



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 1.7.8

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 32-35 of the book *Evidence of Things Unseen*.

As we continue to look at the significance of numbers, I would mention to you another level of understanding. Numbers are not only used to show forth God's presence, they are often used prophetically.

Consider the fact that God created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. This is a great parable of the length of time God would spend in bringing the entire creation into a state of rest. The apostle Peter shared the following key to understanding God's prophetic timeline.

II Peter 3:8

But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

God did not need six days to create the heavens and the earth. He chose six days by design. He was signifying that it would be 6,000 years from the creation of Adam until He would come and establish the earth in a state of Sabbath rest. This day of rest, will be a thousand years. It is referred to by many Christians as "the millennial reign of Christ."

This day of rest will begin after 6,000 years of man. Do you know where

we stand now on God's prophetic timetable?

Christ appeared 4,000 years after Adam was created. It has now been another 2,000 years since Christ walked on this earth. We stand at the end of day 6 prophetically, poised to enter the seventh day.

Just before Christ begins His reign, the earth will go through a time of trouble more severe than ever known before. Some refer to this period as the tribulation, which means "the time of trouble." The Bible describes these troubled days as "The day of the Lord."

Seeing that Christ is soon to return, what type of men and women ought we to be?

## Food for Thought

*"Courage does not always roar. Sometimes it is a quiet voice at the end of the day, saying... 'I will try again tomorrow.'"*

Anonymous

*"That you may retain your self-respect, it is better to displease the people by doing what you know is right, than to temporarily please them by doing what you know is wrong."*

William J. H. Boetcker

## Scripture Memory

Psalms 56:4

In God, whose word I praise,  
in God I have put my trust; I  
shall not be afraid. What can  
mere man do to me?

### Parables Newsletter

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# Evidence of Things Unseen

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## My Son, My Son!

I mentioned that we were to know one more final, agonizing test before we left our home on Levie Road. It began the day the Sheriff arrived to tell us we would have to be out in three days, and this test would be brief, but intense. As soon as the Sheriff

I considered what it would be like to be required to give up one's own child...

left I told my family that we would indeed be moving, although we had no idea at that moment where we would go. I then went into my bedroom to seek the face of God. I was troubled in

my heart because I had expected God to receive our intercession on behalf of this people and bring them forth to a walk of faith. Instead I had witnessed them taking steps backward as they turned away from God's will for them to step out in faith regarding certain decisions they were facing. They were also moving back to a closer affiliation with the traditional Mennonite churches from which the Spirit had called them forth. Because of these things I wondered if our intercession could yet be complete.

As I prayed with much anguish in my heart, a terrible thought began to form in my mind. I sensed the Spirit asking me, "What if I asked you to perform one last great act of intercession for this people? What if I asked you to not move out as the Sheriff instructed you to do, and it ended in your being arrested and you being separated from your wife and children, with your children being placed in government custody for a time? Would you be willing to endure even this as an act of intercession for this people?"

Terror filled my heart when these thoughts came into my mind. I wanted to immediately reject these thoughts as being from the enemy. I wanted to believe that he was simply seeking to torment me further, but it was not the first time I had considered that God might eventually ask me to make such a sacrifice. I had been dreading this moment for years.

Several years earlier, right after the Lord revealed that He would strip us from all things we had gained in our years of disobedience, we had stayed with our friends Randy and Barbara Barnes for a short time. While we were at the Barnes' house, I watched a video that Randy had pointed out to me. It was an older movie called "The Bible", and it began with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and it ended with Abraham taking Isaac to the mountain to sacrifice him.

The end of this movie was very powerfully depicted as it showed Abraham traveling, with the son he loved, to the mount to make the sacrifice. The agony in Abraham's heart was revealed to be tremendous, yet he went forward obediently. The movie depicted Abraham binding the arms of his son with a sash, and then laying Isaac upon the altar. Isaac may have been the age of my own son Josiah who was now thirteen years old. The movie ended with a profound question coming from Isaac's lips as he spoke to his father. He said, "Is there nothing that God cannot require us to do?" Abraham responded, "No son, nothing."

When I watched this movie I was in a time of great testing, and I was carrying a cross that would lead to a financial death. The pain of this cross was great, but I considered what it would be like to be required to give up one's own child. There was, and is, nothing more precious to me than my children, and I felt that I could empathize with Abraham's own agony as I watched this movie. What God required of Abraham seemed beyond normal reason to bear. It struck me as cruel, for I knew that there had to be real agony and torment in his heart as he spent three days traveling to the mount with his son.

After watching this movie I was appalled, and I refused to pray to God for several days. God seemed too terrible to me in the things He required of those who would follow Him. Something within me knew that a day would come when I would also be asked to willingly give to God that which was most precious to me, and I could not bear the thought. The question of Isaac in this movie stood before

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me, “Is there nothing that God cannot require of us?” I knew the answer was that God could, and would, require that we hold nothing back from Him. There could be nothing that we loved more than we loved Him.

After viewing this film I spent several days brooding upon the high cost of discipleship. I wondered whether I actually would be able to give up my children if God should require it of me. I found much weakness within me, and I knew that in my own strength such an act of obedience would be impossible. Now the test was set before me, and I had to confront this matter. I do not know if the things I envisioned happening if I refused to move out would actually occur. I do not know if I would actually be arrested, or my children would be taken from me, but for me at that moment the possibility was very real, and the Spirit allowed it to be a real possibility in my thinking.

I spent hours in my room in agony. I tried to push these thoughts from my mind, but they would not go away. I considered my wife’s response if I told her God had revealed to me that we had to stay and face whatever consequences should come. She had wrestled mightily with the thought of losing her possessions, and had finally accepted this, if it should prove to be the Father’s will. I knew it would be an even more incredible test to ask her to pay this further intercessory price.

I have never known such agony as I did during those hours alone in my room. It became to me my own private Gethsemane as I wrestled with drinking from the cup of suffering I saw placed before me. I was crying out to God to release me, but I would come back to stating, “Nevertheless, not my will, but Thy will be done.” The cross before me seemed unbearably difficult, but after hours of wrestling I finally concluded that I could not shrink back. I had to follow the course God set before me. With a tremendous heaviness in my heart I called my family together that evening and I shared with them what I was sensing from the Spirit. I told them that even if it resulted in our being separated for a brief time, that I knew God would bring us

back together, for God had spoken promises to us as a family that had not yet been fulfilled, and He could not lie. I was reminded of the Scripture that spoke of Abraham’s own trial.

Hebrews 11:17-19

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, “In Isaac your descendants shall be called.” He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.

Abraham knew that, even if he had to give up his son to death, God would restore him to life, for God had given him promises concerning Isaac, and God could not lie. I too knew that if I had to give up my children for a time, that God would give them back for He had testified, “I have great things in store for your family. Marvelous things which only I can get the credit for.”

When I spoke to my family Tony did not receive my words well, being greatly distressed, but the children bore it better. I asked my family to pray with me for God’s grace and mercy in this matter, and for strength to not fail the test. Tony refused to join us, but Kristin and Josiah sat close by me and we prayed together. I have never been so moved in my life as I was by the prayer of my son. He too was in distress over the thought of being separated from his parents, and his sister held him tightly as he prayed with tears running down his face. He said, “Father, I do not know if I can go through this, but I ask you to strengthen me that I would be able to obey.”

*“Is there nothing that God cannot require of us?”*

Josiah was sobbing as he uttered this prayer, and I was reminded of Christ’s own impassioned plea to His Father in the Garden. My son did not shrink

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back, but chose instead to ask the Father for strength, and never have I been more proud of any person in my life than my son as I listened to his words. My heart was moved within me, and I felt that I could barely endure another moment. My heart was so drawn to my son at that moment that I would not have hesitated to do anything possible to assist him in his own trial. I prayed silently to God and I said, "Surely Father, Your heart must also be moved by such a pure cry from the heart of one who wants to be obedient to You. Surely You will show my son grace."

I realized later as I looked back over these events that the Father had shown me that such a circumstance would occur. On that day when my son was

*My heart was moved within me, and I felt that I could barely endure another moment.*

caught outside in a thunderstorm and I had seen him crawling through the yard toward the house calling out for his parents to help him there was foreshadowed this day

when I would see my son in distress. His vulnerability moved me to great compassion, and my heart was being turned over within me. I wanted to spare my son from any pain and suffering, but I knew we had to look to God to deliver us all, even as He provided a ram in place of Isaac.

I slept in the bed with my son that night with my arms wrapped around him. He fell asleep quickly, but my heart continued in pain and sorrow. I had confessed to God that I was willing to do even this, if He required it of me. I was willing to be separated from my children if that was the terrible price of intercession He required of me.

After I had shared with my family what the Spirit had spoken to me and had confirmed to them that I could not shrink back, but I had to follow the Lord wherever He would lead me, our friends the Mills called and said that they felt the Lord would have them to offer for us to live with them for a time. I did not immediately recognize this as our ram in the thicket and our release from this test, for I had fully committed to obeying God and to seeing

things through to their conclusion. I truly expected God to require us to carry through with this intercession to the end, and I was in agony, but I was willing and had already seen it as an accomplished fact. I was not looking for a way out, but rather a way through, so I did not realize how quickly the Father had responded to our willing obedience by opening up a door of provision. It was probably no longer than an hour, or at the most two hours, after we had prayed to God and asked Him to strengthen us in this trial that the Mills called and said they believed God would have us to stay with them. As the next morning dawned I began hearing the Spirit speak to me and tell me that this was His provision. He had seen our willingness to not shrink back from this great test, and He was satisfied.

In hindsight I now see the significance of all the eights and sevens that we encountered when we moved in, for these two numbers together speak of that which is full and spiritually mature, that which is superabundant and satisfying to God. He had opened up a door for us to remain in this community for a couple more months and to intercede for this people, and having received our intercession He was now moving us on. Our intercession had arisen as a fragrant aroma to His nostrils, and He would now bring us a season of peace and grace, which He signified in many ways.

I would be less than honest if I told you that I have not had many doubts about all of the things we walked through during that time. I wondered whether it was actually God who led me to count the cost of making such a sacrifice, or whether it was the voice of the enemy seeking to torment me. I wondered whether I was right to subject my wife to such a test, for the Scriptures say nothing of Abraham speaking anything to Sarah about what God had commanded him to do. He did not even tell his servants who traveled with him what his intent was, and Isaac also did not know until the last moment. Tony had done well to come to a place where she was willing to have all her possessions cast out by the road if it should be God's will, and this was a tremendous thing. It is understandable that she should be greatly disturbed at the

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thought of being separated from her children.

I do not know whether I erred in my handling of this matter, but I know that my heart was focused upon obeying God and not shrinking back even when faced with the greatest sorrow I could imagine. I also know that God taught me some things about His own heart toward His Son by allowing me to walk through this experience. What a great and terrible love the Father has for His creation, that He would be willing to freely give His Son up for us. I can see that the Father, far from being a dispassionate force, was moved beyond measure in His own heart as He observed His Son's willingness to drink from the cup of suffering set before Him. I also learned of the depths of compassion that can be elicited from the heart of a father when he sees a son struggling with great issues while choosing to not shrink back, but instead asking for strength to continue.

More than any other description, Yahweh is called a Father. He has created man in His image, and man too has been given the privilege of being a father. As we delight in our children we learn of the great delight Yahweh has for His Son, and of His yearning to have many sons and daughters. As we experience pain in our dealings with our children, we can also know the pain of our heavenly Father toward His children.

I am now able to look at the experience of the Father as His Son was beaten, scourged, spat upon, mocked, and crucified with just a little more understanding of what it cost Him. I felt a tremendous ache in my heart toward my son for a brief time as I considered giving him up, and it was almost beyond bearing. I have never known a sorrow so deep, or a pain so acute. By experiencing this I feel I have touched in a small measure the pain that was in the Father's heart as He turned His Son over to the suffering of the cross that others might know life. Many people are speaking of being called as intercessors in this hour, but I wonder if most of them truly know what the high cost of intercession is. Intercession is more than merely saying a prayer for another person. It is being willing to lay down

one's own life on behalf of another.

The people at the fellowship in Montezuma do not know of the things we were called to do in intercession for them. They saw only the outer circumstances of our lives, our moving twice, our inability to pay our rent, our being evicted, and they have imagined us to be suffering for our own errors. I have not sought to correct this image in their minds. It is the good will of God that we should be so misunderstood. His Son was also judged wrongly by those who viewed His suffering.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

The church today has almost no understanding of God's will for them to follow in the footsteps of His firstborn Son. Being conformed to the image of Christ includes being conformed to the same life of sacrifice and intercession that He demonstrated. As the apostle John stated, "As He is, so are we in this world" (I John 4:17). We should not think it strange then when God calls us to acts of intercession for others, for such selfless giving of oneself for others is the heart of God. Even as Christ laid down His life for those who reviled and rejected Him, so too will the elect of God be called to make intercession for those who have cast them out and rejected them.

*I have never known a sorrow so deep, or a pain so acute.*

I mentioned previously that the name on the air conditioner at this home on Levie Road was Payne. The owners had replaced the unit with another one from a different manufacturer, yet the repairman had left the old unit sitting in the yard next to the house. I thought of the significance of this, for as long as the old unit sat there we continued to endure pain in our trials. I wanted so badly for someone to come and take that air conditioner away.

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On the day we were moving out the owner's son brought a tractor over and picked up the air conditioner and took it away. Our friends the Barnes were helping us move, and I had told Randy about the significance of the name on the unit. He saw the owner's son taking it away, and he commented to me on the timing of this event. The next months were to be a time of recovery for us, and the pain we had been enduring would not be present.

## A Season of Grace

We had been in Montezuma, Georgia for four months. Our time had started off with great promise, but had ended with tremendous disappointment.

*Paul said that he also knew times when he was perplexed.*

I had felt certain that the Lord would use this people as a core group to begin to raise up a people to His praise. I had prayed for such a people for ten years, and

I had truly believed the Spirit was indicating that now would be the time for a people to come forth who were a people of faith, a people marked by their passion for God and their love for one another, a people who were both led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

In my spirit I was greatly perplexed. I wondered if I had failed somehow in my intercession for this people. I wondered if I had even heard God correctly about His desire for us to participate with this fellowship of believers. Yet, as I looked over all the tremendous confirmations we had received, as I considered the myriad of ways God had come through for us time and again, and as I understood the necessity of the incredible sifting work He had performed in my life, I realized that He had been with us the entire time. Why then, did we not see victory among these people? Why had I witnessed another body turning back to a dependence on the flesh, and why did I know rejection again?

It became painful for me to think about this time in Montezuma, and the pain was increased because I

did not have any answers to my questions. The Spirit reminded me of Paul's words:

II Corinthians 4:7-9

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...

Paul said that he also knew times when he was perplexed. Paul encountered times when things just did not look right, and events did not turn out according to his hope and expectation. Despite times of perplexity, Paul said he did not despair. My dictionary defines despair as "to abandon all hope, loss of hope or confidence." I did find myself experiencing times when I was tempted to abandon all hope and confidence that I would see the things God had promised to me fulfilled. I found myself intentionally avoiding any thoughts about our experiences in Montezuma, for I could not arrive at any answers that would bring me hope or comfort.

My Father knew just what I needed to recover from this tumultuous and painful time we had just passed through. I had no desire to write, and nothing was arising in my spirit that was needing to be shared with the saints. I wanted to take a break from the ministry God had called me to. God provided the outlet I needed. Our friends had many remodeling jobs to be performed on their house, but due to health problems they were unable to complete these tasks themselves. I had worked in the area of apartment maintenance and home repair for some years, and I had the skills necessary to do the work.

Over the course of the next couple of months I worked with my son Josiah to do a variety of jobs. We re-bricked a fireplace hearth, and painted rooms and hallways. We replaced countertops in the kitchen and removed a wall mounted oven and turned the space into a pantry. We installed a drop

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in stove/oven combination and spray painted the range hood to match the other appliances. We sanded and painted kitchen cupboards, and laid flooring in a utility room. We built a table to fold laundry on, and installed ceiling fans and light kits, and we did work out in the yard as well. All of this manual work proved to be good therapy, getting my mind off of the perplexing problems to which I could find no answers.

When we had been with the Mills for about two months, the Spirit spoke to me through a prophetic word I read on the Internet. The word was posted by Mark Kaphaem, and it was titled "Stay in the Game."

*Injury time Out - Do you want to stay in the Game*

*Today in prayer the Lord showed the following to me.*

*I saw a big football game going on and it was an injury time out. There was a player down on the field and the question from the Coach was "do you want keep playing, do you want to stay in the game".*

*The Coach did not ask him how bad he was hurt or where the pain was. He just asked him if he wanted to play, if he wanted to stay in the game.*

*Then I saw a field with hundreds of players down with injuries. Some would only be out for a couple of plays. Some would be out for a couple of weeks. Some would be out for the rest of the season and others had career ending injuries.*

*I then saw the Lord walk up to each one of these players. He just held out His hand and if they wanted to stay in the game He would pull them to their feet and they were instantly strengthened.*

*I believe the Lord is allowing a brief injury time out right now.*

*Are you down on the field? It is up to you. Do you just need a quick breather or maybe a couple of weeks off? Or is this a season ending injury. Maybe you are hurt so bad you just want to go home.*

*The Lord is coming to you. Do not let your injury determine your decision. For if you want to play, if you want to stay in the game, He is there for you. He is reaching out His hand.*

*The Coach wants you in there. For despite all you have been through, He believes in you. And there is no injury His love cannot heal.*

I felt a strong witness of the Spirit as I read this word. I had been injured through all of the troubling events we had known in Montezuma, and I had taken a time out. I had quit writing, and I didn't even want to think about rejoining the game. It seemed to me that the life I knew before, when I was employed as a computer professional, was so much simpler and less troubling. At times I envied those who could go to their jobs day after day, receive their pay, and live their lives with seemingly little struggle. I was wrestling with despair. I had enjoyed the past couple of months where I did not have to get out on the field and get knocked down time and again. It was sort of pleasant sitting on the sidelines.

*I believe the Lord is allowing a brief injury time out right now.*

I knew, however, that I could not remain where I was forever. God had called me to minister to the body of Christ, and I could not be satisfied returning to the life of ease I had known before. I did not want to miss out on the high calling of God in my life. There were many wonderful promises He had made to us as a family that I knew could only be

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entered into if we stayed in the game and did not turn back. I confessed to God that I wanted to get back in the game, despite my injuries. I asked Him to heal me and use me once again.

Almost immediately after this the Lord placed it upon my heart to begin writing again, and the book “The Mark of the Beast” flowed forth. The anointing of the Lord was more evident upon this writing

*It is a difficult thing to  
make ourselves  
vulnerable ...*

than perhaps anything else I had written to this time. Many of the things revealed in this book came to me as I sat down to write, for I had formerly never considered

much of what was written. I felt incredibly helped by the Spirit as I wrote, and I knew the Lord was fulfilling what He had promised. When I had said I wanted back in the game, He was faithful to raise me to my feet and fill me with renewed strength and power to continue.

I did not want a career ending injury, or even a season ending injury. I just needed a breather. The Lord was then able to raise me back up again. Our Father in heaven deals with us with great compassion. I have seen this over and over. In moments of pain He has often given me some special token of His love, and when the fires of refining seemed unbearable He would often take me out of the fire for a time and let things cool off.

At this time, God did not give me any understanding of the experiences we knew during our months in Montezuma. I was still as perplexed as ever, but God encouraged me to return to ministry without having the answers to all of my questions. The ability to continue to follow Christ when things don't make sense is another part of the maturity He desires to see formed in us. I had to choose to know perplexity without giving in to despair. I had to choose to continue in hope and confidence that God would fulfill all of His promises to us if we would just follow Him wherever He would lead.

Over the next few months I continued to write and pray, and God enabled us to help our friends with expenses by buying groceries and doing much of the cooking. At the end of five months we knew it was time to move on once again. The Spirit was urging us to step out once more and to trust Him for all of our provision.

This was a great test for me, for the last two homes God had led us to rent He only provided the resources for us to pay the first month's rent, and each time we ended up being forced to move after only two months. His grace was seen in that He always had another place prepared for us, yet I agonized over being subjected to the same circumstances again. Once more I only had enough money to rent a home and pay the deposits, and we would have to look to the Father to provide the resources for us to continue to remain there.

I was tempted at this time to insulate myself from the further possibility of enduring more reproach and trials by seeking another job in the computer field, yet I knew in my heart it was not the Lord's will. It is a difficult thing to make ourselves vulnerable by returning to a situation that is identical to one that we found to be very painful in days past. It is not unlike someone who survives a plane crash forcing themselves to return to flying, or someone who receives a painful injury returning to the same occupation in which the injury was sustained. God knows our struggles, and He is sympathetic toward us. The word of God states:

Psalms 34:18

Yahweh is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

He would lead us once more to make ourselves vulnerable before Him, but He would also give us many assurances of His presence with us, and we would see His mercy manifested on our behalf.



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## Understanding Comes

When I discerned that God would once more have us to move I began meeting regularly with my family to pray for God's direction and provision to be made known. We were specific in those things we asked for. In particular, we desired a house with at least three bedrooms so Kristin and Josiah might have their own rooms. I considered that a fourth bedroom would be even better, that I might have an office to set up my computer and have a place to be able to pray and write. We also asked for a place in a country setting, though I suspected that this would mean that I would have to go back to a dial-up connection for Internet access, which is a real detriment when trying to maintain a website and attend to a large volume of correspondence. I also wanted something that would be close to \$500 a month, though many people who move into this area have found that almost anything under \$600 a month is run down, small, and in bad neighborhoods. As a final specific point of prayer, I had told my family several weeks earlier that I felt God wanted us to locate in the area of a small town nearby named Byron, Georgia.

Our family had only been praying for a couple days when my daughter began corresponding with a young lady who had recently begun practicing headcovering. As they were getting acquainted my daughter told her that we were going to be moving soon, and when the other young lady asked her where we were going to move, Kristin informed her that I felt we were to move to Byron. This girl responded by saying that she lived in Byron and that her dad had rental property in the area. She volunteered to ask her dad if he had anything available, and a couple days later she got back with my daughter and told her that her dad had a four bedroom, two bath home that was located on their family farm in a secluded location. She said I should contact her father if I was interested.

What this young lady described was exactly what we had been praying for, and I sensed that God was once more going before us in these things. Only once in the past five years did we have to look for a

place to live. We moved approximately ten times in this period, and in only one move did we actually have to look around to see where God would have us to live. In all of the other instances God had brought the provision to us. I determined to call this man the next morning, which was Friday February 13.

On Friday morning I considered that, should the man agree to rent to me that day, I did not have the money on hand to pay both rent and deposits. I prayed and felt that the Lord wanted me to check the IRS website to see when my tax refund would be deposited. When I did I found that \$790 was to be deposited into my checking account that very day. This seemed providential once more, since the means to pay for this house coincided exactly with the opportunity set before us.

I called the man and he was very interested in showing us the house. They wanted a quiet (not rowdy) family to go into this home since it was on their family farm and they lived on the other side of the land, as did some other relatives. We agreed to meet at 3 PM to view the house, and we prayed again as a family before we went. We asked the Lord that if this was where He wanted us that He would give us favor.

We met the man's wife, and she turned out to be someone who had formerly worked at the Houston Healthcare Complex during the same time I was employed there, and she recognized me. She and my wife hit it off very well, as did their daughter and my daughter who were meeting each other face to face for the first time. The husband was very busy, as he is also a home builder, and he only dropped by briefly. I asked him if he wanted me to fill out any paperwork, and he said no, that he felt good about us renting from them. We gave them a check for the rent and deposits and began moving in the very next day.

*What this young lady described was exactly what we had been praying for...*

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The rent was close to the amount I had prayed for, and the home was only four years old, in great shape, and in a beautiful country setting. It had four bedrooms, which we desired, and was just outside the city limits of Byron. It would take less than five minutes to be in town. Amazingly to me, al-

*God had just placed a book in my hands which I felt a strong witness that I was to read.*

though the home is on a farm it is served by two types of high speed Internet access. DSL and Cable Internet are both available. The owners also allowed pets, though we were required to pay

a deposit. There were absolutely no impediments to our moving to this new location. It was as if the Lord had swung the door wide open and said, "Here is my provision for you. Enter in!"

Even with so many affirmations of the Lord's hand in this provision, I was troubled by stepping out and renting this place, for the memories of our experiences in Montezuma were still fresh in my mind. Twice God provided places for us there, only for us to then see all financial provision dry up, and I dealt with the agony of not having the money to pay our rent. My faith was being tested severely, as the Father was seeking to deliver me from the fears that tormented me. I had been struggling to understand why God led us to endure the things we experienced in Montezuma, for I had such high expectations and a very profound disappointment. Although I knew God was teaching me lessons there (It was there the Spirit led me to write the book "The Divine Quest"), there was much I didn't understand and this lack of understanding was producing an unrest and lack of peace in my soul.

Just a few days after we had moved into this home, my wife and children were going off, and my daughter was to spend the night away. I was sitting in a chair by the front door anticipating a quiet evening by myself, and I was watching my daughter come in and out as she was constantly remembering one more thing she wanted to take with her. On her last trip she grabbed two things and headed for the door, but when she got there she changed her mind about a book she was going to take and she

turned around and placed it in my hands, told me good-bye, and was out the door and gone.

I looked at the book in my hands, and it was "Hinds' Feet On High Places" by Hannah Hurnard. I had never read this book before, but I had the feeling that I had been set-up by the Spirit. My family had just left. I was all alone. And God had just placed a book in my hands which I felt a strong witness that I was to read. I began reading the book and as I did the Spirit witnessed powerfully to me and the tears began to flow. I read of the main character, Much-Afraid, and how the Shepherd led her out from her relatives the Fearings. I read how the Shepherd led her to one journey after another where her fears assailed her and had to be overcome, faith had to be exercised, and her will had to be laid upon the altar. As I read I was reviewing my own journey, and I began to understand why my Shepherd had been leading me down the paths He had asked me to take. It has been His desire to free me from all fears and to learn an unshakeable confidence in Him.

I then understood also what he was doing in our current situation, for once more He had led me to a place where I had only enough money to pay for the first month's rent and deposits, and where the landlord required that the next month's rent be paid on the first of the month, only two weeks later. (The first month's rent is for a full month, but the second is pro-rated. I know some will be curious.) God was asking me, "Will you trust Me once more? Will you dwell in perfect peace this time without listening to the voices of anxiety, fear, or evil forebodings?"

In this book the main character Much-Afraid is led down many perilous paths, and through roads of sorrow and pain. She is tormented by members of the Fearing family who dog her steps and continually speak words to her that are intended to turn her back from following the course the Shepherd is leading her down. The Lord reminded me that nearly two years earlier He had prophesied through my daughter with the words "You must learn to listen to My voice, and My voice alone. Put behind you all foolish thoughts of doubt and unbelief, for

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great is My reward to those who trust in Me." My way had been made much more difficult because I had allowed the voice of fear to continually resound in my heart. I had continued to follow where my Shepherd led, but I did so in fear and trembling.

Much-Afraid finally determines to no longer listen to these voices, and at first she stops up her ears, but she is not able to hear anything at all. She later learns that an even more effectual solution is to begin singing praises to God whenever the voices of fear, anxiety and evil forebodings begin to speak to her. The Spirit had been speaking the same message to me for some time. He had been calling me to praise and worship Him in the midst of trials, and I knew that while we were at this house in Byron that Yahweh desired to bring me to complete victory in this matter.

When we moved to this house I noticed that the house number was 2440, which is commonly pronounced "twenty-four forty." I had felt there was a significance to these numbers, but I did not immediately know what it was. After we had been in this house a few weeks, the Spirit revealed to me the meaning. The Spirit showed me that the significance relates to worshipping Him in the midst of trials and tests. The number twenty-four only occurs in reference to two things in Scripture, and the verses the Spirit led me to were in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 4:9-10

And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the **twenty-four** elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will **worship Him** who lives forever and ever...

Revelation 5:8-9

When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the **twenty-four** elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the **prayers of**

**the saints.** And **they sang a new song...**

Revelation 11:16

And the **twenty-four** elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and **worshipped God...**

Revelation 19:4-5

And the **twenty-four** elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne **saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"** And a voice came from the throne, saying, "**Give praise to our God,** all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great."

We see here that the number twenty-four is consistently linked to God's creation worshipping Him. Wherever the twenty-four elders are mentioned, praise and worship of God is also present. The number forty is a number associated with trials and testing, for example the Israelites were tested by God for forty years in the wilderness, Yahshua was tested for forty days in the wilderness, etc.. As I considered these things I sensed the Spirit telling me that He wanted us to worship Him in the midst of trials and testing. We were to have no lack of trials in which to practice this, for from the day we moved in we were beset with one test after another.

*I knew He was answering  
my prayers for  
understanding ...*

It was a great comfort to me that God should choose to bring me understanding of my trials. As I read this book by Hannah Hurnard I experienced a deep peace come upon me. It was as if the Father had come down to wrap His arms around me and to personally assure me that He is with us. I felt like I was having an intimate conversation with the Father as I read this book, and I knew He was answering my prayers for understanding to be granted to me.

## Evidence of Things Unseen

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In the book Much-Afraid is yearning to get to the destination, which is the mountains of spices. The Shepherd at times takes her down paths that are leading in the direction of the mountains, and hope grows in her heart, but then He unexpectedly bids her to follow a path that seems to lead directly away from her destination. These detours are great tests for Much-Afraid who wants so desperately to be at the end of the journey. Great crises are met with time after time as Much-Afraid must once more lay her will on the altar in order to choose to follow the Shepherd.

I could identify my own times when I have been brought to such crises, and I have battled with continuing on, or turning back. Time after time I have

*Time after time I have also been led to build an altar and lay my will upon it.*

also been led to build an altar and lay my will upon it. In the book, as in reality, something of great value is gained every time she chose to follow the Spirit by tak-

ing up the disciple's cross. At each fresh surrender there is something more of the sinful nature that is crushed, and a new release of the life of Christ within us.

I had been very intent upon wanting to arrive at the destination, and to know the fulfillment of God's promises for my life and that of my family. Yet there is tremendous value in the journey, for the journey fits us to be able to receive the anointing and calling God has for our lives. As we travel through wilderness places, knowing many tests, our old Adamic nature is subdued and the life of Christ is brought forth to ever increasing expression. In the wilderness we leave behind all those things that have hindered us, and we come forth leaning upon Christ Who has become everything to the saint.

When Yahweh has tried us thoroughly, He will bring us up out of the wilderness and into the promises set before us. The Scriptures say that it is by "faith and patience" that we inherit the promises, and we are told that we have need of endur-

ance. I believe there is a place of rest to be attained in our wilderness experiences. This rest replaces the restlessness we have known where we feel driven to be at the end of all trials and testing. There is a place where we simply become content to wait upon God patiently, and to endure with joy. When we attain to this place, then the Shepherd is able to bring us up out of the wilderness and into the glorious realms that lie ahead.

As I reflected on this book by Hannah Hurnard, and what the Spirit was speaking to me through it, a peace began to grow in my heart. Our present situation looked so very similar to those we had known in Montezuma which were very painful. Yet the promises of God are very precious, and the apostle Paul declares that the glory to be revealed in us is not worth comparing to these momentary, light afflictions.

Romans 8:16-19

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

There is a purpose for every path and every experience our Shepherd leads us through. He is probably more eager than we are ourselves to see us arrive at the destination before us. Yet He bears long with us when we cry out for deliverance from our painful trials, for He knows that there are no shortcuts to glory. He does not wish that we should fall short of the glory of God in any respect.

I hear my Shepherd asking, "Will you simply follow Me? Will you take the course I set before you, and not shrink back?" He promises to be with us at all times, and nothing can separate us from His love. The overcomers in Christ are identified by the fol-

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lowing simple statement:

Revelation 14:4

These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

I have had many expectations about what God would do at each place He has led me. I have watched three different bodies of believers shrink back from the path of faith before them when I had expected God to take each one into their promised inheritance. Things have rarely turned out the way I thought they would. When I have thought I was nearing the end of the path, there always seemed to be a further valley to travel through. Yet the Shepherd guiding me knows what He is about. I am learning to rest under His watchful and loving eye.

## A People for His Praise

When we moved to our new home in Byron our family had been battling sickness for a few weeks. Some condition similar to bronchitis had been passed around from one member to another, and I had come down with it about a week before our move. Tony also was afflicted with it at this time. I did not think too much of it, for I knew that in time it would pass and we would be restored to health. I did not know that things would get worse before they got better.

A few days after we had moved in my daughter asked me to fix a shelving unit in her room. I was tired from the move, and from battling the respiratory ailment that was going on, but I agreed to do what I could. I asked Kristin to bring me a chair to stand on so that I could reach where the repair needed to be made. I had anticipated her bringing one of the sturdy kitchen chairs, but instead she showed up with a small child size wooden chair, and she offered it to me. I looked at it for a moment, but being too tired to make a further effort I accepted the chair and sat it in the closet.

When I got both feet up on the chair it shattered into a half dozen pieces and I fell and landed on my left arm and side. My daughter was very startled, but I took inventory of myself for a moment and found that nothing seemed seriously hurt. I told her I was okay and I got back up and asked her to bring me a different chair, and I finished the job.

During the rest of the evening my left arm grew progressively more painful, and it began to stiffen up. By the next morning I was barely able to bend it at all at the elbow, and my forearm was very tender. I still considered that it was not anything serious, since I had been able to use it fully the evening before, and I knew it would heal on its own. I was tempted to grumble to God about my sickness and my injury, but I checked myself, and chose to ask God to give me understanding of why these things were happening.

Over the course of the next few days the Lord gave me understanding of my arm injury. I was reminded that in Scripture the left arm represents defense, for the soldiers would typically wear the shield on their left arm while wielding a sword or spear with the right arm. My arm was injured at the exact spot where a shield would be worn. At this time the Spirit had led me to write some articles that generated a lot of negative response, and He was seeking to teach me to not be defensive at all in my responses. This message of not being defensive was confirmed through a couple of sources, so I thanked God for His lesson, and I asked Him to teach me how to be totally without defense before man. I was to receive plenty of practice as the negative mail continued to come in, and much of it was very vitriolic in nature.

*When I got both feet up on the chair it shattered into a half dozen pieces ...*

The physical tests continued as I had something resembling a blister come up on my left eye. It didn't affect my vision, but it looked bad, and was a little worrisome. My wife also continued with her

## Evidence of Things Unseen

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respiratory sickness, and she got to the point where she was having great difficulty sleeping at night, and this affliction was wearing upon her.

About this time my son came into the house one day and he said, “Dad, did you know the air conditioner here has the same name on it as the one on Levie Road? It says it is a Payne.” I had already noted this myself, but I noticed one difference. The lettering was smaller on this air conditioner, and it had a second name on it which was Carrier.

What we choose to believe will radically impact what our response will be.

So it was not just Payne, but a Payne Carrier. I wasn't sure what difference this signified, but I sensed that there would be some difference from our previous experiences.

About a month after we moved in I was experiencing some relief from my respiratory problems. I was not coughing as much, and my breathing was improved, though my wife continued on with much difficulty. I noticed one day that my tongue felt like someone had given me a shot of novocaine. It felt a little numb, and had a strange sensation to it. The next morning I woke up and this sensation had spread to my lips, which felt a little puffy and numb. By the end of the day the entire right side of my face was paralyzed, and I realized I had come down with Bell's Palsy.

I knew about Bell's Palsy because I had an uncle who had come down with this condition years earlier. I read what I could on the Internet about it and I found it was often precipitated by a viral infection, and it was due to inflammation and damage to the seventh cranial nerve. The condition typically persists anywhere from a few weeks to a few months, with some cases lasting longer than a year.

Over the next week the symptoms reached maturity where the right side of my mouth was drooping. When I smiled, I only had half a smile. When I

raised my eyebrows, only my left eyebrow would go up. My right eye would not blink fully, and this led to a dry eye condition and the need to use my finger to manually blink my eye. At times I began wearing a patch over my right eye to keep it from being irritated and drying out. I also experienced much pain in the right side of my head that felt like a severe ear ache with shooting pains. All these things are symptoms of Bell's Palsy.

When I read about this condition on the Internet I learned that there is little to be done in the way of treatment. It has not been proven that any medication will improve the condition. One must simply wait for the damaged nerve to regenerate itself, and this can be a slow process. All of these things have occurred as I have been writing this book, which speaks in places about God performing supernatural healing in our lives. We have no health insurance, for God has told us to look to Him for our health needs, and He continues to reaffirm that this is His will for us.

I knew all of these things happening in our lives were not coincidental, for God orders our steps, and He is the One who chooses our trials and tests. I have been reminded again of the significance of our house number 24-40. God is seeking to teach us to worship Him in the midst of trials. He wants to see if He will find a response of worship in our hearts, or whether we will resort to murmuring and complaint against Him as the Israelites also did in their wilderness journeys. I have been very mindful of this, and because of this fact I have chosen to adopt an attitude of trust and worship, rather than fear and complaint.

As all of these things have been occurring, my family and I have had to choose to recognize the presence of God in our situations and struggles. We can either choose to believe that He orders the events of our lives, and He has a very good purpose for all things, or we can live in the unconscious reality spoken of earlier in this book. What we choose to believe will radically impact what our response will be.

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Because I have chosen to recognize the presence of God, and to not think that anything in my life is chance, or accident, I was ready to receive what God spoke to me yesterday through a prophetic word He led me to. I was writing a chapter in this book and I had just penned the following words:

*Our time had started off with great promise, but had ended with tremendous disappointment. I had felt certain that the Lord would use this people as a core group to begin to raise up a people to His praise. I had prayed for such a people for ten years...*

These words, “a people for His praise,” were still in my mind when I went to find a prophetic word at an Internet site so that I could quote it in the chapter. What I found first was a word that had recently been posted that was titled, “A People that will be a Praise unto My Name.” The Spirit bid me to read this prophecy, and He spoke to me through it. Below is the text of this word.

### **A People That Will Be A Praise Unto My Name**

Dee Hoetmer - 17th March 2004

Isa 33:10 Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

Do not look to the left or to the right, for your deliverance will come from Me. Look to the hills from whence comes your deliverance. Some trust in horses, some trust in chariots. Why do you look to Egypt My people for your deliverance from your circumstances?

Psa 121:1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. Psa 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. Psa 121:3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Psa 121:4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber

nor sleep. Psa 121:5 The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.

Psa 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. Psa 20:8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Psa 20:9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

Isa 54:4 **Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame:** for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Have I not said that I will open the door? Have I not said that I will hold you by the right hand and show you the way in which you must go? Many are fretting, looking for that open door, anxious to move forward in your call. Yes the world awaits the revelation of the Sons of God. Creation awaits redemption, but for now My children I have to teach you patience, longsuffering and fortitude.

*For now My children I  
have to teach you  
patience, longsuffering  
and fortitude.*

Rom 8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

You are to have the attributes of My Son before I reveal MY SONS to the world. Lay down your own agendas, lay down your presumptuous thoughts about what awaits you in your calling. All self seeking, all self glorification must cease. Long have I suffered My name being brought into disrepute. Long have I suffered the mockings of My Holy name, for My children have not brought glory to Me! Now when I send out My prepared ones, MY SONS, they will go forth ablaze in My Glory!

Rom 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this

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present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

There will be no mistaking who is LORD, CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE AND ALL THAT IS THEREIN. You will stretch forth your hand in faith and I will do creative miracles. Yea limbs will grow where there were only stumps, eyes will appear in empty eye sockets. There will be no mistaking that I, THE LORD GOD JEHOVAH, IS GOD!

The miracles will not be for you Beloved, in that day, but that the world will know who I AM. Kings

*I am enabled to praise and worship God in the midst of tests.*

will bow down to Me in that day I will reveal My power through you. My name will no longer be mocked. My people be ye Holy even as I AM Holy! My name will no longer

be mocked, the world will see who I AM.

So now you see Beloved, why it is just a little longer, a little more refining and I WILL SEND FORTH A PEOPLE THAT WILL BE A PRAISE UNTO MY NAME!

1Pe 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

Phi 1:11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, **unto the glory and praise of God.**

Eph 1:12 **That we should be to the praise of his glory,** who first trusted in Christ.

[End Quote]

It is for such a people that I have been led to pray for over ten years. The Spirit is testifying that such

a people will be seen soon. At this moment He is doing a further refining work. He is seeking to teach us patience, longsuffering and fortitude. I can easily see how the present trials being encountered in my family are designed to produce these characteristics. Because I have discerned God's hand in this matter, I am encouraged to endure with patience, and to look with hope for that glory which is soon to be revealed. I am enabled to praise and worship God in the midst of tests.

I am still praying for healing, and I am praying for God's provision to be manifest on behalf of my family, for God has told us to ask. His words says:

Philippians 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

This book is not yet finished, for my story is not yet concluded. I look to great things to come in just a short time. If you have learned anything in this book, I hope you have noted how important it is to discern the presence of God in our lives. God is not absent in the lives of any of His children, though many live as if He is nowhere around. Only when we discern His presence can we respond appropriately to the circumstances of our lives. We must consciously choose to live by faith and not by sight.

The life of faith is not some mystical experience reserved for a few. It is to be the portion of all God's children. We enter into this life of faith one moment, and one act of belief at a time. The Scriptures do testify, "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Without faith I would not be confessing that He has ordered my steps and allowed my wife and I to know physical infirmity at this time. I would also not respond with the patience and worshipful attitude that He desires. Without faith I would not believe that days are just ahead when God will place



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awesome anointings upon His elect, and the blind will receive sight, amputated limbs will grow back, and many other extraordinary things will occur. Yet I do believe, and I look to a day soon when the name of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua will be a praise in the earth because there is a people who walk worthy of Them.

No, this book is not finished, for God is not finished. He will complete what He has begun. He has taken a family that was very much out of order, bound by many ungodly things, and He has been setting things in order. He is bringing forth something that will glorify His name. When our own fears and weaknesses would have caused us to turn back from the course He chose from us, He has held us steadily to the path. It is not our faithfulness that is in view in this book, but the faithfulness of God to complete that which He has begun. As Jude has stated,

Jude 24-25

Now to Him Who is able to keep you without stumbling or slipping or falling, and to present [you] unblemished (blameless and faultless) before the presence of His glory in triumphant joy and exultation [with unspeakable, ecstatic delight]-- to the one only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory (splendor), majesty, might and dominion, and power and authority, before all time and now and forever (unto all the ages of eternity). Amen (so be it).

(Amplified Bible)

He is faithful. Amen!

**He is faithful.  
Amen!**

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### PARABLES PRECEPT— The Bible

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#### **BIBLE STUDY**



#### **GET INTO THE WORD!**

The Bible is a book of increasing revelation. What I mean by this is that the things of God become ever clearer as the Bible progresses from the Old Testament to the New Testament. What was portrayed in shadows become substance in the appearance of Christ.

God has set this pattern of ever increasing light in the Scriptures.

Genesis 1:5

And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Note that the Biblical day established by Yahweh begins in the evening and ends in the day. This sets a pattern of man who begins in darkness and moves toward the light of revelation in Christ. Our lives are to be a progression into ever increasing light. This is also the pattern we see in the Scriptures.

Job 12:22

He reveals mysteries from the darkness, and brings the deep darkness into light.

Mankind begins in darkness and then progresses into the light of truth.

Matthew 4:16

"The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned."

The Old Testament contains types and shadows of the truth that is now revealed in the person of Christ.

Hebrews 10:1

The Law... has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things...

Colossians 2:16-17

Let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day - things which are a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.