

2007 Proclaimer

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, .. to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord!" - Isa.61:1-2

A teaching and exhortation medium by members of the
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July 22nd, 2007

Background of Darkness

By Tom Moore

Notice these words of David as he thanks the Almighty for all the deliverances and benefits that he had experienced throughout the whole of his life - a life filled with many dark moments:

"Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse saith, And the man who was raised on high saith, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel: The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me: One that ruleth over men righteously, That ruleth in the fear of God, He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, A morning without clouds, When the tender grass springeth out of the earth, Through clear shining after rain"
(2 Sam 23:1-4).

Is not the light of a lamp much more welcome at midnight than at noon? Scientists would be quick to tell us that the lamp doesn't really shine any more brightly when it's dark than when it's light - the darkness only makes it appear so by its contrast. But emotionally, what a difference the darkness makes! Without the background supplied by the darkness, we'd hardly love the light as we do.

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Perhaps this explains why the lives of some seem to have more depth, contrast and brilliance than others. Those who've battled to maintain a luminous faith through serious failure or significant sorrow, do not have a faith that is any more "real" than another's, but it certainly "seems" so among the background of difficulty. Are we not drawn to this type of luminous faith?

The attractive power of David's passionate love for God shines with such splendor partly because of the background of failures from which he had to recover. The fleeing for his life from the hand Saul, the sin with Bathsheba, and the pain of Absalom's rebellion are all a part of the background of darkness that allowed the light of faith to shine for all to see.

And consider a man like Paul. He never staggered morally, but here was a man whose desire for God blazed with a special brightness because of the long, dark years of his lonely travail as an apostle. The struggle only made his hope more precious. The apostle Paul declared,

"For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that

have loved his appearing" (2 Tim 4:6-8).

The suggestion here isn't that sorrow should be invited into our lives. But when it makes an appearance, as it will in the life of anyone who dwells on this planet, we can make it our aim to shine all the more radiantly against the dark background that has developed. Our Lord was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3), and we love Him dearly for having tasted the salt of our tears. Unlike Him, our sorrows are often the consequence of our own misdeeds. But whether the darkness is of sin or some other sorrow, we can seek God in such a way as to brighten our character with the brilliance of tested faith. (June 13th, 2006)

WHAT'S YOUR TRADITION?

By Alan Smith

It is said that during a service at an old synagogue in Eastern Europe, when the Shema prayer was said, half the congregants stood up and half remained sitting.

The half that was seated started yelling at those standing to sit down, and the ones standing yelled at the ones sitting to stand up.

The rabbi, learned as he was in the Law and commentaries, didn't know what to do. His congregation suggested that he consult a housebound 98-year-old man, who was one of the original founders of their temple. The rabbi hoped the elderly man would be able to tell him what the actual temple tradition was, so he went to the nursing home with a

representative of each faction of the congregation.

The one whose followers stood during Shema said to the old man, "Is it our tradition to stand during this prayer?" The old man answered, "No, that is not our tradition."

The one whose followers sat asked, "Is it our tradition to sit during Shema?" The old man answered, "No, that is not our tradition."

Then the rabbi said to the old man, "The congregants fight all the time, yelling at each other about whether they should sit or stand..."

The old man interrupted, exclaiming, "***THAT is our tradition!***"

I think I've known some congregations with that same tradition! :-). Seriously, though, what is our tradition? What is it that we have done over and over until it is what we are known for? Is it our posture in prayer? Or is it our fussing and arguing with one another?

Traditions of men are to be renounced when they oppose the commandments of God (**Mark 7:9**), but tradition is nothing more than we way we normally do things. Wouldn't it be great to have a tradition of loving service to God? Or a tradition of unity?

The church in Thessalonica had a great tradition. Paul speaks of it as he opens his second letter to them:

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure." (**2 Thess 1:3-4**)

What's your tradition?

Have a great day!
Alan Smith

THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS

Jason & Marie Anderson
Frank & Tina Ayers
Edith Ayers
Jamie Ayers
Jack & Dorothy Bailey
Margie Buchanan
Julie Bruce
Bill Cain
Larry Cain
Karen Daly
Robert (Bob) Erickson
Helen Gray
Margaret Holcomb
Chuck House
Vivian Jones
Jean McCarty
Jeffry & Kaye Pennant
Berniece Raven
Wendell and Irma Rapier
Rosie Reagan
Glenn & LaurieAnn Reagan
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Brad Rusk family
Bill & Rena Schultz
The Brad Shuck Family
Vern Smith
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Shirley Watkins
Ellie Williams
Gordon & Glenda Wilson

TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Karen Daly
Rick Rittenhouse
Aaron Robertson
David Lovett
Gordon Wilson

IN THE MILITARY

Jason Anderson
David Lovett
Aaron Robertson
Trent Walsh

"I SURRENDER! ~ I SURRENDER!"

Jer 38:17-23

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Many of those we read about in the Bible have suffered many things in order to uphold their faith in God and to sustain His honor among men!
- B. From the very beginning of man on the earth, he has "given in" to Satan's temptations!
 - 1. Adam & Eve surrendered in the garden, and gave up access to the Tree of Life.
 - 2. Cain sinned and surrendered his good standing with God.
 - 3. The lepers in **2 Kings 7:3-4**
- C. No matter how severe his life became, Paul never surrendered to Satan.
 - 1. Paul never had the desire or attitude to surrender the cause of the Lord!
 - 2. We must be strong enough today to remain faithful as God's children!
- D. Defeat often results from the condition of a person's attitude; remember the words of Solomon in **Prov.23:7.**
 - 1. WE can what God wants done if we **really want to do it!**
 - 2. That is, if we don't have a "defeatist's attitude" and don't start THINKING and TALKING like a loser!
- E. The question of the moment is: "Who among us has a *heart to surrender to Satan?*"
 - 1. Perhaps some bible examples will help US keep a right perception about things!
 - 2. **Do you remember?**

I. THE ISRAELITES AT THE RED SEA.

- A. Rehearse the bondage story, up to the final deliverance.
- B. They arrived at the Red Sea, saw Pharaoh and said, "We should be back in Egypt!"
- C. They were speaking out loud their heart's desires for **surrendering!**
 - 1. This was GOD'S DOINGS, and not theirs! *They underestimated God's ability!*
 - 2. If we decide we "can't be aggressive for Christ", we've surrendered!

II. NEXT, LOOK AT JOB'S WIFE. Cf. Job 2:

- A. Job lost everything, was filled with sores and is SO uncomfortable!
- B. His wife, who should have "loved & honored him" tried to make him a loser!
- C. In difficult times or situations, many are ready to "give up!"

III. THE MAN WITH ONE TALENT. Matt 25:18-30.

- A. He excused himself with ~ "I was afraid and hid thy talent in the earth!"
- B. Again, how many people today do you know who seemingly are acting like this?
- C. The Lord holds each of us accountable ~ for DOING WHAT WE CAN!

V. FINALLY, CONSIDER FELIX. Acts 24:25.

- A. Felix wanted "a more convenient season" to act on Paul's persuasion!
- B. People today procrastinate because of the great promise needed to be saved!
- C. Look what our salvation demanded on God's part: giving His Son! **Lk 17:10**

IN SUMMARY:

- A. The *attitude and language of "SURRENDERING"* is one of Satan's best weapons.
- B. We either honor God with faith, or dishonor by surrendering to Satan.
- C. WHAT LANGUAGE do you speak ~ surrender or allegiance?