# Midnight Cry Messenger

FREELY SHARED WITH THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY FOR TRUTH — NOT TO BE SOLD

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**AUGUST-OCTOBER 2021** 

## **Afflictions of the Righteous**

## by C. Parker Thomas

Psalms 34:19 says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth them out of them all."

There are many words in the Old and New Testaments that refer to various types of trouble in this world that man has to go through. In John 16:33, Jesus said, "... In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Job 14:1 says, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

It is significant that the words, afflictions, trouble, tribulation, etc., often comes from one and the same word in the Greek and Hebrew texts. For example, the Hebrew word oni (pronounced on-ee), often translated affliction in the Old Testament, means depression, misery, trouble.

The most prominent Greek word, thlipsis, used for affliction in the New Testament, means pressure, afflicted, anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble, etc.

The cause of affliction can be mental or physical. It can be imaginary or real or a combination of the two. Satan will use things imagined and real to afflict and oppress us. The end result is the same regardless of how and where it originates. What bothers one person may not bother another.

Affliction can be the result of breaking the laws of God, nature or man. If we abuse our minds or bodies, knowingly or ignorantly, we will in time suffer for it. Satan also takes advantage of ignorance to delude and oppress us. This is why it is so necessary to know the truth that make us free. John 8:31-32.

Stressful occupations or situations can bring afflictions upon us. This is why it is necessary to find that place of occupation that divine wisdom has ordained for us. Paul often spoke of affliction encountered in the work of the ministry. II Cor.2:4, 8:2, Phil. 1:16; I Thess.1:6 and I Thess. 3:7. In II Tim. 1:8 he speaks of the afflictions of the gospel.

#### **SATANIC AFFLICTION**

In I Peter 5:8-9, Peter says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

The greatest source of affliction and oppression is demon power. Satan especially wants to destroy those identified with Christ. Although our great sovereign God is over all and nothing takes place without his

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Midnight Cry Messenger P.O. Box 685 Southern Pines, NC 28388-0685 permissive will, Satan and his evil host of demonic spirits are agents of hatred and cruelty that work unceasingly to afflict, oppress and destroy. Although affliction is the result of many factors Satan and his demonic host are directly or indirectly involved.

When afflicted or oppressed, Satan uses many tactics to add to your burden and keep you in the grip of affliction. When you are afflicted Satan will tell you that you are being punished for your sins. He will go back into your life and pull out every skeleton he can condemn you with. He will condemn you with things that you may have confessed and have been cleansed from. We must know how to answer Satan when he falsely accuses us. I John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

He knows that when you are acutely depressed your mind is open to his negative suggestions.

Perhaps Satan's most common and successful tactic is to accuse or blame someone else for your trouble. He will also tell you that if you were rid of this person or situation your problems would cease. James

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## A Great Mystery, Part 1 By C. Parker Thomas

(Editor's note: This article was originally published in the January-February 1976 issue of the Midnight Cry Messenger.)

"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Eph. 5:30-32.

Too many think that believing in the virgin birth, blood atonement, the trinity or some other doctrine is what Christianity is all about. They believe in the Biblical record of Christ come in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth but do not understand the great mystery of Christ come in the flesh of his body, the church. They neither see nor understand this vital union.

Even as God was in Christ and the world of that day could not believe it, the world today cannot believe that Christ is come in the flesh of his body, the church. They believe he came 2000 years ago as Jesus of Nazareth. They believe he is in heaven today and will some day come back to this earth again. But they cannot believe that he is literally present now, in his body, the church. They can't conceive of God dwelling in human flesh

#### **Many Aspects**

There are many aspects of truth relative to Christ and his church that caused Paul to call it a "great mystery." We must come to a knowledge of this truth if we are to manifest the life of Christ in the earth. Failure to see such truth strips the church of her power and glory in the earth.

A mystery, in the ordinary sense of the word, means something unexplained, unknown or kept secret. However the origin of the word (musterion, Gr.) had to do with a religious secret that could only be known or understood by those initiated into it. It is used 27 times in the

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## **Editor's Letter**

Dear Saints,

Greetings once again in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus! Finally, we are enjoying some cooler weather as fall has begun.

Here at the Bible Tabernacle in Southern Pines, NC, we finally experienced an outbreak of the Covid-19 virus that caused us to suspend meeting together for several weeks. We thank God for His overshadowing mercy as most are in the recovery phase and, to my knowledge, no one has needed a hospital bed.

We are prone to wonder when things like this happen but Rom. 8:28 is still in the book! The Lord is working in His people to accomplish HIS purpose, not ours, and He knows far better than we what we truly need. And, His grace is always sufficient!

A few weeks ago I spoke on what's going on in the world in the light of scripture. When I began I referred to a newspaper cartoon I had recently seen. In it one of the characters was running frantically to the left shouting something like, "Run for the hills; the world's gone crazy!" Then a couple of panels later he came running back the other way shouting, "I can't run for the hills; the hills are on fire!" That's a pretty good picture of the world situation at present as the end of the age unfolds.

I believe the Lord is preparing His people to stand and also to be a part of what He is doing to complete His purpose in the earth before He burns it up and brings all men before Jesus in judgment. May we be aware and cooperate in all He is doing. He is faithful!

I believe it is time to once again share some of Bro. Thomas's writings. Both articles were written many years ago but remain very relevant to where we're at today.

Surely it isn't hard to see where, "The Afflictions of the Righteous," fits into the present scene! I'm glad that the Lord does indeed deliver His people. We know how it all turns out and whatever the Lord ordains in the meantime will be for our eternal good as we trust in Him.

The other article, part 1 of, "A Great Mystery," addresses the basic nature of the church as revealed in scripture. Sadly, what men call the church has become the product of human effort and rule. Christ said He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. He never told us to build Him a church!

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3:14-15 tell you where these negative and tormenting thoughts come from. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."

The word devilish in verse 15 is actually demonic. It simply means the depressing thoughts that you have are being injected into your mind by demons. You are paying more attention to devils than you are to God (word). II Tim. 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Another tactic of Satan is to use the Bible against you in the wrong way. When you are in the throes of depression Satan will use the law to further condemn you. He knows far better than we do that sin has no strength apart from the law. I Cor. 15:56. Only a knowledge of the word will enable us to resist such attacks. Gal. 3:11.

All of these tactics are cleverly designed to destroy your faith and keep you from praying or looking to God. When you try to pray, Satan will tell you there is no use, that God will not hear you. Above all things Satan does not want you to pray or believe the word that would minister faith and hope to you.

You can also expect some Job's comforters to be around who know why you are being punished. With great show of fleshly wisdom and philosophical sayings they will only add to your burden of affliction.

#### **ALL SUFFER**

Everyone suffers from some type of affliction at times. Aside from normal world conditions, God's people have always had to contend with severe trial and opposition because of their faith. Peter speaks of the same afflictions being accomplished in our brethren that are in the world. I Peter 5:9.

The true church is meant to be a literal expression of Christ by the Spirit, operating by supernatural enabling according to the various gifts and callings He ordains. Most often what men call church is nothing more than human organizations, often devoted to maintaining religious traditions, governed by politics and human ability, and operating according to the ways of the world.

I believe that God has a true remnant in the earth. May He awaken His own to seek Him as never before that Christ may have a body on earth through which He can speak and act. There is nothing lacking in His purpose, His promises, or His provision. As James put it, "You do not have because you do not ask God."

Till next time may God's rich blessings be yours.

Your brother in Christ, Phil Enlow

#### **STRESS**

Because of the increasing stress in the world system this condition is growing worse.

There is a reason why heart attacks are the number one killer in our country today. This, no doubt, is the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy that men's hearts would be failing them for fear and looking after those things coming on the earth. Luke 21:26.

A few months ago I read a syndicated news article which told of the alarming increase in suicides among children and teenagers. Certainly that is symptomatic of an alarming condition which we face in a world of growing complexities over which we have no control.

It is indeed sad when children and young people, usually so vital and full of hope, find life so miserable and futile that they take their own life. This is why more people are on tranquilizers than ever before in the history of medicine. Being separated from the life and peace of God, they are turning to alcohol and drugs to find relief. At the root of many of our social problems such as child abuse, wife beating, infidelity, separation and divorce, you will find miserable, unhappy frustrated people that can't cope with a life of stress.

#### **RESTLESSNESS**

The chief characteristic of man's separation from God is restlessness. With restlessness and misery gnawing away at his vitals he is ever looking and seeking for rest and peace he doesn't have. Some make money their God thinking that riches will give them the peace and security their heart cries out for.

A few years ago I spent a day with a man who had made a million dollars in a short period of time by buying and selling real estate. He told me personally that he couldn't spend the \$110,000.00 yearly interest he was receiving on mortgages he held. Although he owned several thousand acres of land in addition to this, he was traversing the state looking for more property to buy and sell.

Did this success in making money give him the peace and security he longed for? Actually he was one of the most lonely and miserable men I have ever met. He couldn't be still or relax. Literally driven, all he could do was think and look for more land to buy and sell. I fear that Paul's words to Timothy were being fulfilled in this case. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." I Tim. 6:9.

The root of all the trouble in the world is restless man out of touch with God. Prodded by Satan he is ever looking and searching for an earthly utopia that doesn't exist. In an effort to obtain his goal he will rob, kill and destroy everyone and everything that gets in his way. Actually it is this condition in man that is the cause of all inward strife and turmoil. All the great wars of world history that have resulted in so much death, suffering and sorrow are

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the result of man being out of touch with his maker. Isaiah 57:20- 21 says, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

#### **PEACE AND REST**

Although this is true of the wicked, God has provided peace and rest for his people through his son, Jesus Christ. The Lord told Moses, "... My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Exodus 33:14.

Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28-29.

However, many of God's people find themselves in stressful situations just as miserable and unhappy as people of the world. This is often because they want to live their own lives without being true disciples of Jesus Christ. They may succeed in obtaining this earth's wealth and honor among men but they lose something far more precious than fame and fortune. Peace of mind and the joy of the Lord are worth more than the whole world.

In this hour of increasing trouble, sorrow and frustration when the demonic forces are mounting an all-out attack against all nations and segments of society, man needs to know something about the source of his trouble.

Although our great sovereign God is permitting these things, we still need to know what is taking place and how to cope with it. Significantly there are many things that are accomplished in our lives through trial and suffering that cannot be done any other way.

This is a principle that has applied to man since he was driven from the Garden of Eden and applies more so today. In connection with the end of this age Daniel was told by the angel, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Dan. 12:10.

#### **CAUSE OF AFFLICTION**

Although the cause of affliction and human suffering is varied, we have some answers from God's word that gives us some specifics we need to understand.

According to Jesus, Job, Paul, Peter, David and others it is simply part of this life and the result of the curse. The fall of man left him with a depraved nature that has no capacity for God or righteousness. This is the cause of his trouble. Job 14:1, Acts 20:23, I Peter 5:8-9, Psalms 34:19 and John 16:33.

The Bible is a divine record of the joys, the sorrows, the afflictions, the persecutions, the faith and the triumph of God's people. Through all these things God has worked to purify, perfect, teach and bless his people.

Although it is a groaning creation

(Rom.8:18-23) awaiting that glorious day of deliverance, we can rejoice even now in the knowledge that "... our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." II Cor. 4:17.

Beyond doubt some afflictions are the result of willful or ignorant disobedience to laws that were ordained by God for our good. These laws may be natural, spiritual, civil or otherwise. Honor and obedience to these laws brings the blessing promised to us by their author. Continued disobedience will bring a harvest of trouble, sorrow, and death. According to Galatians 6:7-9, we reap what we sow, here and in eternity to come. David was so acquainted with the principle of affliction until he gives us a storehouse of knowledge on the subject in the Psalms. Psalms 107:17 says, "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted."

David's prayer in Psalms 51 is the story of a man greatly afflicted because of his sin. Although his sorrow and distress were almost unbearable he knew God's Judgments were right and that God had, in faithfulness, afflicted him. Psalms 119:75. No doubt it was such faith as this that caused David to be looked upon as a man after God's own heart. I Sam. 13:14.

Job's suffering and affliction cannot be attributed to sin as in the case of David. The Lord called him "a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." He was such an example of righteousness until the Lord pointed him out to Satan by saying, "... there is none like him in the earth ..." Job 1:8.

Of course Satan hated Job for his righteousness and he challenged the Lord to let him afflict him so he could prove that Job was serving God for selfish purposes. In this case Job became a spectacle unto angels and men proving that God had a man that would praise and glorify him in spite of intense sufferings.

After the loss of his herds, his flocks, his servants and the death of his children, Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly. His answer to all this disaster was "... naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21-22.

After days of intense suffering with boils inflicted by Satan, Job finally cursed his day and said, "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived." Job 3:1-2.

Job's experience is a good example of acute depression when the afflicted one feels totally abandoned by his God.

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I

shall come forth as gold." Job 23:8-10.

However, it was Job's faith, even the faith that overcomes the world (I John 5:4-5) that enabled him to say, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10.

Job's faith was the same faith that Abraham had that was "counted unto to him for righteousness." Rom.5:3. In spite of Job's righteousness when finally confronted by the Lord, his mouth was shut as he cried out, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Job 40:4.

All of this goes to show us that the corruption of the natural man would never let him live in the presence of a holy God. Isaiah's reaction to his vision of the Lord was very similar to Job's. After seeing the Lord upon a throne high and lifted up, Isaiah cried out, "... woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts." Isaiah 6:5.

As good a man as Job was his suffering changed his concept of God and himself and brought him into a new dimension of humility and spiritual reality. This is why he said what he did in Job 42:2-6. "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

We too need to be careful lest we grow bitter in our afflictions thinking that we do not deserve such a fate. God may be bringing us into a new dimension of spiritual reality. From this example and others we can understand why the corruption of the Adam nature make it necessary for the Lord to deliver us "unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." II Cor. 4:11.

#### DOESN'T AFFLICT WILLINGLY

Lam. 3:33 says, "For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men."

God is not a sadist. It is not his nature or desire to afflict or cause men to suffer. To have an orderly, harmonious creation, including the universe, God's plan in the beginning was inspired by infinite wisdom. Even as man must have a plan to build a house, a dam, an airplane, a computer, a skyscraper or a great bridge, God himself had a plan in the beginning.

This plan was drawn with infinite care and wisdom. The principles embodied in this plan took into consideration time and eternity. Nothing was left out or overlooked. Celestial beings and terrestrial beings, things visible and

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things invisible were all included. Because of the complexity of this vast and eternal plan, principles, guidelines or laws were decreed and set in motion.

Strange as it may seem these principles or laws, both positive and negative, are implemented by God through his Son Jesus Christ, man, angels and devils. In the original creation all things were good and holy. But God gave them liberty (or latitude) to serve him or rebel. Even Satan and his demonic hosts have certain powers, liberties and rights that will not be taken away from them until their day is over and they are cast into the lake of fire.

In the meantime regardless of our afflictions of mind and body, all things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Rom. 8:28. It is through affliction and suffering that we draw nigh to God and are taught many things we could not learn otherwise.

However, let's ever remember that God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. God would have us to know and overcome the adverse forces of evil and walk in harmony with his eternal kingdom.

#### THE DIFFERENCE

The believer and the unbeliever alike experience varying degrees of affliction at times. However, there is a difference in their understanding and reaction to suffering whether it be mental or physical. Matt. 5:8 says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

This is the essential difference between the believer and the unbeliever. Like Moses, the believer will look beyond his adversity and see him who is invisible. Heb.11:27. Afflictions will cause the believer to turn and seek the Lord. Even though he may not have all the answers to his affliction, he is able to see God in his suffering and turn to him for help. David said, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears." Psalms 18:6.

David often found himself in the place of distress and affliction. This is why he said, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Psalms 121:1-2.

In the case of an unbeliever, affliction or trouble causes him to consult his doctor or psychiatrist. Some will go to a fortune teller or consult their astrology counsellor. Many turn to drugs or drink trying to escape from their affliction. In some cases of acute depression without faith or hope in God some commit suicide.

Like never before I believe God is working with and preparing his little remnant for the end of the age. Beyond doubt he is teaching us the real purpose behind the afflictions of the righteous. It is our hope and prayer that these scattered thoughts will be a ray of light to some who are surrounded by the darkness of affliction and mental oppression.

#### **GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**

David said in Psalms 119:75, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

Such sayings as this are another reason David was called a man after God's own heart. Surely it takes faith to accept God's judgments as being right and to recognize that our afflictions are the result of his faithfulness. This is truly humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God that he might exalt us in due time. I Peter 5:6.

#### **EXPRESSION OF GOD'S LOVE**

When we are afflicted or suffering acute mental depression, Satan will do everything in his power to make you doubt God's love and concern for you. Satan, the accuser (Rev. 12:10), has always worked at accusing man to man, God to man and man to God. Although affliction or severe mental depression will try our faith like nothing else, the Lord assures us through the prophet Isaiah that he will comfort and have mercy upon his afflicted.

Let's note the Lord's word to us in Isaiah 49:13-16. "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

"But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me"

Since God does not afflict willingly there is an infinitely wise purpose in our suffering.

#### **CAUSES US TO LEARN**

In Psalm 119:71 David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."

This is going a step farther in David's understanding and appreciation of affliction. By understanding God's purpose in his affliction David could now say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn thy statutes."

Learning God's statutes or word is of vital importance to the child of God. If we have the seed of faith in our hearts affliction will drive us to God's word for strength and comfort. No longer will we read God's word casually but we will search it with all diligence looking for that word of faith and hope that will help us in our distress.

Help and comfort from the scriptures will also help us to better appreciate what Jesus meant when he said, "... Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4.

Even as our physical lives are nurtured and sustained by good food our inner man is nurtured by the living word of God. God's word is more than a means of expression or vehicle for thought. Jesus said, "... the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63.

#### **TEACHES OBEDIENCE**

In Psalm 119:67, David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."

Too much of our apprehension of truth or God's word is unproven theory. It is not something we practice or live by. I can tell you from personal experience it is much easier to tell others how it ought to be done than it is to practice it yourself. Affliction and suffering will teach us the fear of the Lord and purify and perfect us like nothing else. According to I Peter 1:2, we are purified through obedience to the truth.

In Isaiah 48:10 the Lord says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

No doubt this is what Peter had in mind when he spoke of the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire. I Peter 1:7.

#### **PATIENCE**

One of the most needed virtues in a human being is patience. By nature we have none. The temper tantrums of small children and even infants are symptomatic of the whole human race. Patience has to be worked in us by the grace of God, usually through suffering. This is actually what James is talking about in James 1:2-7. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

Too many of God's children are like the waves of the sea driven with wind and tossed to and fro. (See also Eph. 4:14).

#### **JESUS, OUR EXAMPLE**

Our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed the principle of obedience through suffering. Heb. 5:8-9 says, "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

If this were true of our Lord Jesus Christ, how much more is it necessary for us?

Obedience is necessary if we are to bear the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Like the branches that bear fruit it is necessary for God

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to purge us through affliction that we might bring forth more fruit. John 15:2. This purging, affliction or chastening as it is called by Paul, is most grievous to those experiencing it. But in process of time it will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Heb. 12:5-11.

Beyond doubt the road to reigning with Christ and bearing fruit is through suffering. This is why Paul said in II Tim. 2:10-12, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."

Suffering teaches and better fits us as vessels of the Lord to help others. As said elsewhere, it's one thing to know these things by theory and another to experience them personally. Suffering causes us to be sensitive and sympathetic toward others who are suffering.

#### WHEN AFFLICTED?

The first step on the road to deliverance when one is afflicted is prayer. Prayer is simply communication with God who understands and loves you more than all other beings in the universe. James 5:13 says, "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray."

Just ordinary depression or anxiety will go when we have a good season of prayer. This no doubt is what Paul meant in Phil. 4:6-7 where he said, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Closer attention to such scriptures as these might enable us to avoid acute depression and intense suffering that could take weeks or even months to overcome.

However there is deliverance from the horrible pit of acute depression and affliction if we will utterly cast ourselves upon the Lord. Although the heavens may seem silent for a long time when you first begin to seek God, HE IS LISTENING. Our problem is not that God is not listening but that he is simply waiting on us to reach the place where we can hear him. This can be our most trying time. Like a terrible nightmare that seems to have no end, we can reach such a place of utter despair and desolation until, like Job, we will curse the day we were born.

Above all things we must not give up. The Lord is faithful and will come to our rescue when his purpose has been accomplished in us. Rather than give up we must intensify our prayer and supplication to him. It would be good if you could find grace to give him praise and glory.

However the spirit of mourning and depression may be so great upon you until you can't praise God. Your mind is so completely occupied with your own misery you can't concentrate on anything else. At this point you must continue to look to the Lord letting him know that he is your only hope. Above all don't forget Heb. 4:15 which says that he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Maintaining this position will bring you into a place of brokenness and contrition. This brokenness will be a humbling experience. It will cause you to search your heart and change your attitude about many things. It will enable you to forgive people and even pray for your enemies. David said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17.

Although you are broken before the Lord you are still miserable and wretched because you have no faith to overcome your condition or fight the adversary. At this point you may not even recognize that much of your affliction is Satanic oppression. Remember that Satan takes things imagined and real to afflict and oppress us. In cases of severe or acute depression you may be so affected in your mind until you cannot concentrate or do anything that requires mental effort.

However in spite of your grief and torment of mind you can look to the Lord until help comes. Isaiah 45:22 says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

When in the throes of such mental anguish or affliction it is difficult to look to the Lord. Your mind has occupied itself so long with your misery and trouble until it is with great effort you begin to change this pattern.

#### **USE OF THE WORD**

Actually your help will come from the Lord as you begin to search the scriptures and meditate upon his eternal promises. In the final analysis this is one of God's great purposes in drawing you to himself through your affliction.

During a time of trial or affliction your confession is very important. Remember the power of life and death is in the tongue. Everything is against a positive confession when you are acutely depressed. Your flesh, the devil and the world are all against you. You must think and confess the positive promises of God's word. When the devil tells you that there is no use or that you can't, you must say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.

David constantly went to the word for help in time of trouble. He fully realized that God's help was on the basis of what was written. In Psalm 119:107 David said, "I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word."

In Psalm 119:49 David said, "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou has caused me to hope."

In this Psalm David is not asking the Lord

to remember him but to remember His word upon which he had caused him to hope. David's appeal to the Lord here was on the basis of the word he had put his hope in. David realized that God could not deny His word.

Psalm 105:8-10 says, "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And to Israel for an everlasting covenant."

God actually ministered strength and comfort to David through the word. As already stated, God's word is not just a vehicle that conveys thought. The New Testament from 26 Translations by Zondervan says that the word of God is living and active. It is full of life and power. The consensus of opinion by the various translators is that God's word is a manifestation of himself in virtue, life, energy and power. It is active, creative and effectual.

God has ordained to reach our minds, our bodies and our entire being through his word. Even as electrical power must have a conductor to transmit that power through, God's life and power is transmitted to us through his word

Because of this principle David said in Psalm 119:50, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me."

It will be noted from David's saying above that the word was a life giving force that comforted and quickened, or imparted, life to him.

David didn't just appreciate the word as wise or philosophical sayings but he realized it was his salvation in his day of trouble. This is why he said in Psalm 119: 92-93, "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me."

How true this saying of David is! Surely we would all perish in our affliction if we did not have God's word to quicken and comfort us. We would be like a drowning man without a life jacket. This is why it is vital that you turn to God's word in your time of affliction.

Read it, meditate upon it, quote it to yourself, to the devil and above all, to the Lord. As you pray and continue to seek God, stand on his word, thank God for it, claim its promises and praise God for the answer.

Let's remember, "... man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4.

Daniel 12:10 says, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

According to this scripture, the wise will understand and respond by submitting themselves to the purifying process that tries them and makes them white. At the same time the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand.

The purifying process of affliction preceding Continued on Page 6 PAGE 6 AUGUST-OCTOBER 2021

#### **Afflictions**

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the end of the gospel dispensation is upon us. Like the priests that led the way and carried the ark of the covenant down into Jordan, the ministry that God uses to lead his people in these last days must go first. They must be the first in and the last out.

I believe Ezekiel 20:33-38 is in process of being fulfilled. Verse 33 says, "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you."

According to this verse, God is going to rule over his people. For too long we have been allowed to drift along more or less serving God when it was convenient for us. With a stretched out arm with fury poured out the Lord is going to change this. Let's not doubt for a moment that God can bring us to our knees.

I believe the Lord has been separating an elect remnant from the common multitude of professing Christians and bringing them into a wilderness of the people where he has been pleading with them face to face. Through the word by the Holy Spirit, God has been speaking to us to prepare us for a future crossing.

In the same manner that God dealt with Israel in the wilderness of the land of Egypt before taking them across Jordan into the promised land, he is now dealing with his people for the greatest crossing of all time. This crossing will be from time to eternity at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to Ezekiel 20:37, this remnant will pass under the rod and into the bond of the covenant. This rod symbolizes God's power and authority. Coming under the rod is submission or surrender to God and his authority.

This coming under divine authority is a prelude to coming into the bond of the covenant. Many people want the power and blessings of God's eternal covenant without surrendering their lives. They want to rule but not be ruled over

As Joshua said to the people before the crossing of Jordan, "... sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." Joshua 3:5.

## A Great Mystery

Continued From Page 1

New Testament and invariably has reference to spiritual things, or things that can only be discerned with the help of God's Spirit.

Notice that Christ (Eph. 3:4), the kingdom of God (Mk. 4:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the faith (I Tim. 3:9), and Babylon (Rev. 17:5), among other things are called mysteries. All things pertaining to the invisible realm or the realm of spirit (good or evil) are mysteries. Mysteries must be revealed by God himself. Daniel 2:22. I Cor. 2:11. No one, however brilliant or wise, can understand these mysteries. I Cor. 2:14.

Significantly, this mystery of Christ and his church was unique in that it was a "great mystery." It was something that went beyond the ordinary in the realm of mysteries. The scope of this great mystery was something vitally important that we need to understand.

We cannot expect the unbelieving world to understand this great mystery, but the truth is, this blight of unbelief also greatly affects the church. How can we have faith to do great things when we do not really believe that God is with us?

An understanding of the many aspects of this "great mystery" will enable us to enter the realm of faith and power experienced by the early church. It takes the keys of truth to unlock the various aspects of this great mystery and to ultimately release the life of Christ through his body, the church. Daniel 11:32 says, "...But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

#### **A Union**

Because of the nature of the union of man and woman in marriage, it is used as a type of the union of Christ and his body, the church. In the marriage union, man and woman forsake all others, including mother and father, to become one with each other. Taking precedence over all other relationships, the marriage union should be so complete that the two thus joined become one flesh.

Although marriage is a union of man and woman for life, it is an earthly relationship and therefore temporal. Matt. 22:30. Christ and the church is the union of God and man for eternity. Although it takes place on earth and involves our bodies and minds, it is spiritual, heavenly and eternal. I Cor. 6:17 says, "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

#### Separation

Simultaneously with the union of God and man there comes a separation of man from those things that alienate him from God. This consists principally of having his own way, being his own lord in his own environment. The purpose of the gospel is to separate him from all this by showing him something far better than earthly treasures. Heb. 11:24-27.

There is a practical aspect to this separation that we need to see also. As long as we are a part of any society — national, racial, political, or religious — we listen to the voice of that society and reflect its belief and character. This is why the call of God involves separation from country, kindred and our father's house. Gen. 12:1. God cannot speak to us as long as we are listening to the voice of our environment.

The purpose of the call of Abraham by Jehovah was to have a people separated from the mainstream of humanity unto himself. God wanted a people with whom he could make his covenant, people with whom he could share his eternal glory, a people to whom he could reveal himself and who would represent him in the earth. Through this separated people he would also reveal himself to others. This sepa-

ration included Abraham's country, kindred and his father's house.

Coming over into the New Testament, we can see that the principle of separation still accompanies the call of God. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." II Cor. 6:17-18.

#### A New Relationship

The call of God that separates us from the world of natural men joins us to the family of God through the new birth. Jn. 1:12-13, 3:1-16. This spiritual union that makes us one flesh with God's family is part of the great mystery that transcends all earthly relationships.

When told that his mother and brothers desired to speak with him, Jesus answered and said, "...who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." Matt. 12:47-49. See also Matt. 10:34-38.

Surely it is significant that Jesus made a point of emphasizing his spiritual relationship with his disciples above that of his flesh and blood family. Ordinarily, such tender ties are not to be compared with any other relationship. To many, the most important thing on earth is their immediate family; this is their life.

Such devotion is good within certain limits. Beyond those limits, it becomes a form of idolatry that keeps men from God and works evil for all involved. This is because so very few have the grace of God to deny their own flesh and blood. Many children are spoiled and made unfit for life by over-solicitous parents who actually hinder them from developing and becoming responsible, self-reliant adults.

When God called Abraham from his country, kindred and his father's house it was because he wanted to form a family of his own whose vision went beyond the confines of Abraham's own selfish interests. As long as Abraham's vision was limited to the problems, needs and desires of his own flesh and blood he could never really be interested in God, or God's family and kingdom. This was true in Abraham's day, in Christ's day and it is still true today.

The natural man's love for his own (Jn. 15:19) is a very poor type of God's love for his eternal family. As Isaiah the prophet expressed it, God's love is a love that never forgets nor forsakes its own. Isaiah 49:15-16 says, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." This also demonstrates why Jesus emphasized his relationship with his disciples

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### **A Great Mystery**

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over that of his natural mother and brethren. His vision went beyond carnal earthly relationship that is often vain and temporal. Like Abraham, he, too, was looking for that city where man's relationship with God and his brother would be glorious and eternal. He understood that all earthly relationship ends at the grave but spiritual relationship continues on into eternity.

#### A New Fellowship

This new relationship also results in a new fellowship with God, the Father; his Son, Jesus Christ; and members of Christ's body. I Jn. 1:3. Called a mystery by Paul in Eph. 3:9, truly it is a mystery to the world who cannot see nor understand such fellowship. Unbelievers feel ill at ease and out of place in the presence of true Christian fellowship; it can only be understood and appreciated by those who are a part of it.

There are many things that serve as a basis for fellowship in the world. These all vary according to the taste, culture and environmental training of the person. But when we come to Christ there is one thing which we all have in common that transcends all others: the reality of the living Christ who bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

Regardless of our culture or geographical state, the love of God that dwells in us will bring us to the fellowship of the saints. I Jn. 5:1 says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him."

#### **Many Members**

Another aspect of this great mystery is that membership in this body is open to every one who believes the gospel. Rom. 1:16, 10:12-13. From the entrance of sin into the world to this day, the human race has been split and divided into many divisions. Not only has man been alienated from God, but he has also been alienated from his fellow man, separated into many hostile camps. Christ, who is our peace, has broken down these walls of enmity and made us one through the cross.

The Bible still says, "For God so loved the World..." This love crosses all religious, social, economic and national barriers. When the church is moving in the power of the Holy Spirit, it crosses all barriers of prejudice and preaches the gospel to every creature. He that would have God's power and blessings upon him must be free to move in God's love.

I Cor. 12:13 says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." At the coming of Christ, the principal wall of division was between Jew and Gentile. Thinking himself to be chosen of God, the natural Jew was blind to spiritual reality. Thinking themselves

to be honored of God, the Jews despised the Gentile and rejected their Messiah. As natural descendants of Abraham, they had no claim on God or his covenant. Matt. 3:9.

#### Two Seeds

From Abraham there came forth two seeds, one natural and one spiritual. Gal. 4:22-23. Ishmael was the natural seed and Isaac was the spiritual seed. Rom. 9:7.

Unable to bear the reproach of being childless, Sarah gave her Egyptian maid, Hagar, to Abraham that she might have children by her. The result was Ishmael, a product of the flesh, a type of human effort or works. This is also a type of human religious effort in the professing church today — the results of which will never inherit the kingdom of God.

Isaac was supernaturally brought forth, according to God's promise to Abraham. In fact, God purposely made Sarah barren and waited until Abraham was impotent to give them Isaac. He wanted them to know beyond any shadow of doubt that this son of promise, the true heir, was not a product of the law of nature. He also wanted them to know that the strength of his covenant was not dependent on human resources.

The true Jew, or seed of Abraham, was never the natural seed of Abraham any more than the natural seed of the Gentile is a Christian today. The true seed always has been and always will be spiritual. It is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free. As Paul says in Gal. 3:29, "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

#### Advantage of Jew

It is true that until the coming of Christ and Israel's rejection of him as their Messiah, the Jew had a definite advantage over the Gentiles; this was because the oracles of God were committed to them. The word "oracle" means "utterance of God." They were favored in that they had God's truth in the earth. Rom. 3:1-2, 9:4-5.

Until the coming of Christ, Gentile nations had no prophets and were destitute of the truth. This is why Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22.

However, there were individuals from among the Gentile nations that joined Israel and partook of the same covenant God made with Abraham. Examples are Rahab, the harlot, and Ruth, the Moabitess. Joshua 6:25, Hebrews 11:31 and Ruth 1:16. I might also add that the righteous line of seed that started with Adam in the garden continued through such individuals as Rahab and Ruth, showing us that Gentiles could partake of God's righteousness as well as the Jew.

God's purpose to have a family of his own with whom he could share his eternal glory did not start with Abraham. This was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:3-5. The elective process of redemption began with God's provision of slain animal

skins to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness in the garden of Eden. Gen. 3:21.

#### A Remnant

Abraham and the nation Israel were simply part of the unfolding elective process in which God sovereignly purposed to choose from among all nations a people for his glory. Gen. 22:18. Rev. 7:9, 21:24. Actually Abraham fathered many nations (Gen. 17:4-5) in addition to natural Israel, which was not the true Israel of God.

True Israel was a very small remnant within the confines of the nation as a whole. Rom. 9:6-7, 9:27. Although God watched over and protected natural Israel, this protection was really for the sake of the true elect remnant. Were it not for this remnant, God would have destroyed the whole nation as he did Sodom and Gomorrah. Isaiah 1:9.

May I hasten to add that it is still this very small remnant in the earth today that keeps God's wrath from destroying the world. As Israel the nation was favored and blessed because of the righteous remnant within, God has, in like manner, blessed and favored some of the Gentile nations because of the righteous remnant within them.

The fact that the righteous seed has always been a very small remnant in the earth is a revelation of no small magnitude. It is a truth that is born out in the Old and New Testaments. I Kings 19:14-18. Rom. 11:1-5, 9:27-29. It will be noticed in Rom. 9:29, where Paul is quoting from Isaiah 1:9, that it was necessary for God, by a sovereign act of election, to preserve a very small remnant of people. Otherwise, they would have all been destroyed by fire and brimstone as Sodom and Gomorrah were. In Elijah's day, the number that God sovereignly spared out of all Israel was seven thousand.

Perhaps the greatest example of this tiny righteous remnant is the eight persons whom God delivered from death by the flood, through the ark. The earth was in such an apostate condition until only eight people believed God and fled to the ark for safety.

Coming over into the New Testament, we find it is still a very small remnant of people that had a heart for God and could recognize Jesus as their Messiah. The national rejection of Christ was almost total, and John considered it such by saying, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:11.

Jesus, himself, confirmed this principle of a small remnant of believers by saying, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:13-14.

The disciples themselves understood the Lord to teach this when they asked him, "... Lord are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate;

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### **A Great Mystery**

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for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:23-24.

Please note that the reason people are not going to get in is not because they don't try. Undoubtedly, most of the religious effort put forth by mankind from the Garden of Eden to this day has failed to gain him an entrance into the kingdom of God. Like Cain, many have tried and have not been able. Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7:22-23.

The reason that Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets in Matthew 7:15 is because he knew they would religiously deceive most

## **Broadcasts**

#### **Television Broadcast**

— (30 Minutes Weekly) —

#### **Local Broadcasts**

**Albuquerque, NM** - KAZQ - TV 32 Sun. 7:30 AM

**Birmingham-Tuscaloosa, AL** - WVUA TV-23 Sun. 6:30 AM

Cape Girardeau, MO - KFVS/QFVS - DT 12.2, CW Sun. 9:30 AM

> Cheyenne, WY - KGWN TV-5 Sun. 6:30 AM

Chicago, IL - WJYS TV-62 Sun. 7:00 AM

**Greenville, SC** - WGGS TV-16 Sun. 7:00 PM

Jacksonville, FL - WTLV - Ch. 12 HD Sun. 6:00 AM

**Joplin, MO** - KODE - Ch. 12 ABC Sun. 6:30 AM (Starts 4/4/21)

**Lansing, Michigan** - WLAJ-DT 53.2 CW Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Los Angeles, CA - KDOC-TV 56 Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Macon, GA - WGXA TV-24 Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Minneapolis, MN - WUCW-TV CW23 Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Palatka, Florida - WJGV-CD 48 Sunday, 6:30 A.M. and Monday, 3:30 A.M.

> Phoenix, AZ - KASW-TV CW6 Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

**Pittsburgh, PA** - WPGH-TV FOX Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

**Rapid City, SD** - KEVN-TV 7.1 Fox Sunday, 6:00 A.M.

San Francisco, Oakland, California

KBCW TV-44 - Sunday, 6:00 A.M.

Sioux City, IA - KPTH TV-14 CBS Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Springfield, MO - KOZL TV-27 My Network TV

Sunday, 6:30 A.M. (Starting 4/4/21)

**Topeka, KS** - KTMJ TV-43 FOX

Sunday, 6:30 A.M. (Starting 4/4/21)

of mankind about the kingdom of God. Matt. 24:5

Like Sarah, in order to gain converts, the church world, beginning with Constantine, has resorted to carnal methods. Instead of preaching the Word of God and depending on the Holy Ghost, the church has used proof-text salvation, evangelistic psychology and good works to gain their converts.

When Rome married the church, Constantine marched the soldiers by the thousands down into the water and had them baptized, supposedly converting them to Christianity. Rome isn't the only one that has been guilty of making church members out of the unconverted.

Perhaps the greatest hindrance to the work of the church in our generation is the belief that great numbers, beautiful buildings and great religious works are the important things. (Is. 66:1-2). The church itself operates on the same premise as does the business world: so many contacts produces a certain number of converts. Instead of being a living organism manifesting the life of Christ, the church has become a vast organization geared to the methods and dictates of our modern business world.

Although it is rich and outwardly impressive to the world, its converts, like Hagar and Ishmael, are spiritually destitute! Christened

#### **RADIO STATIONS**

Monday - Friday

Stat.	Freq.	Location	Time
WDJS	102.5 FM	Goldsboro, NC	9:00 AM
WEMM	107.9 FM	Huntington, WV	11:00 AM
WDJS	1430 AM	Mt. Olive, NC	9:00 AM
WWVA	1170 AM	Wheeling, WV	9:30 PM

#### **Short Wave Radio**

WWRMI Radio Miami International South America and the Caribbean Mon.-Fri.: 9:45 AM Eastern time - 9955 KHz North America and Canada Mon.-Fri.: 7:15 PM Eastern Time - 9395 KHz

Voice of Hope World Radio Network South, Central, and West Africa Mon.-Fri.: 1530 UTC 4965, 6065, 9680, 11680, 13680 kHz Available via live webstream at: www.voiceofhope.com

#### **TV Network Broadcast**

(30 Minutes Weekly) –

#### The NRB Network (DirecTV 378)

Sunday - 6:30 AM Eastern Monday - 3:30 AM Eastern

#### **VTN - Little Rock Arkansas**

Online or Cable Sunday - 1:30 PM Central

#### SacFaith TV - Sacramento, CA

Monday - 8:00 AM Pacific Time Tuesday - 8:30 PM Pacific Time Watch Online or on Cable Channels Comcast 20 / AT&T 14 / Consolidated 19 when they are born, baptized when they are eight and confirmed at twelve, most of them go through life having never experienced the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Once in a great while, one of them will be apprehended by the Lord and brought to the new birth through contact with God's people. Though outwardly these sheep are numbered with the desolate group that has no head (Christ), inwardly they are one with Sarah and Isaac who are destined by God to inherit the promises. Gal. 4:22-31.

However, in spite of the futile efforts of the religious world in bringing forth far more Ishmaels than Isaacs, God is fulfilling his purpose through election. Elijah complained to God that Israel had thrown down his altars, forsaken his covenant and killed his prophets. In his despair, Elijah felt that he alone was left in the earth to champion the cause of Jehovah. The Lord's answer to his overwrought prophet was that he had reserved seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal. I Kings 19:10-18. Romans 11:1-10.

Israel's failure to apprehend the true righteousness of God, which is by faith, did in no wise hinder the plan of God to save his elect remnant. This remnant, foreknown of God from the foundation of the world, inherited the same promises as Isaac. These "children of promise" have never been cast away and never will be. Rom. 11:1-2.

Another marvelous thing about this remnant is that they are the true elect of God, and, in process of time, they will hear his voice. John 8:47, 10:26-27. The true church of Jesus Christ has a perfect evangelistic program. It is not dependent on advertising schemes designed to draw a crowd. Neither does it major on signs and wonders, nor does it exalt human personalities. It is dependent on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to work in men's hearts. And rather than produce Ishmaelites it will, if necessary, wait twenty-five years until God sends the son of promise, Isaac.

Although we are privileged to be a part of the great election process in the work of saving this remnant, God will not fail. Our weakness, our instability and human failure will not thwart the plan of our great sovereign God. Everything is moving according to God's prophetic timetable. With strictest determinism, unwavering skill, and with irresistible authority, God is drawing us to the climax of the ages when our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will come with power and great glory to claim his remnant church.

In the meantime, let's send the message, loud and clear. There is some lost sheep somewhere that will hear. One day, and it may not be long, the last lost sheep will hear his voice and join the heavenly throng.

Visit Midnight Cry Ministries on the web:

www.midnightcry.org