



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.7.6

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 23-27 of the book *Evidence of Things Unseen*.

If we have eyes to see, we will begin to discern meaning in many things throughout Scripture that are not apparent to the average reader. In recent issues I have been speaking of the significance of numbers.

Yahweh does all things by design. He puts great thought and purpose behind all things that He does. These things are intentionally hidden from the eyes of man, but man is called to search these things out.

Proverbs 25:2

It is the glory of God to

conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Many readers of the Scriptures do not see the veiled truths of God hidden in the Bible. They only understand things on a surface level, taking things as literally as possible. They have not discovered that what is obvious on a natural level is designed to reveal hidden spiritual truths.

In the gospel of John we are told that it was Christ who spoke all things into existence. Apart from Him there was nothing created that has been created. Christ has always spoken in parables that some might see, and others might not.

Matthew 13:34-35

All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable, so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world."

God would have His people to search out the "hidden things" of His word. Those who are casual in their study of the Bible will not perceive those things that are reserved for those who love God and His word.

Food for Thought

"Gratitude can be a vaccine that can prevent the invasion of a disgruntled attitude. As antitoxins prevent the disastrous effects of certain poisons and diseases, thanksgiving destroys the poison of faultfinding and grumbling. When trouble has smitten us, a spirit of thanksgiving is a soothing antiseptic."

John Henry Jowett

Scripture Memory

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

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Evidence of Things Unseen

A Titus Two Woman

In the months that followed our time on Jekyll Island, where My wife and I celebrated our sixteenth wedding anniversary, the Lord continued to bring about many new beginnings in our home. We had not been in our townhouse long, and I had only been teaching college classes a short time, when God began leading my wife to make some profound changes in her life. I will let Tony share this in her own words.

The Father began speaking to me in January of 2001 about the head covering. I began to diligently study

I knew right away that He was speaking about me covering my head...

the Word and pray about this asking the Father to show me if this was for today. My husband has believed in the covering from the beginning of our marriage yet I did not see

this practiced in the churches that we attended. As I studied I became convicted that this was what the Father was leading me to do.

One day in June as I was disciplining my son because he had not done what I had asked him to do earlier in the day, I heard the Father speak to me that I had not yet obeyed Him in something that He had asked me to do. I knew right away that He was speaking about me covering my head...so the next day when I got up I began wearing the covering. That was June of 2001. (I need to interject something here: One thing that really grieved my heart, was that I realized that all the years we have been married, knowing that my husband believed in the covering and desired that I cover, the Holy Spirit showed me that I had been in sin and rebellion all those years that I did not cover. I very quickly repented of my sin, received the forgiveness that I so desperately needed and now I am walking in obedience to the Lord and my husband.)

The first thing that took place when I began covering is that I had a peace settle over me like I have never experienced before....it is still here too. There have been several things that have taken place since I began covering and I consider each of these things to be blessings sent from God to me as a result of my

obedience to Him in the area of covering and dressing modestly. I guess the one that has meant the most to me is that my hubby told me that I am more beautiful to him now than ever before. <Very Big Grin>

I wish I had time to tell you all that we have walked through in our marriage and how we got to where we are now....it would blow your mind!! I have noticed that he now sees me in a different light and he has always been respectful to me, but that has increased even more and I also see his love poured out to me even more. He spoke to me one day about this and told me that he sees a gentle and quiet spirit that has not been present before. That was very humbling.

My son has begun showing more respect toward me and his whole attitude has amazed me. He has been very encouraging to me in his own little way since I have been covering. He is funny sometimes....I will have my dress on and will sit down and may not notice that my dress is not pulled down all the way over my legs and he will bring it to my attention. This has been a big thing to him. His whole perspective on modesty has changed, and I am so grateful for this. Also, my hubby and I have been out eating before and I have had older men walk over to our table and stand there and just smile at me and one even nodded his head at me as he turned to leave. It is like this demands respect, and it is given.

Our daughter began covering in February of 2002 and then the dresses followed for her in April. I see this as a true blessing from God as a result of my obedience to Him in these areas in my own life. My daughter was a big time tomboy, and to see her in her covering and dress now is more beautiful than I can describe to you here. My heart overflows with joy when I see her. She has such a tender heart toward God and always wants to be pleasing to Him.

Dresses were the hard thing for me to start wearing. When I started covering I was wearing shorts and pants. Boy, what a walking contradiction I was, and I did not even know it. Though I do remember that as the summer went on that my shorts felt like they got shorter and shorter. That was just the way that

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the Father dealt with me and allowed me to become more conscious of my clothes and the call to modesty.

The sad thing in all this is that the biggest critics have been other believers. The covering stirs something in them that they don't want to deal with. It represents things that they do not want to hear about and have not heard talked about in the church. It is funny, because without them knowing all that it is about, they (other women) are made mad by it.

A few months back we were at a gathering and, as we walked up, my hubby and I were standing outside and I happened to look inside the building and this guy who I knew saw me and he turned to his wife and then they both turned and looked at me. Both of them had this disgusted look on their faces. They were not happy people. I feel sorry for them. This reminded me of a Mennonite pastor that I heard on a tape one time that said when you start covering get ready to be persecuted.

The covering speaks so loudly to the women of this day who are not walking in the place that God has prepared for them; submission to their own husbands, covering and modesty. My life has been radically changed through learning submission to my husband, wearing the covering and dressing modestly. I NEVER want to go back to the old way things used to be. There is NO going back.

Tony Herrin (written 4-27-03)

We truly were in a time of new beginnings in our home. It had been many months since God had told me that He would change the heart of my wife, and from the time in Payne City when the Holy Spirit said He would set our household in order. We were still seeing these changes come, and each change contributed to the atmosphere of peace, joy and righteousness in our home.

I had never nagged my wife concerning her wearing the Christian woman's veiling, but I had shared with her from the beginning of our marriage those things that the Scriptures taught on this matter. I had en-

couraged her on a couple occasions to begin this practice, but when she was unwilling I had let the matter drop.

It would do little good for a woman to practice such Christian ordinances under compulsion, for the head-covering is supposed to be a testimony of what is in the heart of a Christian woman. When I thought of trying to coerce my wife into wearing a headcovering I was reminded of the cartoon of a little boy who was forced to sit in a corner because of misbehavior. The little boy said, "I may be sitting down on the outside, but I am standing up on the inside." I did not want my wife to wear the headcovering out of compulsion, desiring instead that there should be a harmony between her inner person and her outer witness. (If any man or woman should desire to read more on this topic, I would recommend the book "Sarah's Children", which can be read online, or downloaded, from the Heart4God website:)

I was so blessed the first time I saw my wife come into a room with a headcovering on. I was amazed at what the Spirit had been doing in her life as she explained to me what He had spoken to her. It was an added blessing when she began wearing dresses. I had told Tony when we were first married that I thought it was right for women to wear feminine attire, and I had always thought that women in long dresses were the picture of beauty, being arrayed both modestly and in feminine attire. Rather than accentuating the sexuality of a woman, as the majority of sensual attire today does, or going the opposite direction in making a woman appear masculine, as another segment of the clothing industry does, the Scriptures teach that a woman should wear feminine clothing that is modest and does not provoke men to lust, or draw attention to themselves in unrighteous ways.

We truly were in a time of new beginnings in our home.

Deuteronomy 22:5

A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does

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these things is an abomination to Yahweh your God.

I Timothy 2:9

Also I desire that women should adorn themselves modestly and appropriately and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with elaborate hair arrangement or gold or pearls or expensive clothing...

(Amplified Bible)

I have for a long time also desired that my daughter should dress in this feminine and modest manner. As Tony said, Kristin had always leaned toward tomboy styles. She wanted to dress as a cowgirl, or in camouflage shirts and pants, or similar styles. I knew that there were precious few examples anywhere of young ladies dressing in feminine and modest array, and it was extremely difficult to find anything suitable at local department, or clothing stores. Kristin had always been sensitive to dressing modestly, but her clothing simply wasn't feminine.

Wendy taught her how to sew some simple garments...

I think the Spirit waited for Tony to enter into obedience in this area before He began to move upon Kristin's heart, for He wanted to show Tony what an impact her own obedience would have upon others. The day Tony began wearing dresses, she set her face as flint with the attitude that there was no going back. She got rid of all her clothing that she felt was no longer in accordance with the Spirit's witness in this matter, and she has never vacillated in this determination to be obedient to God.

Even more changes were forthcoming, however. I had for many years wanted Tony to be more domestically minded, more of a keeper at home who would develop skills such as sewing and cooking. I had bought her a new sewing machine a few years after we were married, but she lacked interest in it and ended up selling it some time later. Tony also lacked confidence in her ability to sew, feeling like the necessary skills were lacking in her make-up. I was somewhat doubtful then when she told me that she wanted to get a sewing machine again. I had also begun to doubt that

she had what it took to be a competent seamstress.

A great encouragement for Tony at this time was an acquaintance she made with a Christian sister named Wendy who had an Internet forum and website for women who were practicing headcovering and modest dress. Tony began to correspond with her after she started practicing headcovering. She purchased a few headcoverings from Wendy, and their friendship grew so much that Tony flew out to California for ten days to spend time her. While there Wendy taught her how to sew some simple garments, and when Tony returned home she was full of excitement about the things she had learned.

Tony has since been making her own dresses, and they are as well made as the ones she was purchasing from stores and from individuals. Her skills and confidence have grown to the point where other women are asking her to teach them to sew. It is a great blessing to me to see all of these changes occurring with my wife. She is being conformed to the image of a "Titus Two Woman".

Titus 2:3-5

Bid the older women similarly to be reverent and devout in their deportment as becomes those engaged in sacred service, not slanderers or slaves to drink. They are to give good counsel and be teachers of what is right and noble, so that they will wisely train the young women to be sane and sober of mind (temperate, disciplined) and to love their husbands and their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, homemakers [workers at home], good-natured (kindhearted), adapting and subordinating themselves to their husbands, that the word of God may not be exposed to reproach (blasphemed or discredited).

(Amplified Bible)

God has brought forth things in our home that I had not imagined possible in such a short period of time. There is no doubt that our family appears as a

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“peculiar people” in this hour when women are abandoning the traditional feminine roles of motherhood to pursue careers in the world. My wife and daughter stand out as distinctly different from the other women, both old and young, who dress to appear sensual and alluring. We are called to be lights in the midst of darkness, and both my wife and daughter have had opportunities to encourage others to also choose a course that turns aside from the ways of the world. These things are truly amazing, and are a source of much satisfaction to me.

Both Feet In

As my working hours at the college were dwindling I came to sense that a transition was coming again and that the Father would lead us out once more to trust Him entirely for our provision. I also began to once more feel a lack of desire to remain where God had temporarily placed me as a college instructor, desiring rather to be occupied in teaching the word of God to the saints. On February 20th, 2003 a Christian brother from California e-mailed me to make known an opportunity to manage a retreat center on a ranch he owns. He had a vision for it being used as a spiritual training center and he felt that the Lord might be calling me to be instrumental in raising up a work there.

My very first thought when I heard of this offer was that the Lord had led me to pray for the past ten years that He would raise up a people in Middle Georgia for the praise of His glory, and that this ranch being in California would be taking me away from seeing this body raised up. Yet the Father had never given me a timetable for raising up this people, and I considered that it was possible that He might be leading us to California for a time. This seemed all the more possible because my wife had only seven weeks prior flown out to California to spend time with a close friend, and all she had talked about since her return was wanting to move to California.

The timing of this offer was just right for me to be

able to give notice at the college that I would not be returning, and to finish out teaching the present quarter. Also, our lease would be up at the end of April, and this brother in California shared that his current caretaker for the property would be leaving in May. As I was convinced that a transition was coming, and I felt released in my spirit from the college, I gave my notice that I would not be returning to teach the next session. I shared with my wife that whether God took us to California or not, I was convinced that I would be doing something different by the time my birthday rolled around on May 7th. My college duties ended on March 19th, and at this time we were still unsettled about California being our destination, not having heard a final confirmation from the Christian brother I had spoken with.

As a family we began to pray in earnest that God would show us His will. Tony, Kristin, Josiah and I began seeking God daily for direction. On March 25th we still had heard nothing definite regarding the move to California, and feeling like we were in a state of limbo, we gathered together and prayed that the Father would direct us. The ranch had sounded like a wonderful opportunity, for it would bring my wife close to her friend in California, and the location was very scenic. It was located right next to Yosemite National Park, being surrounded on three sides by national forest. It had a view of the Sierra Nevada mountains and a lake stocked with bass and perch. Yet with all of this natural attraction, we sincerely prayed that if this were not the Lord’s will for us at the time that the door would be shut. We voiced our heart’s desire to the Father that we would rather be in the middle of a desert with Him, than to be in a paradise without Him.

As a family we began to pray in earnest that God would show us His will.

The very next morning the answer came. The brother who owned the ranch e-mailed me to tell me that the situation had changed and that some things had been mis-communicated to him. The caretaker that he thought was moving, actually had intentions to stay

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on, and he felt that he could not ask him to leave. This left us in a bit of a quandary, because I had left my employer in anticipation of God moving us to participate in a new work somewhere, and now we had no door open before us.

A week passed with our family being in the situation of not knowing what God was calling us to, and as we

I had a great hope that God would at this time raise up a people for His praise...

were now in the first week of April I felt led to call my family to a day of prayer and fasting. This was the first time our children had fasted, and it was a good experience for them. We

gathered several times during the day to pray and to ask the Father to give us some direction.

No direction came that day, but two days later, as I was sitting at the table with my daughter, I told her that I felt led to visit a non-denominational church whose members had a year previously come out of a Mennonite congregation. My daughter was quite surprised at this, for we had been outside of any organized group of believers for the past three years.

During our three year time of wilderness wanderings we missed the fellowship of the saints very much, and on several occasions we sought to return to fellowship with some group of believers. On each occasion, however, the Spirit let us know immediately that this was not His will for us. In a way, I felt like Samuel when the seven sons of Jesse were passing in front of him. Some of the churches we thought of visiting looked impressive, but when we considered them we heard the Lord say,

I Samuel 16:7

"Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks at the heart."

At each church that we considered associating with, the Lord would say, "I have not chosen this one either." I must admit that in suggesting that we visit this recently formed body of believers, part of me anticipated hearing the Lord say these words once again. However, the Spirit never spoke these words to me, and I found a growing excitement within me that God was about to fulfill that which He had me pray for since 1993. I had a great hope that God would at this time raise up a people for His praise, and that this newly formed body of believers were to be the ones He would begin this work through.

I had similar hopes at the last two churches we had been a part of, but my hopes were unmet when both bodies failed to walk forward in faith when God asked them to do so. They had been daunted by the giants in the land, and the strongholds and walled cities to be conquered. I continued to look for a people who would not turn back from the challenges and obstacles before them, and over the course of the next few weeks I had many reasons for my hope to be reborn that I might see such a people raised up soon.

On April 6th, 2003 we visited this body of believers who were meeting in a warehouse that belonged to a roofing company. The location was very rural. We were invited home to share lunch with a family from this church, and as I spoke to them the man shared some incredible stories of trust in God. Here was a man sharing with me that he had cast all over onto God in a time of trial and he had seen God deliver him in a spectacular manner. He had been tried in the fire, and had faced the loss of all he owned. He had chosen to lean upon God alone to deliver him, and God had been faithful. How my heart was encouraged as I listened. I had been yearning to find a people with a real, practical faith, and I was hearing of just such a faith. Hours went by like minutes as I listened to this brother share of his own tests and of his determination to demonstrate faith before God.

It was the practice of this body to have the men take turns bringing a devotion each Sunday, and I was further encouraged by what I heard. The young men were included in this time of sharing, and I heard

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some wonderful messages coming from young hearts that yearned to experience a vital walk with God. I was impressed with the messages of faith I was hearing, and the very evident sincerity of these young men.

On April 14th I had a growing sense that the Lord was going to move us to be a part of this fellowship. It was about a 35 minute drive to the warehouse where they met, and all of the church members lived a distance from us. Our lease was to end on our home in two weeks, and I felt confident that the Lord would move us, but I had no idea where He would move us.

As a family, we were continuing daily in prayer, asking the Father to reveal His will. On April 14th the Spirit spoke to me and said, "You are asking me to manifest My direction and provision for you, but you have only one foot in the water. You have quit your job, and this is putting the first foot in the water. The second foot is giving your notice to your landlord that you will be moving."

I thought about this some, and it seemed reasonable to me that God would ask such a thing, for He often asks us to do that which is unreasonable in the natural. I once more called my family together and shared what the Lord had spoken to me about giving our notice on our lease. I sensed some reservation in them, and this led me to doubt. I returned to prayer and asked God to confirm His will. Just three days earlier a book had arrived in the mail that I had not ordered, neither was I expecting it. The book was called "Rees Howells - Intercessor," and a Christian brother had felt impressed to order a copy to be sent to me. I sensed the Spirit leading me to pick up the book and begin reading where I had left off. The next chapter was titled "Standing in the Queue". It was all the confirmation I needed.

The chapter contained a wonderful testimony of God calling Rees Howells and his wife to a new work as missionaries to Africa. It detailed God's dealing with this English couple as He required that they step out

in faith to follow His direction. He said He would take them to Africa when they did not have money to even take a train to London. They were led to buy tickets to take them as far as they could go, which was only 20 miles. The next connection they needed to make would be on a train that would arrive in a couple hours. Rees had no money for the tickets, and the time was close for the train to board, when God spoke to him and said, "Have you not preached that a word from Me is as good as coin? What would you do if you had the money in your pocket right now?" Rees answered, "I would go get in that ticket line so that I could purchase my tickets." God then replied, "Then go get in the line."

There were about twelve people in front of him in the queue, and the devil started to come against him. The devil said, "You are just like those Israelites who had Egypt's armies behind them and the Red Sea in front. You are going to get to the front of the line and have to step out because you have no money." Rees answered, "You are wrong, because God has said that I am going through." When it got to where there were only two people in line in front of Rees, a friend, who had followed them to the station to see them off, suddenly walked up and said he could stay no longer for he had to go open his shop, and he put 30 shillings in Rees' hand. Rees used this money to purchase tickets to London, and the Lord then opened up many other sources of provision as other friends began coming up and giving them financial gifts.

As a family, we were continuing daily in prayer...

I called my family back together and read this chapter to them. God was asking me to put both of my feet in the water, which was similar to what He did when He asked Rees Howells to go get in the line to purchase tickets. I asked my family if any of them now doubted this was the Lord's will for us. They all said that they no longer doubted.

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Rees Howells shared that this experience of standing in the queue to buy a ticket was something he was glad he was not deprived of, for it brought him a great confidence of being in the will of the Lord when he saw the Lord's provision come suddenly and miraculously. I told my family that the Lord would also use His deliverance and provision in our lives to give us confidence of His way before us, letting us know that we were in His will.

I called our landlord and he answered right away. I asked if I could come over to speak to him and he told

The Spirit began testifying to me that it was possible to know peace in the midst of the storm.

me to come right on over. I left, asking my family to pray for favor, since I wasn't giving a full month's notice and we would be needing our full deposit back. My time with our

landlord was very good and we ended in prayer. He had no problem with the late notice and said he would get us our deposit back as soon as possible. So both feet were placed in the water and I began looking for the Lord to show His provision and make His plan known to us.

A Growing Hope

April 23rd came and, as it was a Wednesday, there was a meeting of the church that night which I desired to attend. We had little gas in the car and no money to purchase more. My wife was invited to attend a ladies sewing meeting that morning with members of this same fellowship, but things were so tight that I knew if she went we might not have enough gas to go to the church meeting in the evening. After praying I felt confident to tell her to go, believing that if God wanted us to attend the meeting that night, He would provide the money needed for gas. My wife took both of our children with her, and this left me in the house alone, and I used the opportunity to pray.

During the preceding weeks the Father had been leading me into a place where I could know peace in

the midst of trials. Often before, when the Spirit had led us through some test of faith and we had obeyed, we did so in fear and trembling. The Spirit began testifying to me that it was possible for us to go through these trials of faith and to know peace in the midst of the storm. I wrote an article at this time sharing those things the Spirit was speaking to me, and I titled it "Resting in the Confidence of His Love".

In the week following God's instructions for us to place both feet in the water, I found that I was able to walk in a place of peace I had not formerly known during such trials. I was greatly encouraged in meditating upon God's faithfulness to us in the past, and also in reading the book on Rees Howells' life. On top of this, the Spirit had spoken prophetically through my daughter about nine months previously during a moment of great testing. This prophecy was written down and I found constant encouragement in reading it. The prophecy read:

Word From Kristin - July 24th, 2002

I have great things in store for your family.

Marvelous things that only I can get the credit for.

My sheep will hear My voice and they will know that it is I, the Lord thy God.

My provision is on its way. My timing is perfect.

You need not fear any trouble, instead, trust Me.

The time has not yet come to reveal all things, but behold, it is drawing nigh.

You need have no less than great expectations, for I, the Lord thy God, am in control.

Watch and wait.

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You must put behind you all foolish thoughts of doubt and disbelief, for great is My reward for those who trust.

Forget not those things which I have done for you, and expect greater things in the future.

I am a just God, those who put their life in My hands need never fear.

Await with anticipation the things that are to come. They are drawing near.

Those things which I have spoken to you will be fulfilled, for I do not lie.

I have listened to your heart's cry. I have not turned a deaf ear.

I am a father who loves to give good gifts to His children. Trust My timing.

You must learn to listen to My voice, and My voice alone. Take the path which I have set for you. Do not turn to the right or to the left.

On this day, April 23rd, as I was praying I was led to read the Psalm of the day, which is not something that I normally do. As I read the Psalm I felt the presence of the Spirit, and I received great comfort and peace. The opening words declare, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." The word 'want' is a synonym for 'lack'. This Scripture is testifying that we will not know lack, for our Shepherd will take care of all of our needs.

Just a few days earlier I had found in a trash can in the bathroom two Scriptures written on 3x5 cards that I had recorded about 20 years previously. My son had gotten the cards and used them for some purpose, cutting a hole in the center of each one, but I could still read the Scriptures. They said:

Matthew 6:30-34

"Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Philippians 4:5-7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Great peace was ministered to me as I meditated upon these Scriptures. As I considered that it is the Lord's command that we are not to be anxious about anything, I felt a release from the clinging anxiety that I had known most of my life. I had formerly acted as if it was some Christian duty to be anxious about the cares of life. Somehow the thought had been ingrained into my psyche that a responsible Christian man must worry about providing the necessities of life for himself and his family. I had picked up the idea that it was okay to follow God in faith, but one should act like a responsible citizen by being constantly worried until the manifestation of God's provision should come through.

I am a just God, those who put their life in My hands need never fear.

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I hated this anxiety. Anxiety is the child of fear, and it grows up quickly into a hideous monster. Now I was hearing the Spirit say that it was not God's will for anxiety to be in my heart. All worry was to be put away. Peace and confidence were to be the habit and mindset of the believer. During the past two weeks since I had placed both feet in the water I was able to experience a peace and confidence that had previously eluded me. On this day in particular I experienced a boldness in knowing that God would certainly meet our needs.

About 2:30 in the afternoon the mail came and there was no money in it, only a bank statement telling me I

I found that a deposit had been made into our account for \$500...

was \$1.22 in the hole. I was at peace even in seeing this. I came into my room and knelt by the bed and prayed, expressing my needs to God. I thanked God that I knew His eyes were on us, and I was

trusting in Him. I ended by telling God that I was experiencing such peace that I believed I could sleep in the stern of the boat at this time while the storm raged around me.

When I got up I felt led to check my bank balance online, and when I did I found that a deposit had been made into our account for \$500. This was unanticipated, and it came from a Christian brother half-way around the world. I cannot express how much joy flooded my soul. It was not just that we had some money, but it was a testimony of the fact that God is present and watching us every minute. He knows our needs so intimately and is able and willing to provide. I began singing the 23rd Psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."

For the next hour I went around the house singing to God and praising Him for His love and watchfulness over us. I looked forward to my wife and children coming home so that I could share this miracle of provision with them. When they arrived we all sat

down and my wife asked if she could share first. She told me that a lady at the meeting, the wife of an elder at the church, came up to her and gave her forty dollars. She told Tony that they really wanted us to continue to come to church and they knew it was a long drive, so they wanted to give us gas money to get there.

What an answer this was to my prayer that morning. I had asked the Father that if it was His will for us to go to church that He would provide money for gas. Here was money given to us for the express purpose of being used to purchase gas to drive to church. The Father could not have answered my prayer more specifically. This woman did not just give us money for expenses. It was for gas. Neither was it for gas to drive anywhere, but to enable us to drive to church. What a confirmation this was to us that God wanted us to attend this fellowship of believers.

When I then shared my news with the family, they were awestruck. What incredible good it did me to see my children and wife exulting in the faithful provision of the Father. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not lack for any good thing. All of these things were conspiring together to raise the level of my hope and expectancy that God would at this time raise up the people of faith I had long prayed for. I felt a deep excitement about upcoming events.

Pouring Water on the Altar

When the Lord instructed us to place both feet in the water, and then He confirmed His instruction with the story of Rees Howells standing in the queue to purchase tickets, I felt like the Lord would probably take us down to the wire before manifesting His provision for us. Rees Howells had two people in the line before him when God placed the provision in his hands. I suspected that we might get down to a couple days before it was time to move before He showed us where we were to move.

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On April 23 we had a week left until our lease expired, and still no idea where we were to go. I had a growing feeling that we would be moving south toward the community of Montezuma, Georgia where the people currently resided. We were told repeatedly, however, that rental property in the area was very scarce. Being a rural community that had not grown appreciably in many years, the housing market was very slow. My wife had asked me whether we should ask the members of the church to help us locate a place to rent. I prayed about this, and I felt that the Lord did not wish for us to do this.

As I contemplated the Lord's working in bringing us into fellowship with this body of believers, I understood that He desired for us to encourage them in their faith before God. I knew that the people He was looking to raise up were to be a people marked by a peculiar confidence in God's ability to protect and deliver them. Our moving to the community was to be an example of God's ability to provide for His children when they look to Him alone to accomplish His purposes, for the battle belongs to the Lord.

As I was considering this, I heard the Spirit tell me to pour water on the altar. I was reminded of Elijah pouring water on the altar when he was in the contest with the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth. I looked up the Scripture and read the following.

I Kings 18:33-35

Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." And he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

Elijah had such a confidence in God that he knew that he could not make the test too difficult for Him. Pouring water on the altar was merely a mark of Elijah's

great confidence in God's ability to accomplish what He said He would do. When God finds a saint with great confidence in Him, He will at times allow them to pour water on the altar, which brings greater glory to the Father. Never before had I been given such an opportunity. I had followed the Lord in faith numerous times before, but I did not have the peace and confidence necessary to go beyond the demands of what God required in order to pour water on the altar.

As the Spirit spoke to me about pouring water on the altar, I understood that in our case, pouring water on the altar equated to telling our friends at church to not go hunt for a place for us to live. The Lord wanted to demonstrate to them that He could bring the provision to us Himself. On April 23rd we attended a Wednesday night meeting of the church and a brother asked about our situation. I told him that we were to be out of our house on the 30th, and at the moment we were not sure where we were to move, but we knew God would move us. He asked me if they could help us look for a place, and I respectfully declined his assistance. I shared with him that we wanted to know that the provision came from the Lord and felt that we were to rest and trust in Him.

*I heard the Spirit tell me
to pour water on the
altar.*

The following Sunday my wife was talking to a lady from the church, and she also asked if she could help look for a place for us. As I was standing nearby, I once more poured water on the altar by telling her that it was not necessary for her to assist in this way.

The 29th of April came and we still had no prospect of a place to move. In all of this time, however, the Lord had allowed us to know an unusual peace that we had not previously experienced. The day began with individual prayer, and then our family met together. We reminded ourselves of all that the Lord had spoken to us, encouraging one another in our faith. We then

Evidence of Things Unseen

prayed and asked God to manifest His provision quickly.

Some of the people of the church had arranged to get together and help us move, and they were to meet at

*The principle is true that
“whatever is not of faith is
sin.”*

our house on the morning of the 30th. We had already boxed everything up, and had as much as possible of our belongings stacked and ready to go out the door. I was consid-

ering how closely the Lord was taking us down to the wire. We were within one day of people from the church showing up to move us, and we still had no clue where we would move.

After we prayed Tony went and checked her e-mail, and then she excitedly called me into the room. In her inbox was an e-mail from a lady at the church telling us about a house she had heard about that was coming available, and it was close to the community and church building and sounded like it might be a good fit for our needs. Tony was excited, however I experienced reservations.

The Christian sister who had e-mailed this information was one that we had asked to not go out and look for a place for us, and it came into my spirit that if she had gone and found this place for us that it would not provide as strong of a testimony to the church about the Lord’s ability and willingness to handle things Himself. I did not want any man or woman to claim that they provided a place for us. I desired that the glory should go to God.

For about an hour I struggled with this issue. I considered how close we were to the end of our time and we had no other prospects. If I turned this down, and nothing else materialized, we would look like great fools and it could even lead to homelessness for our family. Yet if I accepted this house not having a clear conscience before God that I had acted in faith, then I knew God would not be honored and we would lose a

great blessing. After wrestling with this issue I called our family together and I told my wife that she would have to call this lady and tell her that if she had gone and found this house for us that we could not accept it. In doing so I was pouring water on the altar for a third time.

Tony went outside to make the call, and when she came back in she had news to share. She related to us that this woman had wanted to go look for a place for us, but her husband told her that they needed to honor my wishes by not seeking a place. She had obeyed her husband and had not looked for a place. She then shared how two different people had called her the previous day to tell her about this place that was coming available, not knowing about our situation at all. A young couple was moving out of a double wide home set in the midst of pastureland on the family farm, and the parents of the young man were seeking to find if anyone in the community knew of a family needing a place to live. The people who owned the property were not even members of the church we were visiting, and they had no knowledge of us. The lady who contacted us confirmed that she did not go seeking a place.

I felt a release of my reservations about the home when Tony related these things to me. In my spirit I felt that we had poured water on the altar a third time by making the call that morning, and that in return God had honored our faith and made His provision known. If we had not made the call and told the people we could not accept the property if they had gone looking for it, then God would not have honored our heart attitude. The principle is true that “whatever is not of faith is sin.”

We still had to talk to the owners and see if they would rent to us, and all day we waited to hear something, and no word came. At 8:30 that night we were still in the situation of having heard nothing and we also had no money in hand to rent the place. At 9:00 I was finally able to get hold of the owner of the property, and over the phone he committed to rent to us

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without even meeting us or requesting references. Better still, the man said that he did not require any deposits, or even the signing of a rental agreement, and the rent was less than half what we had paid the previous two years. Ten minutes later our previous landlord drove up to our house to bring our son back from playing with his sons, and he told me that he would give our full deposit back in the morning. So within 15 minutes we had both a place to move, and a commitment that we would have the money to pay the rent.

God could not have waited much longer to manifest His provision. It was only 12 hours until the people from the church were to show up to help us move. God had tested us severely, and on this last day I struggled with maintaining an attitude of peace. Yet I was given grace to not murmur or complain against the Lord.

We did not see the house before we moved in. Some people asked us how we knew whether the house would be suitable. Some asked if it had appliances that we lacked, a range and a refrigerator. I told them that since the Lord was handling the arrangements I was sure that everything would be fine. Sure enough, everything was a perfect match for us. The bedrooms were larger than what we had before. The home was prettier and in better shape. There was nothing about the place that disappointed us. Our entire family just walked around the place and expressed their satisfaction with every detail.

As a family we felt like we had gone through a protracted battle and had come out on the other side victorious. Yet the victory did not belong to us, but to the Lord. Not only did He prove Himself faithful in His provision, but He encouraged us in numerous means all along the way. He desired for us to have peace as we waited on Him. He longed for us to succeed, and to rest in Him. True are the words of Scripture:

Isaiah 40:28-31

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlast-

ing God, Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is beyond searching out. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for Yahweh will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.

Having begun this relationship with this body of believers in this way gave me great hope for the things the Father would do among them. He longs to prove Himself in such magnificent ways to the entire body of Christ, even to the entire world. Days of great exploits lie ahead for the body, for those who trust in Yahweh. We truly serve a risen Savior who is in the world today!

Storm Warning

I felt we had done well in this episode as we had placed ourselves unreservedly into the Father's hands, knowing that if He did not come through for us, we would be in a real mess. We had stood faithful against that tyrant called time, and had continued to look to the Father to deliver us. Yet at the very end, my faith had indeed been tested severely and I had not been perfect in my faith, and I must now tell you about it.

Since the Lord was handling the arrangements I was sure that everything would be fine.

When I finally got the man on the phone who would be our landlord for the next two months, I was dealing with anxiety and fear. I was still looking to the Father to deliver us, yet I was also willing to "help him out" a little. If this man did not rent to us, we had no other prospects and we were to be out of our home the next day. As I spoke to this man on the phone I learned that they had never rented to others before. They had a family farm with a dairy and large family house, and some distance removed in the middle of a field was a double-wide manufactured home that they had bought for their five sons to live in for a time af-

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ter each one got married. One son and his wife were just moving out, and the other sons seemed to be years away from marriage, so they decided to rent the home out.

The price was excellent, less than half of what we had been paying, and though we rented the house without seeing it, we were to find that it was a beautiful home

I found that my eyes were not on the Savior who could walk on water...

that had been well kept and it was situated with a lovely lawn, and the lawn was itself surrounded by pasture land, making it very scenic and peaceful. The owner did not require a contract to be signed,

nor did he require any deposits. Both of these things were wonderful since I did not know how long the Father intended us to be there, and I did not have much money at the time.

When I spoke to the owner on the telephone I asked if there was anything he wanted to ask about us, and the only thing he asked was whether we smoked, for they didn't want smokers in the house. I assured him we did not smoke. As I was on the phone my family was waiting with baited breath to hear the outcome of my conversation, for they were also desirous of knowing that they had a place in which to move the next day. As my daughter Kristin listened to me speaking to our soon to be landlord, she pointed to our two dogs, and I knew what she was indicating. She wanted to know if I had mentioned to this man that we had two indoor dogs. I politely ignored my daughter, for the thought flitted across my mind, "What if the dogs are a deal breaker, and the man refuses to rent to us because we have dogs? Where will we turn?"

Now, if I had a perfect faith before the Father I would have told the man about our dogs, for God was able to work a divine thing upon the owner's heart, or He could have led us to another home that was suitable, or any number of things. God was not worried in the least about us being homeless, or left without provision, for the One who fed an entire nation for forty years in the wilderness, who caused their feet to not swell nor allowed their clothes to wear out, the One

who caused water to come forth from a rock, was neither anxious nor worried about anything.

At that moment, however, I found that my eyes were not on the Savior who could walk on water, but they were upon the wind and the waves that were raging around me, and I began to sink beneath the waves. I did not tell the man about the dogs, and I justified it to myself by considering that I was not lying, I was merely withholding information that he had every opportunity to ask me about. I had even asked him if there was anything he wanted to know about us, and he had merely asked if we were smokers. Besides, our dogs were housebroken and I was confident that they would not do any harm to the home.

When we moved in I found that my heart wasn't at ease due to the fact that I had not disclosed to the owner that we had dogs. The owners had some corn planted in the backyard, and they asked us if we would allow them to maintain the garden until the corn was ready to pick, which we were happy to oblige them in. The wife of the owner would come over every day or two to weed the garden, or do something to it. I found myself working to keep the dogs inside and out of sight whenever she would come by, and I noticed my wife doing the same.

Before I go further in this story I want to tell you about our moving day. We moved things in several loads, and the last thing we left to move was our dogs. We planned on taking them along with the very last load, which mainly consisted of things from our refrigerator. This was primarily to keep the dogs out from under foot while we were moving things into the new home. It was late in the evening when we went left our former home with our dogs. My wife had turned our keys into our former landlord, and it was now after dark. As we drove the thirty miles to our new location we entered into a storm.

Not long into the trip the wind began to blow savagely, and dark clouds were overhead. Things got steadily worse as we got closer to our new home. Lightning was flashing continuously and the rain was coming down heavily. Off in the distance we saw an electrical transformer blow up with blue flames

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shooting into the air. Along the road were woods and pecan orchards and the wind was blowing so hard that pieces of trees, from single leaves to large branches were breaking off and flying across the road. This debris was raining down so thickly that it reminded me of being in a heavy snow storm. The debris literally covered the road so that the lines on the pavement could not be discerned, and at one point we dug a sizeable limb under our car for some distance. I did not get out of the car to remove it because the storm outside was so ferocious.

I have never been in a worse thunderstorm in my life, and I would not have been too surprised to see a tornado appear. When we arrived at our new home the power was out due to the storm, and we turned on our weather radio to hear warnings of severe thunderstorms with winds of 60-70 miles per hour. There were actually two separate storms that moved through, one right behind the other. This was a foreboding beginning to our stay at this new residence, and over the next two months I contemplated how in this way God had shown us prophetically that our time in this place would be filled with spiritual storms.

The first few weeks in our new home went fairly well. Other than being nervous about what our landlords might think when they discovered our dogs, things were going well. I had paid a month's rent when we moved in, and all our bills were paid up. I received a refund check from a retirement fund I was required to pay into while I was an employee of the state of Georgia, and it amounted to 23 hundred dollars, which was another confirmation from the Father that He would take care of us. I mentioned previously of the Father speaking to me through Psalm 23 on the 23rd day of the month, that He would be our Shepherd and we would not want for any necessary thing. This sum of 23 hundred dollars we received was a testimony to me that God would continue to meet our needs.

It had now been nearly four years since the Holy Spirit had spoken to me at my sister's house in Mississippi about being a cutter of grass. He had spoken to me through the following verse from Isaiah:

Isaiah 40:6-7

All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of Yahweh blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

The Spirit spoke clearly to me at that time and said, "I have indeed called you to be a cutter of grass, for all flesh is as grass, but I can only use those for this ministry who have allowed me to first cut the grass in their own lives." I knew the Spirit was saying that He needed to deal with my flesh, before He could use me to deal with the flesh of others. God was about to speak to me again about cutting grass, and I was about to have my own lawn mowed (my flesh cut away).

The home God had provided for us in Montezuma was surrounded by a beautiful lawn of lush green grass. It was undoubtedly the nicest lawn of any home in which we had lived. This was a very remarkable fact to me, because, since the time that the Father had spoken to me about my calling to be a cutter of grass, every home we had lived in had terrible lawns where I could not get grass to grow. In one home that we were in for a year the backyard was devoid of grass. I borrowed a friend's tiller and it would barely scratch the surface of the dirt. The ground was like concrete, concrete made of Georgia red clay. I scattered grass seed on it in vain, for the yard remained nothing more than dirt for the entire year we lived there.

When we arrived at our new home the power was out due to the storm...

The next home we lived in had never had a lawn planted in it before, being in a new development. The owner promised to plant grass for me when we moved in, yet it was four months before he was able to get anyone to come and do the job. The land was tilled with a tractor and prepared to receive seed. The seed was sown and straw placed over it to protect it from the rain, yet the day after the seed was sown a heavy rain came and washed all the seed away from

Evidence of Things Unseen

the house and down to the edges of the yard and into the road. To the day we moved out we never had grass growing around the house. This was the house we were in just prior to moving to Montezuma.

You cannot imagine my excitement then when I saw the beautiful yard of grass around this home the Father had just moved us to.

The Spirit has for quite some time spoken to me through numbers...

I thought that perhaps now the Father would open the door for me to begin to minister as He had prophesied to me.

While in the previous two houses the opportunities for ministry were as barren as the soil surrounding our homes, but now we had a lush and fertile yard.

A couple years previous I had bought a used push mower at a yard sale for ten or fifteen dollars, and I had been using it to mow the sparse amount of grass that I had. Now I had the better part of an acre of thick grass to mow, and I thought of purchasing a riding mower to do the job. The Spirit closed every door that I knocked on as I looked for a riding mower, and I became convinced that He desired for me to continue using my 22" push mower.

The Spirit has for quite some time spoken to me through numbers, and I noticed the prevalence of a certain number when we moved to this home. The house number was 2231, and the road we lived off of was County Road 22. When the Spirit showed me I was to use my push mower, the first thing I noted was that it was a 22" mower. I began to wonder about the significance of this number, and I was certain it had something to do with cutting grass, that is, removing sinful flesh. Before I was to leave this house, which would be our residence for two months, the Spirit revealed the significance. I did a search in my Bible software for the number 22 and I came up with the following.

Jeroboam, the king who made all Israel sin with the two golden calves he set up reigned 22 years and God cut him off (I Kings 14:30). Ahab, the king who did more evil than all the kings who preceded him be-

cause of his wife Jezebel, reigned 22 years and God cut him off. Furthermore, the Scriptures record the following about these other wicked kings:

II Kings 8:26-27

Ahaziah was **twenty-two** years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri king of Israel. He walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of Yahweh, like the house of Ahab had done, because he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

II Kings 21:19-23

Amon was **twenty-two** years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. He did evil in the sight of Yahweh, as Manasseh his father had done. For he walked in all the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served and worshiped them. So he forsook Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of Yahweh. The servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his own house.

The number 22 has a correlation to wicked kings. As saints we are a nation of kings and priests, and there are among the saints those who are also wicked, for they have allowed the flesh to rule in their lives and have not dealt with it as they ought to. The number 22 speaks of cutting off this wickedness from our lives, even as my 22" mower was used to cut the grass that surrounded my new home on County Road 22. Another astounding confirmation of the symbolism of this number came at this time when a sister in Christ who sends out a daily Scripture, was led by the Spirit to send forth the following:

Ephesians 4:22

22 Strip yourselves of your former nature [put off and discard your old unrenewed self] which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lusts and desires that spring from delusion...

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During this period of time in Middle Georgia, we were running a rain surplus of more than 10 inches for the year. Much of this surplus occurred during the two months we were living at the house I am writing about. This made the grass grow tremendously fast, and it was all I could do to keep it mowed with my little push mower. About every other day I was out mowing grass for a couple hours, and, even doing this, it at times got taller than was desirable.

God often foreshadows spiritual realities with natural symbols, and the pattern is “first the natural, then the spiritual.” My grass cutting in the natural, preceded a flesh cutting in my life. Whereas I thought I was ready for God to use me in this special ministry toward others, I learned that I still had more flesh to be removed from my own life. One enemy that had been allowed to grow up in my life without proper pruning was fear. Some of these fears had kept me bound and had hindered me from walking in perfect freedom before God, as was demonstrated in the matter with our dogs. God wanted to set me free from this fear, and He used our time in this home to do just that.

My grass cutting in the natural, preceded a flesh cutting in my life.

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PARABLES PRECEPT— The Bible

BIBLE STUDY



GET INTO THE WORD!

Not only is the Bible unusual in having so many different authors, and having been written over such a long period of time, it was also written in two different languages.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, which was a Semitic language. A Semite is someone who was born of the lineage of Shem, one of the three sons of Noah. All men today come from one of Noah's

three sons, for all other men were destroyed in the great flood.

One of Shem's sons was named Aram.

Genesis 10:22

The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and **Aram**.

The descendants of Aram were called Arameans. Abraham was an Aramean, and therefore was also a Semite (Shemite).

Deuteronomy 26:5

And you shall answer and say before Yahweh your God, 'My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there.'

Abraham, the wandering Aramean, was also called a Hebrew.

Genesis 14:13

Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew.

There is some dispute over the origin of the name Hebrew. Some suggest that it means "a descendant of Eber." Eber was the grandson of Arpachshad, who was the brother of Aram. To adopt this view we would have to conclude that Abraham was not a descendant of Aram.

Another suggestion is that the word Hebrew means "a nomad," or "a wanderer." Abraham was certainly a wanderer, for he dwelt in tents, and journeyed from place to place.

The language of the Hebrews, or the descendants of Abraham, is the language of the Arameans, for that is where Abraham came from. It was in this language that the Old Testament was written.