, at 7:00 p.m. There will be additional services each morning at 11:00 a.m. and each evening following at 7:00 p.m. Meals will be served on the grounds and lodging furnished for those desiring to stay any length of time. It would help us meet your lodging needs if you would contact us before your arrival so that we will be better prepared. We ask you to please bring your own bedding, and if possible, a jacket and a fan. The weather is very unpredictable here at that time of year. There are also motels nearby for those interested in that type of accommodation.

The camp meeting will be held at the White Pines Campground just off Rt. 92 and 28 in Arbovale. There will be signs directing you to the campground. The meeting is conducted on a freewill offering basis. If you have questions or would like to make lodging reservations, please

call Bro. Toney Samons, (304) 456-3017, or correspond with us at P.O. Box 173, Green Bank, WV 24944.

Please pray with us for the success of this meeting, the encouragement of the saints and the saving of souls.

JEFFERSON, OR, CAMP MEETING

Once again, we look forward with anticipation to what the Lord has in store for the Jefferson, OR, meeting which convenes June 13 at 7:30 p.m. and continues through the 22nd. 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. services will be held during the week. Afternoon services at 2:30 p.m. are added on weekends. Lodging, meals and RV hookups are available. For more information, contact Cliff Smith at (503) 581-4575 or Bob Wilson at (541) 327-3621.

Special thanks to the saints and ministers who have supported and carried a burden for the people here. The Lord taught us that we could do nothing without Him; therefore, we are leaning heavily upon Him to meet the challenges of our day.

ALCOA, TN, WEEKEND SISTER'S RETREAT

A weekend sisters' retreat is planned for June 20-22, for sisters beginning at the age of 25. So that we can have an idea of what you would like to discuss at this retreat, we would appreciate it if you would send in topics and ideas that you would be interested in discussing.

For some time I have had a burden for the sisters. Please pray that the Lord will have His way and bless this retreat.

Accommodations will be provided. However, if you would like to stay in a hotel, we can provide you with that information.

If you additional information, please contact Sis. Mary McDonald at (865) 977-6997 or Sis. Carrie Porter at (865) 984-2348. If you wish to send your comments via postal mail, you may write to Sis. Mary McDonald, 117 Dawnybrook Drive, Maryville, TN 37804.

CHANGE OF MYRTLE, MO CAMP MEETING DATE

We would like to notify the saints of a slight change in the date of the Myrtle camp meeting. Instead of beginning on Wednesday following the Monark meeting, and continuing through

Sunday, it will begin on Friday this year and continue through Wednesday of the following week. The date for this year's camp meeting is August 1-6.

The change has been made to give more time for preparation for the Myrtle meeting following Monark, and to give those desiring to attend more time to rest between the two meetings. We extend a hearty invitation to all to attend the Myrtle camp meeting this year. Please come and stay the whole meeting, if possible.

— Bro. Harlan Sorrell

MINISTERS' MEETING REPORT

The special Ministers' Meeting held March 6-8 at the Church of God Chapel, Guthrie, OK, is over and past but the blessings and inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the precious Word of God that went forth will dwell forever in our hearts. With preparations of fastings and prayers of the holy brother and sister ministers from across the nation, we came to this meeting with our hearts prepared to receive the wonderful spiritual uplift that met us. Every service was filled with a spiritual blessing.

The holy covenant God made with Abraham and its connection with us in Christ was a rich inspiration in one of the sessions. The blessing and need for Holy Spirit anointing was another. We who were here can testify of the blessing of

the Lord in the meeting all the way through. We put everything into the meeting and the Lord rewarded our sacrifices with a special visitation of His refreshing and spiritual renewing. The two night preaching services were anointed and directed by the Holy Spirit and a number responded to seek the Lord at an altar of prayer.

As Peter said to Jesus on the mount of transfiguration when they saw His glory and the two heavenly visitors, we said in our hearts concerning this gathering of the ministers, "Master, it is good for us to be here!" Luke 9:33. Love, harmony, joy, gladness, peace and holiness unto the Lord were set forth and exemplified in our midst. We are so glad that we were privileged to be present in this wonderful gathering.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

THE HIGHEST CALLING

Bro. Keith Fuller presented this thought on March 7, 2003, at the Ministers' meeting held in Guthrie, OK. Edited for print by W.E.M.

I heard something recently that nearly brought me to tears because it reawakened in me the high calling that we really have. It was brought out this way by way of analogy.

Can you imagine what it would be like to be in the chamber when Congress was about to hear the State of the Union Address? There was

This photograph of a group of ministers and their spouses was taken March 8, 2003, on the west side of the Guthrie chapel, after the conclusion of the Ministers' meeting. Photo by W.E.M.



someone there who observed this. The senators were there, members of the house of representatives, the Supreme Court, and those who have responsibility in running our nation. There is a lot of honor in that chamber, and pomp. But the high point of that meeting, the State of Union Address, is when a courier, comes out and announces, "Ladies and gentleman, the President of the United States." Then, as the president, the man who is being focused on comes out, it just sends chills through the people.

Can you imagine how that person feels, the one who is appointed to be the messenger, to announce the president? Oh, can you imagine if someone said you were appointed to be the messenger to bring that announcement of "Ladies and Gentleman, the President of the United States?" Certainly you would feel honored.

We have been made ambassadors of Christ. We are to announce, "Ladies and Gentleman, the King of the Universe, The Lord of Lords, the Savior of the World." That is us! We are his couriers. What a privilege and what exaltation. And that is no exaggeration. God wants us to see it like that.



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

CA—Dear Bro. Murphey and Saints: I figured it is time to send in our testimony to the paper. First of all, we thank the Lord for salvation and sanctification and for His real and abiding presence in our lives. We thank Him for deliverance from a lung virus which my husband had.

The first time he had it was in 1996. The Lord blessed him to get over it fairly quickly. However, he had another attack beginning late in the year of 1999. This time it was really severe. The symptoms became so severe that we took him in to be examined. They immediately put him in the hospital and took many tests. They found that he had not only pneumonia, but a virus as well. We learned that the virus spores float on the wind in the area where we live.

At this time, we put in a standing request for him in the *Faith and Victory* paper. He was quarantined in the hospital because they thought for awhile that it might be tuberculosis.

He said that one night he was almost strangling to death. The nurse on duty was in so much amazement that all she could do was sit and watch. He said that he told the Lord, "If You want me to go, I'm ready." He said the Lord shut it off just like someone turning off a faucet. The nurse was astounded. From this time on, he began to get better, and in June 2000, one month after he was admitted, he was able to come home and has steadily gotten better.

They wanted to remove one of his lungs and he told them no. The last time his breathing was tested his lung capacity was up to 100 percent. When he was first examined, he had a hole the size of his index finger in one lung and the other one had a hole the size of his fist.

When he was checked again in August 2001, his smallest hole was almost closed. We want to thank the Lord for answered prayer and we thank you dear brothers and sisters for faithfully holding us up in your prayers.

Christian love and prayers,

—Bro. Charles and Sis. Thomasene Pierro

SC—Dear Saints: We want to write and praise our dear Lord for what He has done for us. He has been so good to us that we hardly know where to begin. We began having sickness in our home in October of last year. It seems that one of us has been sick, in some way, ever since that time, with very little reprieve in between bouts.

On December 27th, Kevin became very ill. His fever went up to 104°. He was having a very difficult time breathing, was wheezing terribly and had a very deep cough. He had to miss two full weeks of work. At times, the situation looked very grim and we really pled for God to have mercy. There were times when we really found God to be a present help in time of trouble. At one point, the severe coughing brought on violent hiccups. He had them for several days, almost non-stop. They began happening about every 14 seconds, then progressed to about every three seconds. Needless to say, it was very nerve-racking for him. It made it hard for him to eat and especially to sleep. By the third or fourth night, we had both just about

had all we could take. We called several saints to join with us in unified prayer at a certain time and do you know God healed those hiccups? It was one of the most amazing things we had ever seen. It may sound insignificant, but to us it was not. It was a great miracle. God had abundant mercy and healed the fever, the breathing difficulties, wheezing, etc. He had to be examined several times to be released from work and the nurse practitioner who saw him has commented many times on how serious Kevin's condition was. She told him the asthma he suffered from as a child had returned and made his condition even more serious. There were several in our area sick at that time but she said his condition was the worst she had seen. He still has a slight residual cough and some wheezing that we are seeking the Lord to heal. Last night the devil came in like a flood and started bringing back the fever and the wheezing. Again we sought the prayers of the saints and tonight he is much improved, praise our dear Lord! Please continue to pray for his complete healing.

Little Zachary has had several bouts of illness since October and recently he got very, very sick. We had him examined and were told he had a bad ear infection in both ears, a virus, and that he was also teething. His temperature got very high and he was unable to retain nourishment for four days. It seemed I was at my wit's end. My dear mother was here with us one day and she really began to call on God and beg Him to please heal Zachary. We agreed in fervent prayer together. The poor little fellow had become so weak and I felt he was near dehydration. Normally he is a very active child but he didn't want to play and seemed almost too weak to sit up. After Mom prayed, it was only a matter of minutes until Zachary got down in the floor and wanted to play and run around. He was almost completely back to normal! I praise the Lord for my dear, praying Mother and that I still have her and her prayers. Again we were amazed at God and His power and how we did praise Him! We waited so long for this child!

During the time I was expecting Zachary, I had many complications arise. It was then that God gave me a verse that I still cling to today. It is found in Proverbs 10:22 and says, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." I have stood on that for so long...and it carried me through this latest trial.

There have been several other instances that I could mention but I do not want to take up more space. I feel I could write a book of all the things God has done in my life. It would take a book to contain it. He has blessed me from birth and brought me through many things. I praise Him from the bottom of my heart. We want to serve Him and be faithful to Him, for we surely owe Him everything. In Christ's love,

—Kevin, Cheryl and Zachary Smith

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OK—Bro. Willie: I haven't written a testimony in the *Faith and Victory* for some time. For the last three or four years I have had problems with congestive heart failure. My breathing would get shallow and I couldn't lay down on my bed because the fluid would build up in my lungs. My legs were also very swollen. I was under Hospice care and they felt that I had six months or less to live. I felt the same way. As a matter of fact, we went and picked out a grave marker and made arrangements for burial. This occurred about the time Bro. Randall Flynn was so low. We had been very close to each other over the years.

I talked to him different times during his illness and we would compare our feelings. Just a few days before he died, I sent word for him to pick a good shade tree over yonder for us to sit under and visit because I felt that I would be coming soon. Shortly after he passed, the Lord gave me a touch and I started improving. The swelling began going down and my breathing cleared. I have gone off Hospice care and like the little boy said, "I'm just feeling gooder and gooder."

I hope to be able to attend some of the camp meetings this summer. Folks, it pays to trust the Lord. He has never failed me and I know He will not fail me now. He may bring us to a close place, but just hang on, He will take you through with victory. Thanks so much for your prayers, visits and phone calls. My wife, Dora, is very afflicted with arthritis. We surely would like to see the Lord touch her also. God Bless.

—Bro. Dale Doolittle

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LA—Dear Saints: Greetings in our dear Lord and Saviour's name. It has been a year now since the Lord has taken my dear companion, Randall. It has been a hard year, but the Lord has been so near and good to me. I don't have adequate words to express the goodness and love of God to me.

I am thankful for the 38 years the Lord permitted Randall and me to be together. My desire is to live close to the Lord and be faithful to the end.

We want to thank each of the saints for your prayers, cards, the love offerings for funeral expenses and the phone calls. It all is appreciated and means so much to us.

Christian love, —Sis. June Flynn
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FL—Dear brethren: In a recent paper you had an article by W. J. Henry on *Death Bed Repentance*. Not many are willing to print or believe this. I pray it will awaken the lost.

Several of us meet in homes on Sunday as there is no Church of God chapel here. We will share the article by W. J. Henry. Be encouraged in your labors to print the everlasting Gospel which is able to save the lost. Thank you again for the *Faith and Victory*. In sincerity,

—Sis. Sarah Monkman
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CT—Dear Friends in Jesus: My, how time flies by! In 1954, the Lord used Bro. DiDio to come all the way to Bridgeport, CT, where I was born and still reside, to bring me the good news. I was saved and Bro. and Sis. Key came all the way from LA to baptize me in Beardsley Park, Bridgeport, CT. They are all in God's paradise of love now, waiting as we all do for Jesus' return and that great resurrection day. I'm now 73 years old and my wife Harriet is 64 years old and saved also by the precious blood of Jesus. Praise God. We are both in good health and still work in God's will day by day. Thank God for His mercy and love,

—Bro. Tom Stoliker

P.S. Enclosed is a poem I want to share with you. It was given in a season of prayer Dec. 18, 2002.

God's Banquet

Feast your eyes on the rising sun.

Feast your eyes on the glorious colors
Tinting the clouds above in red and purple
and yellow and gold.

Feast your eyes on the setting sun

As it closes the chapter of another day.

Feast your ears on the sounds of new life.

Feast your ears on the wind blowing in the trees.

Feast your ears on the birds calling to their mates.

Feast your heart on all these things and more,
never ending.

Open your heart wide and feast on the
Banquet of God.

—By Bro. Tom Stoliker

LA—Dear Ones: Greeting to you in His love. I am thankful for all He means to me and for His blessings. I'm doing pretty well at this time but missing my dear companion. May you be blessed for all you do to get the paper printed.

—Sis. Lula Williamson
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OK—Dear Bro. Willie: Greetings in the lovely name of Jesus. Mary the mother of Jesus said, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Jesus told His disciples to "have faith in God" after they had noticed how soon the fig tree withered. We have a great reason to rejoice in God our Saviour, for God sent His Son to be our Saviour, and Jesus said to His disciples, "Lo, I am with thee always, even unto the end of the world." Then He has promised to deliver up the kingdom unto the Father where we can be with Him forever.

Your Brother in Christ, —T. V. McMillian
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From Ghana...

March 10, 2003—Dear Bro. Willie Murphey: Greetings to you and the saints abroad. Brother, we thank God that He has lifted up His hands on the work in Ghana. By the grace of God we started a new congregation at a town called Nkenkasu. God has done wonderful things there. The church is moving alright. To God be the glory.

We are preparing for our general camp meeting on April 18, 2003. This is our first general camp meeting and we are looking to the Lord to supply our needs. We ask the saints to pray for this meeting that it will be edifying, uplifting and successful.

On February 27 to March 2, our two brothers from Nigeria came to Ghana to visit us. They were Bro. F. Naths Igbaniibo of Port Harcourt and Bro. Chinedu Uba of Lagos. God moved in their messages and they were an encouragement. These two brothers moved from place to place and their messages strengthened many souls in Ghana. We thank God. Yours in Him,

—Bro. Maxwell Nkansah
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From India...

March 21, 2003—Dear Bro. Willie Murphey: Greetings to you in the precious name of Jesus. Our conventions at Vilayanthur and Trichur were real good. Convention at Koottarvila will be starting during the first week of April. There will be a three-day revival meeting at Nadukkunnu during the last week of March. Also we decided

to conduct a five day Vacation Bible School (V.B.S.) for the children at Thrikkannamangal during the second week of April. The work on the permanent tabernacle building here is progressing. Please pray for the needs of this project. Sorry to know of war in Iraq which started today. May God protect the people living around that area. Our prayers are for the saints everywhere. Yours in Him, —Bro. John Varghese

From Nigeria...

March 20, 2003—Dear Bro. Willie: Greetings in Jesus' dear name. I trust you and all the saints in the Lord's print shop are doing well.

I just came back from Asana yesterday. I was there over the weekend. I thank God for everything. We had a wonderful time on Sunday sharing the love of Jesus with people in the neighborhood. I might be there again next week by His grace. The people asked of you and also sent their greetings.

There is one very bad news item from that side. The first pastor, Pastor Idem, I engaged to oversee the work in Asana from 1997. He died a little less than four years ago in inexplicable circumstances occasioned by opposition to the revival in the work of God when it started again in 1996. He left behind his wife and four very young children. The wife, Sis. Idem, took ill late last year and passed away also to be with the Lord. She was quite a young, lovely and committed sister. She left behind four very young children without father and mother (except God) to care for them. It is really pathetic, but God is in control. Join me to pray for these young children, for God to take them over one way or the other.

Do pray for us in Nigeria. We are getting disturbed about the war in Iraq. We do pray for the will of God to be made perfect in America and in the whole wide world as He begins to really minister to the hearts of people in a time like this. My love to all that love Jesus.

Brotherly yours, —Anietie Essien

From Nigeria...

March 22, 2003—Dear Bro. Willie Murphey: Greetings to you in our dear Redeemer's name. We are still grateful to God for giving us Jesus Christ His Son as our Savior. Because of Him the powers of the enemy have been subdued for men to live unto God. Glory be to Him in the highest! We thank God also for the publishing work, which is very dear to us. Thank you for the

March issue of the F&V paper which I received a few days ago. The articles are still lively and refreshing. "Surviving the Winter" and "Balanced" are a good reflection of how the people of old lived perfectly with God, which is required of us today no matter the perilous time we are in. It is good to be constantly reminded of what the Lord wants us to be and the promise He has made to help us as we look up to Him.

I am glad to report that at last we made it to Ghana through God's wonderful help. I took Bro. Chinedu Uba with me for the trip, which lasted for four days (28th Feb to 2nd March 2003). We had memorable fellowship with the brethren who expressed great joy for our presence in their midst at Akumadam, Nkenkasu and Tanoso. The combined service on Sunday, March 2nd, was well attended to the glory of God. Many requests were made to us to come again. This we are looking up to God to perfect. With our presence there we began to appreciate all the more the labors of Sis. Dorothy Kaiser and Bro. Michael Smith and his family.

It is our prayer, which should be all the saints' prayer, that God should make the seed planted there to grow and blossom. Though in the same West African Region, it took us two days to go there by road from Lagos, crossing three borders with delays at check points. But we thank God for the privilege and the experience He kindly and graciously granted us.

I want to confirm that our plan to hold a 4 day crusade in the city of Benin where Bro. C. C. Carver of blessed memory baptized Bro. Titus Enu has reached advance stage. God willing, the meeting will be held from May 8 - 11, 2003. The rest of the church intends to join our few faithful brethren there for the work. Kindly remember us in your prayer. Let all the saints abroad join us in our prayer. We see ourselves as unworthy for the work but we know that God is great and since our labor is to His interest, He will help us through the difficulties and fears.

At the end of the National Crusade, we will plan for our national camp meeting for the year. I gave a copy of the pamphlet on the church of God to an inquirer about the church in Ghana who was very glad and began to read it on the spot. The man who identified himself as a minister in the Apostolic Faith came back later for further interesting discussion.

May God bless you and the dedicated workers of the print shop.

Yours in His Body, — Bro. F. Naths Igbanibo

From the Philippines...

March 21, 2003—Dear Bro. Willie: We send you greetings of love from the Muntinlupa Church of God. Praise be to God, the King of Kings! We had a blessed and wonderful fellowship last March 2. We worshipped God in songs and heard inspirational messages. Our goal of "each one, bring one" was blessed. Our number was doubled. Bro. Pat Tangunan came from Montalban.

I was in bed for three days. I had the fever, maybe because of the change of climate. It's hot during the daytime but at night it is very windy and cold. I praise God for His healing touch. I was able to sit and write to you today. We are praying for you and all the saints there. May God continually shower His richest blessings to all. I believe He is taking care of you.

God Bless you! We love you!

Your Sister,

—Nellie Tibayan

**Just because God said so!**

Do we really know how to let go and let God?

By Sis. Denise J. Sherman-Adolph

I've heard many testimonies about how God has worked for people. God is wonderful, mysterious, wise and merciful, I could go on and on. But I would like to begin this little testimony by saying faith is recognizing God's promise as an actual fact, believing it is true, rejoicing in the knowledge of that truth and then simply resting because God said it.

I got saved during a camp meeting at Pacoima, California in September 1991. Since that time I have tried to live my life as close to the Word of God as I could. After I was saved, I consecrated my life to the Lord and was sanctified. I have had many trials and through those trials I pray and believe that I have grown spiritually. God has a special way of dealing with us as individuals. Jesus taught us to deny ourselves and to follow Him. Following Him is the key to our own happiness. God has blessed me in a very spiritual way. He has shown me the kind of love that parents should show their children. He nurtured and nurtured and gave me peace with instruction and direction until the plan that He put into place came to reality in my heart.

I would like to relate something special that God did for me. During the past ten years I have

tried many ways on my own to purchase a house. I thought this prayer would be answered only if I kept my credit up, saved money and made sacrifices of my own personal needs, not really believing God would provide a way. I was just trying to do things myself. I have tried many ways to purchase a house (except lying or cheating). Each time I would get close something would happen to prevent the transaction. Either someone would out bid me or I did not make enough money to qualify for the house, etc. After many disappointments I prayed, "Lord if this is not Your will for me please take away this driving need to purchase a home. I don't want to be a slave to a house. I realize that it is a good investment but is this something that You want for me? I'm tired of the many disappointments and I give this to You."

I was told that God wants us to follow through on leads that may come our way but He does not want us to lose focus on Him and over extend ourselves trying to obtain anything. The need to purchase a house did not go away.

A brother called and asked me to check out some information for him with the County Assessor's office on tax foreclosures. These homes, those with delinquent taxes due on them, would be auctioned off. He said if I got the information for him he would reimburse me and I could review and use the information also. So, I thought, "Okay, God is this an option for me?"

I obtained the information and found five homes that I checked out and wanted to bid on. Two days before the auction I found out that they required cash money in the form of a certified check for a percentage of the down payment before you could bid on anything. Of course I did not have that amount of money. But I thought, "My credit is good, I will go to the credit union and see if I can borrow the money." When I tried to borrow \$10,000.00 they turned me down! I was shocked because the reason they turned me down did not make sense. I prayed, "Lord, I know I can fight this and get the money but I need to know is this something You put a stop too? I need a clear understanding from You." Then I just waited for God to let me know what to do. (God was teaching me patience).

On my way home that evening, God, through the Holy Spirit, told me that I would be getting the Pierce house. I thought, the Pierce house? His daughter lives in that house She has a disabled son. She has lived there for many years and Mr. Pierce who owns the house lives in

Louisiana somewhere. But God, I prayed, if this is Your will for me, then I will wait on You and leave the credit union alone.

That was over a year ago. I could go into detail to tell you all the miracles that occurred prior to the purchase of the house, but I believe that is another testimony. I will say this, I was sitting in my van in my mother's driveway about a month or two after I prayed for direction. Kevin, Mr. Pierce's son, came over to my van and said, "Hi Denise, how are you doing?" I said, "Fine, Kevin, how is your dad? I have been thinking about him lately." Kevin said, "You are not thinking about my dad. You want to buy our house."

Today, March 11, 2003, my family and I have been living in the Pierce house that we purchased through God's love and grace on January 30, 2003 (the closing date on the property). Please pray for me that I will be able to keep this home for the glory and honor of God and be able to know and do God's will for me in this life.



George Henry Adams was the youngest of eight children born to Dan and Sammy Adams in Castle, OK on April 5, 1903. George attended school at Boley CME School. Like most young men in those days, George attended as much education as was needed in those days and then he began to assist the family with farming.

George worked in Boley and then moved to Detroit, MI. While in Detroit, George made a number of friends and expanded his life experiences. George was informed of his ailing brother and decided to return home to care for his brother and sister-in-law. They have since both gone to glory.

It was during this time that George accepted Christ and served as a faithful member until his health failed.

George met and married Darlene Henderson on April 5, 1990.

George passed away February 22, 2003 at 2:50 a.m. at Seminole Medical Center in Seminole, OK. God closed his lips in silence until the resurrection.

Preceding him in death was his father and mother, Dan and Sammy Adams, six brothers and one sister.

George leaves to reflect on his life, his wife, Darlene Adams of the home; his niece, Hattie Mae Singleton of Bakersfield, CA; two step daughters and two step sons-in-law, Caroline and Timothy Tarrilton of Okemah, OK, Sherry and Elmer Crockett of Tulsa, OK; six step-grandchildren, seven step-great-grandchildren, one great neice and two great nephews. George leaves a number of cousins and friends. George will be missed.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:31-32.

GOD STILL LIVES AND HAS CONTROL

(Continued from page 3.)

thee, oh king, our God is able and if he doesn't deliver us, we will not bow down." Oh, this man was furious. He caused the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and cast them into the fiery furnace. And the flames were so hot that it slew the men that cast them in. But they fell bound in their hosen, their coats and their hats and Nebuchadnezzar rose up in haste and said, "Lo, did not we cast three men into the midst of the burning fiery furnace? Behold, I see four men and the fourth looks like the son of God" and he said, "They're walking around and they have no hurt." Oh folks, God took the heat out of the flame. It seemed like satan was in control. It seemed that Nebuchadnezzar had everything under his power, but folks, God is the one in control.

Nebuchadnezzar came to the mouth of that furnace and he called out to those Hebrew boys. It says that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, came forth with not even a smell of smoke on their garments. What a mighty God we serve! Satan doesn't want us to believe that God is in control.

"He stopped the lions rage and roar," Oh, Daniel, because he was faithful, he prayed to his God three times a day. He opened his window toward Jerusalem and began to seek the God of heaven and people were angry with him about the stand he took for God. So they plotted against him and Daniel was cast in the den of lions. But the great God of heaven sent his angels down into that den and closed the mouth of the lions so they could not hurt Daniel. It looked like those people were in control. They had a good plot and they carried it through. We're going to get rid of this man but God was the One with authority. God is still the same today. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day and for ever."

"He has raised the dead and healed the spotted leper." God still lives—What Jesus did when He walked the shores of Galilee, He's able to do today.

"He told the King his dream." King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream and it troubled his spirit, but the dream went from him and he called his magicians, soothsayers and Chaldeans and wanted them to tell him what he had dreamed. They said, "King, you're wanting something that no man can do. Only the gods can reveal to you what you have dreamed. You dreamed it and have forgotten it, how can we possibly know what you dreamed?" But Daniel came, then he went back and told his companions Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and requested them to seek God's face in prayer that God would reveal to him the king's dream. And in the night, God gave Daniel a vision and it told him just what Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed and He gave him the interpretation. Folks, can't you see what a mighty God we serve? What a great God that He could reveal to someone what another individual had dreamed. The devil doesn't want me and you to know that God has that kind of power.

"Stopped the Jordan's flowing stream." When the Israelites were going over into the land of Canaan, the waters didn't part from the rod being stretched out. It was a time of harvest and the Jordan River was overflowing its banks. But

when the priests stepped their feet down into that water, the great God of Heaven cut that water off and separated it. Some of the water went on down the river and the water that was coming down just stopped. What a mighty God!

"Healed the lame, the blind, the palsy, what a Savior!" Oh may God help us to really get hold of the fact that God is the One in control.

Turn with me to Job chapter one, verses six through twelve, please. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is none like him* in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD."

You see, dear ones, Satan could not touch Job's life unless God gave him permission to do so. The devil told Him, "You have a hedge around Job; You are protecting him." Saints, God has a hedge around every one of us. Satan cannot touch your life or my life except God gives him permission to do it. And if God gives him permission to touch your life or my life, God is putting confidence in you and me that we, by His grace and power, will stand the test. Oh, we need God to help us in these last and evil days.

In the book of I Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." You see, we have an adversary. Satan, the enemy of all souls, is walking about seeking whom he may devour. I thought about Christian on his journey to the Celestial City and as he was approaching the house of the interpreter he halted. He saw two lions by the way and he began to draw back. But someone came to the door and they encouraged him.

They said, "Come on, the lions are chained, they can only go so far and no farther." Saints of God, satan is chained, he can only go so far and no farther. As we stated concerning Job, he can only do what God permits him to do. Christian didn't have to fear. As long as he stayed in the center of the pathway he was safe. It's only when you and I get outside of the pathway that we are in danger. When we stay in the path God will take care of us.

Malachi 3:1-3 please. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness."

One of the definitions for control, is to regulate, which means to adjust and to decide how much. God sits as a refiner and a purifier of silver and He controls the furnace. You see, He adjusts it and He determines how much heat you get and He knows just how much it takes to separate the dross from the silver. So He is not going to let the heat get too hot for you and me. I thought about how we work on a job and we may work on it for years, but eventually we retire or maybe get to the point that we think we are getting a little old and they just give us a retirement. They put someone else in our place to do what we have been doing. Well it's not that way with God. I'm glad that the Lord didn't leave the adjusting to anybody else. He is still on the job. He never retires. He is still there. He is still adjusting and regulating and controlling the temperatures and letting just enough heat come so that He can purify your and my soul as we journey through this dark and sinful world. Oh, God still lives and has control.

Let's close with I Corinthians 10:13 please. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The devil wants you and me to think that somewhere along the journey of life you are going to run into something you can't handle. It is going to be too heavy for you. That is not so, folks. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common unto man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. He will not let any more come upon us than we can bear. You see, dear ones, that for everything we go through, someone has already gone through that test or trial, and not only so, but Jesus Christ was tempted in all points like as we are. He bore it upon Himself and He knows how heavy the weight is and as a result of Him experiencing it Himself, He knows how much we can bear, and will not let any more come upon us than we are able to bear. Our God still lives and has control. But Satan doesn't want you and me to believe that. He doesn't want us to understand that he is subject to God. Even though he may paint some pictures that make it seem like he is in control, it is not so. God is the One who governs. God is the One who rules. God is the One who has authority. Amen.

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