



VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Volume 9 Issue 4

April 2002

PEOPLE OF HOPE **PRaising AND WORSHIPING IN GOD'S PRESENCE SERIES** **"OPERATING IN THE GLORY OF ZION"**

One of the most encouraging scriptures is written by the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians. 1 Thes. 4:13, **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."**

No hope is when all avenues have been explored and dead end street signs are everywhere. Unless the mind has a route of escape, it panics and all kinds of things happen. The hope that God has given us rises above human abilities and has the ability to calm the most troubled minds. Some people say that religion is just a crutch that relieves the mind and allows people to function in the worst of circumstances. Perhaps that is true of religion, but it certainly isn't true of relationship. Relationship is an involvement with someone. It goes beyond an idea or formula to heart felt feelings. What I am about to share with you is one of the most moving experiences that I have ever felt. During my trip to Florida a few days ago, I saw a young woman lying on the grave of what appeared to be her young child. The grave sight was adorned with all kinds of toys, chairs, lights and other objects. Obviously, she lost life itself when she lost the child. I am not saying that Christians don't hurt just as much as this mother but I am saying that in the midst of hurt we can have a hope that heals the spirit and mind because of our relationship with the Master. Hope in Christ allows us to walk away from the grave knowing that our Father does care. Thank God that He removed the dead end street signs through the death of His Son and our Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Pastor George Ferrington

In order for a believer to operate in the glory of Zion, he or she must first come to fully understand the meaning of the name Zion. The word "Zion" carries with it the idea of a sunny mountain or a mountain that shines. I believe this is a reference to His glory shining forth from His presence. Zion in scripture is always important because it is a place from which God purposed to shine forth His Glory and His Power over all of creation. That place is now found in the inner temple of the living body of Christ, the Church.

The definition of glory is the manifestation of His divine attributes and perfections. Yes, God fully intends to shine forth from His presence the manifestation of His divine nature over all of this earth, and is now doing so! This would be a good spot in our lesson to look at the different ways that the glory of God is used in the Bible. First, we see God's glory as God's moral beauty and perfection of character. While God's glory is not a substance, at times God does reveal His perfection to man in a visible way. Such a display of the presence of God is often seen as fire or dazzling light, but sometimes as an act of power. Some examples from the Old Testament are the pillar of cloud and fire, the Red Sea crossing and His revealed presence of glory in the Tabernacle.

We next see God's glory revealed or shown mainly in Christ, and in the members of His Church. An example of this glory is found in Luke 9:29-32: **"And as He (Jesus) was praying, the appearance of His countenance became altered (different), and His raiment became dazzling white—flashing with the brilliance of lightening. V30, And behold, two men were conversing with Him, Moses and Elijah, V31, Who appeared in splendor and majesty and brightness and were speaking of His exit (from life), which He was about to bring to realization at Jerusalem. V32, Now Peter and those with him were weighed down with sleep. But when they fully awoke they saw His glory (splendor and majesty and brightness) and the two men who stood with Him.** Christ not only experiences God's glory, but also shares His divine glory with His followers as revealed in His great prayer found in John 17:5-6, 22: **"And now, Father, glorify Me along with Yourself and restore Me to such majesty and honor in Your presence as I had with You before the world existed. V6, I have manifested Your name—I have revealed Your very Self—to the people whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have obeyed and kept Your Word. V22, I have given to them the glory and honor which You have given Me, that they may be one, (even) as We are one:"** In fact, we as believers are now being transformed into the glorious image of God. This is supported in the Bible in 2 Corinthians 3:18 which states, **"And all of us, as with unveiled face, (because we) continued to behold (in the Word of God) as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; (for this comes) from the Lord (Who is) the Spirit."**

The third way in which the glory of God is revealed is in the praising of the Lord. At special moments, God's glory may become the honor and audible praise which His creatures give to Him. This is clearly seen in Psalms 115:1, **"Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to Your name give glory, for Your mercy and lovingkindness and for the sake of Your truth and faithfulness!"** We also find that all of creation shall manifest God's glory as they praise His Holy Name. (Continued on Page Three)

GOLD

Gold has been the currency of kings down through the ages. Thousands of people have been killed world wide, all for the gaining of gold. Our own Fort Knox was built for the sole purpose of storing unimaginable tons of pure gold. The Inca empire was destroyed along with the Aztecs, by the Spanish plunderers, all for gold. No life, no city, no civilization would be considered worth saving, compared to the acquisition of gold.

Rumored gold strikes have sent shock waves through many countries, setting off hordes of men willing to do anything to get some of the precious metal. These inevitably disintegrate into mobs of thieving, killing unsuccessful miners, willing to perform any act, to get the fabulous gold. Gold still lies on the bottom of the seas of the world where ships that were carrying tons of it and silver too, were sunk in storms along the perilous routes back to their home ports. Salvage groups assemble millions of dollars worth of mechanical equipment all for the sole purpose of finding that elusive pile of rotted timbers and mounds of ballast stones which indicate a shipwreck beneath the sea. Lives are lost due to malfunctioning equipment and unforeseen conditions, but the survivors will go home with millions in gold and silver.

King Solomon received and acquired more gold than any former King of Israel. Perhaps any other king period. Throughout the Bible gold is spoken of many times. Once even to tell of the so-called Israelites bringing gold (that had been given to them by the Egyptians before they left) to Aaron, the high priest, and Moses's brother, to make a golden calf to worship because Moses had not come down off the mountain from receiving the ten commandments. To explain his actions against the one true God, Aaron later told Moses that the people brought all of this gold to me and I threw it into the fire. What came out was this golden calf. Moses was so mad that he ground up the gold and made the people eat it, or drink it. With today's knowledge of the medicinal powers of gold over arthritic diseases, Moses may have been doing his people a favor. Gold then is used in many ways to indicate wealth. It is also used to denote purity and truthfulness.

In today's life, gold is used mostly for jewelry and adornment. The daily currency is paper printed to represent certain quantities of gold backing. We no longer have to weigh out a certain amount of gold or dust when we shop for our groceries. The Bible still tells us to buy pure gold, meaning to secure redemption and truth for ourselves in God's Kingdom. Our own salvation is our responsibility and no one else's.

What is more precious than gold? There are several valuable metals, precious stones; but above all is great black **oil**. Gold is right now being transferred to pay for oil in many nations. If the USA is ever allowed to get itself into this position, our dominance will be lost and no longer will we be considered a world leader. Gold is being used to pay for arms and ammunition and missiles and radar systems. Soon the new deadly magnetic weapons will be traded by nations for gold. In South America, deep into the rain forest jungle, high banks of dirt, mud and some gravels have revealed the presence of gold. Tiny parcels 10 and 20 feet square have been sold or leased or granted and the purchasers dig square shafts down into the dirt to get a tiny amount of gold, which they soon give up in the brothels and saloons nearby. Defeated as the mine shafts gives out, these once hopeful miners die of the jungle diseases and sheer wear and tear that ravages their bodies. Over the millenium then, gold has caused more deaths, murders and havoc than any other commodity. World wide, only a few have ever acquired enough gold to change their lives and set them on a new course of ease and comfort. But this is what everyone is thinking about when they leave home to go find gold.

Many stories and crisis lie ahead for the dealings in gold. Not only individuals, but whole nations will be suborned by the greed of gold. Diamonds were recently attempting to occupy the portion of the marketplace now held by gold. The diamond dealers, world wide, have put on the brakes and are slowing and will eventually stop the illegal flow of diamonds for guns. But on the world scene, only one thing will ever stop the flow of gold from the poor to the wealthy. That will be the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. He and He alone will have the power to stop the greed for gold. Gold will no longer have any of the importance that it now has over persons or whole nations. It will still be there because it is in the earth, but one day according to prophecy, even that will disappear.

Chemists and scientists claim that the actual chemicals in the average human body if retrieved would be worth only a mere pittance. That may be true, but to Jesus Christ we are priceless. He does not want to lose even one of us. However, He knows that there will be many lost, and this saddens Him. We are not His burden, we are His blessing. He thanked God for us all the time and prayed in remorseful prayers for those who would not believe the truth. Jesus will one day take great delight in us as He looks at us, His own creations. He wants us to be very happy, and will provide the very best that can be imagined for us in our new home which He has gone to prepare for us. Given the choice here on this earth between gold and one of the many mansions that are in His Father's house, that are being prepared for us, many would be hard pressed to decide. Gold has that glits and glamour that even God's own children would have trouble resisting. Gold, then, might provide you with riches on this earth, but it would also make you a target. God bring blessings on us all.

Bro. Vic Clayton

OUR CORNER STONE

Isaiah 28:16, “See I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.”

Try to imagine if you can, a twenty by twenty foot slab of concrete poured out on the ground with its sides and surfaces plumb and level and so forth. Now try to imagine the depth of this slab at twenty feet below the surface of the ground. This is when the Lord began to deal with me about the immovable nature of our cornerstone—Jesus Christ.

It would be basically a waste of time to try to move such a mass of stone so deeply rooted in the earth. So then, if we are standing on, or trusting in, our foundation, Jesus Christ which cannot be moved, then neither can we be moved. That is, as long as our faith is in Him. Based on His works and not our own. Remember Isaiah 28:16, “**See I lay in Zion a tested stone.**” Jesus Christ our Lord was tested to the maximum. His record is spotless, without blemish and perfect. If we build on that stone with our pitiful works not by faith in Him, we will be tested and found to fail miserably. This is the reason the cornerstone is immovable. Jesus Christ’s record will hold fast and true throughout all time—and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. For this reason, we have hope; not in anything we can ever accomplish on our own, but simply what the Lord will accomplish through us if we will allow Him by His grace.

Ephesians 2:19-22, “**Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household; built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.**” Paul goes on to speak of the grace given to him by God for the mystery made known to him by revelation. This mystery given to Paul was God’s grace being poured out on all—that every man would be part of God’s house, with Israel; all members together of one body.

I believe the key word here is **grace**. In order to build on that foundation, which is Christ Jesus, grace must be given by God towards understanding and revelation knowledge. 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, “**By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds; For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.**”

So then, we thank God for our firm foundation on which we stand, Jesus Christ. We cannot be moved.

Be Blessed,

Bro. Neal Emfinger, Jr.

OPERATING IN THE GLORY OF ZION (Cont. from Page One)

This is supported in Revelation 5:12-13 which states, “**Saying in a loud voice, ‘Deserving is the Lamb, Who was sacrificed, to receive all the power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and majesty (glory, splendor) and blessing!’ V13, And I heard every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth (in hades,**

the place of departed spirits) and on the sea and all that is in it, crying out together, ‘To Him Who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb be ascribed the blessing and the honor and the power (might and dominion) forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities)!’ Truly God’s glory is being manifested in the praise of His Son Jesus.

Nowhere is the glory of Zion better seen or supported than in Isaiah 4:4-6, which states, “**When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the Spirit of Judgment, and**

by the Spirit of Burning. And the Lord will CREATE upon every dwelling place of MOUNT ZION, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all GLORY shall be a defense. And there shall be a TABERNACLE for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covering from storm and rain.” The Lord promises through Isaiah that He will put a covering, or defense “**upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies. . . .**” a cloud of God’s bright, brilliant Glory, “**and the shining of a flaming fire.**” This manifested glory of Zion becomes a defense for believers who operate therein. There is no doubt that Zion not only speaks of natural Jerusalem, but also to the Church as the spiritual people of God, who have entered into the presence of God and have experienced His Glory. The Tabernacle of David as a type and shadow is fulfilled in every believer because God dwells inside of man’s spirit person and thus forms His Tabernacle there as a place of refuge from the cares of this life. The glory that is produced from God’s presence is our shield of defense from the heat, storms, and rain that come into this life.

**My help comes
from the LORD,
who made
heaven
and earth.**


Psalm 121:2



Gene R. Brown, Associate Pastor



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Then
the
LORD
said,
"There is a **place**
near me where
you may **stand**
on a **rock.**"
Exodus 33:21