



To Do *Then said I, Lo, I come
in the volume of the book*
Thy Will *it is written of me, to do
thy will, O God (Heb 10:7)*
O GOD

To Do Thy Will O GOD

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Chapter 1

Sacrifice and Offering

“Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second” (Heb 10:8,9).

If I were asked to name what, in all the universe, is of greatest importance, I think I would have to name the will of God; for in this lies all that we need seek of Him, eternally hidden. It is when we constantly walk in the will of God that we'll fully possess the mind of Christ. Outside God's will, there can be no knowledge of His purpose. And all those who shall be counted worthy to share the glory of Christ's kingdom in the age to come must first experience, in this age,

the wonderful knowledge of His will. For we shall only be able to avenge all disobedience when our own obedience is fulfilled. And before the will of God shall be done on the earth where we dwell, it must first be done in the earth which we are.

The hour has come when the will of God shall be done on the earth as it is done in heaven. For thousands of years, the earth and the inhabitants thereof have been ruled by the will of men, ruled by cruel kings and wicked conquerors, dictators and despots who have imposed their wills on the nations, rejoiced at the sighing of the needy, and ignored the groaning of the oppressed.

The kingdom of God is here. And the kingdom of God will not be governed by the desire of carnal man, nor by the craven will of self-centered men, but by the will of Him who created the universe for Himself. It will be governed by the will of Him who knows all things and loves all His creatures. And those who will be counted worthy to share His kingdom must first depart from their own will to become one with Him who *“worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”*

The opening passage of Scripture above echoes the declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ on what it takes to please the Father.

After it became clear that sacrifices and offerings, and burnt offerings and sin offerings—all offered according to the Law—were incapable of pleasing God or expiating sin, the Lord stepped in for us. Then said He, *“Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.”*

For centuries, man had been laboring to no avail with sacrifices and oblations of all sorts to expiate sin and receive atonement before God, and none of these found acceptance. But the very moment the Lord Jesus stepped in and made this declaration, a proclamation made for our benefit, God took favorable action:

God immediately took away the “first” that He might establish the “second.” What does this mean? What is the “first”? What is this “first” that He took away? Let’s listen to the Scripture:

“But that which is spiritual is not first, but that which was natural, afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is out of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord out of heaven” (1 Co 15:46-47).

The “first” in our passage of meditation above refers to the will of natural man. It is natural and out of the earth. It is from below. This is what He took away. The “first” refers

to the way of man, including his efforts to please God and to gain the knowledge of good and evil. The first includes everything concocted in the mind of man apart from God. It's all that originated from man, including the things purported to be for God's glory. It's anything and everything that has the mind of man as its source, whether openly contrary to God or not. It also includes those expensive sacrifices and great missions which man embarks upon and invites God to tag along. Yes, it includes all the seemingly well-meaning programs and elaborate infrastructure designed and manufactured by man and presented to God to endorse. These all miss the mark, no matter how great the sacrifice involved. These constitute the "first" which He took away.

Once we have understood what the "first" stands for, the "second" becomes clear. The "second" is the WILL of GOD. It is what He wants, what He's saying, and what He wants to accomplish. It is His purpose in action. The second refers to the things that please Him.

The "first," in the Scriptural passage above literally refers to the sacrifices, burnt offerings, and sin offerings offered by the Jews under the Law. Today, for the believer

who does not offer animals upon a physical altar, it would refer to all those legalistic works that we are doing to please God and which some still do to atone for their sins. These laborious activities and the hard-hearted atmosphere of justice in which some have caged themselves are useless in pleasing God. These sacrifices and offerings dragged from man's rebellious heart cannot bring God any satisfaction. They are not acceptable to Him. He is only pleased by things given to Him from the heart, from a willing and cheerful heart. He's pleased by those who serve Him in spirit and in truth. He delights in a cheerful giver who does His will from the heart. He desires living offerings given to Him out of a free will. He will not accept any service rendered to Him grudgingly.

The moment you and I delight in God's will, all sacrifices are done away. The moment we become one with His will, He removes any need for all those laborious sacrifices. When pleasing Him becomes our daily experience, He removes the first. This is the end of dreary sacrifices. A new era of relationship with God begins. We begin living and walking as He directs and carrying out His desire. We are no longer trying, doing, laboring, or sacrificing to please Him. We are living as children of

His delight. For how could anything pleasing to God be a sacrifice to one who delights in God's will? It's no sacrifice anymore: it's a pleasure.

The core message in this seventh verse of the tenth chapter of Hebrews is this—that in the moment when the Lord Jesus declared that He had come to do the will of God, the heavenly Father put an end to the *"first"* order and inaugurated the *"second."* When the Lord Jesus, our Christ stepped into the scene with this declaration, God the Father reacted saying, *"This is my only begotten Son, in whom I am well pleased"*. God then put an end to the works of the Law and the necessity for it. This is part of what Christ, our Redeemer, did for us. And likewise, in the moment when we, the children of God, dedicate ourselves to the will of God, God will be pleased, and He will take away the *first* and inaugurate the *second*.

When a man makes a quality, heartfelt decision to submit to the will of God, God sees it and is satisfied. God, being totally pleased, will remove the need for any sacrifice or righteous work to please Him or to curry His favor. The heart of the seeker is instead filled with faith. And God becomes totally pleased with everything this saint does. The first is

therefore totally removed, and the pleasure of God is established.

The sacrifice and offering spoken about in this passage and enumerated in the Law pertains to the will of man. It is dragged from man's unwilling heart, and therefore it's a sacrifice to him. It is demanded from him. And because doing what pleases God is not natural for man, he has to be forced to do it. Hence, it is not a living sacrifice. It is not from the spirit. It is not of faith. It is not an offering from a willing heart, and cannot bring God pleasure.

In addition, because this sacrifice is of the natural, coming from below, produced from the fallen earth, like the offering of Cain, it is unacceptable to God. It is not a living sacrifice. There is no life in it, and God therefore will have no respect for it.

Sacrifice and offering is man's hard work and effort put forward to please God. This is unacceptable. Man cannot buy his way into the heart of God using rotten earthly currency. His work and efforts are worth less than despicable filthy rags before God. Therefore, he must put all his sacrifice and works aside, for they are stinking abominations before the Holy One. He must come to God through the one sacrifice of

the “*body*” that God has provided. He must surrender totally *to the will of God* and not seek his own way.

As man makes the quality decision to join Christ the Forerunner and declare, “*Lo, I come, in the volume of the books, to do Thy will O God,*” God will take away the “*first,*” the will of man, and establish the “*second,*” His own pleasure. God will take away all the fruitless strivings, struggles, and useless labors, and establish the heart with grace.

“For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein” (Heb 13:9b).

This will be the end of all those gruesome sacrifices! The curtain is drawn on the struggles of the worn-out man seeking God, and a new era comes. A new day dawns. There is no sacrifice anymore for this one, for he delights in the will of the Father. The only labor this one performs is that which is coming from the heart of the Father, and this to him, is a delight not a sacrifice. It’s a privilege, not a burden.

It is the dawn of a new day, a new dispensation of the will of God—the day when the will of God rules and reigns in and from the heart. It is a new era of the *sons of God* whose “*ears*

have been opened” and who, like Christ their Forerunner, are led by the Spirit of God. These sons of God, like Christ, will step forward and declare in truth, “*I delight to do Thy will, oh my God.*” Their voices will be heard in all the earth, and their proclamation in all corners of the heavens.

As their voices are heard in the heavens, nothing will delay the coming of the Son of Man in His glory. Neither will His glorious reign be delayed any longer; the sons of God will be revealed with Him. It is then that we’ll see the full manifestation of the prayers of our Lord, for *His kingdom will come* to this earth and “*His will*” will be done in it, as it is done in heaven.

Chapter 2

To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice

“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”(1 Sam 15:22).

King Saul sounded excited. He had spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, and brought back the best of the sheep, oxen, and lambs from Amalek. He had convinced himself that as long as he pretended they had been saved for sacrifice to the Lord, all would be well. He would tell Samuel that these quality sheep, oxen, and lambs were set apart for sacrifice to the God of Israel. “This will be highly impressive to Samuel,” he thought, “and must be pleasing even to Jehovah Himself.” But wait a minute! What did God instruct King Saul to do?

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

“Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Sam 15:2,3).

And what did Saul the king do?

“And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah. And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley.

“And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

“But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly” (1 Sam 15:4-5,7-9).

These instructions may seem extreme, but that is because we do not see the whole picture as God does or understand as He does. However, for those not familiar with the history of the Amalekites, Moses, who was there when it happened, rehearsed the

episode for the younger generation in the Book of Deuteronomy:

“Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it” (Deut 25:17-19)

If these people had been permitted to live, they would probably have caused more unimaginable trouble for the children of Israel. So, God instructed Saul to utterly destroy them, in the same fashion that He told us believers to utterly forsake Satan and all his works. There can be no compromise with evil, and no remnant of it must be allowed to remain in our lives. There must be complete conquest over the evil forces, and Agag must not be spared.

However, Saul spared some of these people that he was told to utterly destroy. And so,

when we come to the Book of Esther, we see a descendant of Agag, Haman, who indeed raised himself up to destroy all the Jews that were in the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. To refresh your memory, let’s visit the Book of Esther.

“After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. And all the king’s servants, that were in the king’s gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai” (Es 3:1,2; 5,6).

Haman’s genocidal impulse against the Jews recorded here is deeper than just a reaction to what Mordecai did: it is satanic and generational. By demonic divination and casting lots day by day, a satanic equivalent (or shall we say perversion) of the Urim and Thummim, Haman chose a day to make a

request of the king to destroy all the Jews. He was successful in getting Ahasuerus to agree with signing a decree to that effect.

“Then were the king’s scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king’s lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king’s ring. [13] And the letters were sent by posts into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey” (Est 3:12,13).

Haman, Agag’s descendant, was obsessed with satanic passion to exterminate the Hebrew nation—and would have succeeded had God not intervened. Beloved, we need to take God’s side always, even when we do not understand His actions. It is only when we have God’s understanding, His perspective, and His vantage point that we’ll be able to appreciate His actions. He sees far ahead. His

actions that may look strange to us today are aimed at saving us from calamity tomorrow. And things that look very innocuous to us today may have a brooding seed that will mature into a disaster in the future. We must spare neither Agag nor his descendants. We must obey God.

Let’s also note something interesting here: Saul chose the best of the best and saved them, according to him, to offer as a sacrifice to God. Okay, let’s take his word for it. Let’s agree with him for a moment that he sincerely chose these to offer them as a quality offering by fire unto the God of Israel.

Would this suddenly make his action acceptable? Would this impress God as to change His mind and adjust His instructions? Would these best-grade fatlings bring such a pleasant aroma to God as to make Him change His commandments and modify His will? This indeed is the folly of religion.

God has mapped out a way, but man, ignoring the way God has provided, goes about rigorously and sacrificially crafting his own. He goes about doing things that are good, and he arduously seeks to please God by good works, by exemplary giving, and by sacrificial living. He gathers his best and brings them, sincerely as it were, to offer

unto God. But will he be accepted?

God has already spoken. Man's *best of the best is at best* a filthy rag before God, which is why He has prepared another way for man to earn a passing grade. The way is not by works of righteousness, but by grace, and by accepting that which the Lord Jesus Christ has done for him. Religion seeks to make the grade by its own sacrifice and good works. This will never please God. Indeed, holding on to religion is disobedience. It is forsaking the way God has paved for us and constructing our own highway of righteousness. Hear what the Lord said:

"Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer 2:12-13).

This must be a lesson for you and me not to make up our own doctrines of righteousness or holiness, however great and upright-looking they may be, but to simply obey what God has said. It is not the sacrifice, expense, rigor, or pain of our ministry to God that determines its acceptability before God, but the quality of our obedience.

God prefers obedience to any external religious service, saintly denial, or rites and forms of religion prescribed by the Law, aimed at serving God. They are of no value to Him when done in place of obedience. Jehovah values the obedience of the heart far more than all the imposing performances of ritualistic worship, and our expiation from sin comes not to us as the result of our elaborate ceremony and self-denial, but as a result of our great Substitute's obedience to the will of Father God.

And so Saul, according to the seventh verse of our passage, *"smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt,"* as God commanded. Up to this point, Saul was obedient. But after he utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword, he took Agag, the king of the Amalekites, alive. This is partial obedience. And partial obedience is disobedience, for it is when our obedience is fulfilled that we'll be able to avenge all disobedience.

"But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly" [1 Sam 15:9].

Saul must have thought, "What a shame to destroy everything!" Do we know better than God, who said, *"Destroy everything?"* Did Saul know better than God? Saul thought it was better to spare the ruling aristocrats while he destroyed the peasants. The entire Amalekite nation was wholly given to evil, and the king, above all others, should have been destroyed.

Saul at the onset of his reign was mighty in anointing and mighty in battle. But because he disobeyed and *"spared Agag, and the best of the sheep,"* in addition to his other offences, it brought him to ruin. The fact that he planned to dedicate these items to the Lord made no difference. Obedience always remains God's ultimate desire for His own, and is better than sacrifice. We hear a lot of appeals today from everywhere for "sacrifice," on the basis that God needs what you have, and that unless you give it to Him the work of the Lord will not go forward.

Yet, through it all, there is only one real request and persistent demand from the Eternal Spirit: *"My son, give me your heart."* When you give Him your heart, you give your all; but if you give Him all your material possession and withhold your heart, you give Him nothing. After you've given Him your

heart, it becomes easier for you to give Him the rest. Besides, what things can you really give to Him for His benefit? Thus says the Lord:

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

"If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" (Psa 50:10-13).

The sacrifices we render may all be great and wonderful, but what we need to do is find what He really desires from us. The *"cattle on a thousand hills"* belong to Him, as well as the gold and the silver, and the treasures in this world. Neither does He really need us to make huge sacrifices in order to build Him a villa to dwell in.

"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at

my word” (Isa 66:2).

What He desires is for us to sit at His feet, listen, and obey His words. This is the principal thing. And this was the test Saul failed that resulted in his rejection by God.

Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying,

“It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night” (1 Sam 15:11).

“And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons” (1 Sam 16:1).

God was in essence admonishing Samuel that it was time to stop pleading for Saul, and that it was time to move on. In the first place, Saul was not God’s choice for king over Israel. Saul became king as a result of the people’s request—by the *“will of man.”* The people of Israel chose him because of his stature: he was very tall and handsome, head and shoulders above the rest of the people. Even after God had shown them

what manner of king Saul would be, and after both God and Samuel had tried to dissuade them from electing him as king, they still went ahead. They wanted to be like the other nations around them, so they asked for a human king like Saul. Therefore, God gave them what they *asked for*. In fact, in line with God’s prophetic humor, the name of their king, “Saul,” means *“asked for.”* They asked and insisted on it, and therefore, God gave them exactly what they *“asked for.”*

“Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power; And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people” (1 Sam 9:1,2).

This boy Saul was very handsome. Physically, he looked like a king. The children of Israel wanted a king, and they liked Saul. He was handsome. He was tall. He was fine-looking. There wasn’t a more kingly-looking man in the entire nation. And since the people were choosing their king by outward appearance, they found a perfect match in Saul. But he

was not the man after God's heart. He was not His choice to reign over Israel.

"Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you" (1 Sam 12:13).

This should be a lesson for you and me to be careful about what we ask for and what we insist on getting from God. We should seek His will. Our earnest desire all the time should be that His will be done in our lives. It is important that we do not fastidiously insist on our desires, because if we press things too much, He might just give us what we ask for—and we might just get a Saul.

"Lord, help me to seek your will above all things. Help me to submit my desires, however good they might look, however holy and selfless they may look; Help me to put your will above all my life and ministry ambitions. And ultimately help me to become one with your will, just like my Lord Jesus, Amen."

And so God allowed it. He gave them what they asked for and allowed the "man of the flesh" to rule over Israel. The will of man, not the will of God, was king over Israel for 40 years. During this time, the will of man contended against the will of God in Israel. On one occasion, we see Saul taking it upon

himself to perform the function of a priest.

Samuel had told him, *"Seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do"* (1 Sam 10:8). But when Saul waited the seven days and Samuel did not come, he said, *"Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering"* (1 Sam 13:9). Saul had the audacity to assume the place of a priest and offer a burnt offering. But what are we saying? What is so different today? We see carnal men taking upon themselves the office of a prophet today; As it was then, so it is now in the religious establishment of our day.

"And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever” (I Sam 13:10-13).

The Saul company is always walking by reason rather than by God’s instruction. The anointed Sauls are always gathering people unto themselves rather than unto God. They seek the crowd to advance their ministry and fame and not for the zeal of His house. They lack the revelation that it’s not about the anointed minister of God, but that our gathering is about SHILOH, *“and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be”* (Gen 49:10).

Saul passionately said, *“Because I saw that the people were scattered from me.”* That was why he took it upon himself to act as a priest and offer the burnt offering. But as it was then, so it is today with the anointed Sauls of our day. We see them stepping into the prophet’s office, if only to gather the crowd around themselves. But why does this matter? They are Sauls in the first place—not God’s choice, but the people’s.

Saul knew that God’s instruction required him to wait for Samuel before making any

move against the Philistines. He also knew that no one in Israel except the priest was ordained to offer the burnt offering, and that God Almighty would defend them even though it looked like Samuel, the prophet and priest, was delayed in his arrival. God is never late. Saul, again, willfully disobeyed and proceeded to offer the burnt offering. It was a test of his patience and trust, and he failed woefully.

Sometimes we get so concerned about the fulfillment of a prophecy we have received or a vision God has given that we attempt to help God fulfill them. Rather than simply walking with God, we want to help Him in its fulfillment. God alone can fulfill a prophecy or a vision He has given, and He will do it when His appointed time is come. The superpower nations of the world cannot as much as help God in fulfilling the most trivial of His prophecies; They can, any more than you and I can pray Christ into making His second coming next week. When that notable emperor in history helped the gospel with political power, it led to the dark ages and led the church into the coldest apostasy this world has ever seen yet.

God is always late by man’s timetable. But let’s never forget this fact: He moves

consistently forward according to His eternal plan and purpose. The frustrations that we experience as we seek Him and wait for Him are a necessary part of our training and His discipline in our lives. This is to bring forth the fruit of patience in us and make us learn obedience. We must not terminate this process with willful disobedience. We must not be like Saul, who *“forced himself,”* as he told Samuel, to disobey God, and took upon himself the role of a priest, which a king in Israel had no right to do.

Saul: A Type of the Flesh

The Scripture clearly shows us the kind of person Saul was. He walked down the pathway of disobedience. He “spared Agag and the best of the sheep” when God required utter destruction. He “forced himself” and yielded to the wishes of the people, when God had commanded otherwise. He was a man of the flesh and represented the walk after the flesh.

But God had His own man—a man after His own heart who would reign according to His will over Israel. That man was David the son of Jesse, who was secretly anointed king over Israel in his father’s house in the presence of his brethren. He was the king who was anointed to rule by the will of God.

In other words, there were two anointed kings in Israel: Saul and David! The first was chosen by man, according to the will of man, and was after the flesh. The other was afterwards chosen and anointed by God, and the two were in Israel at the same time. Saul opposed David and sought to destroy him. Saul persecuted David and set traps everywhere in the nation to capture and kill him. This is the same constant war between the flesh and the spirit that we saw when our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of David, encountered the Jews while He was here on earth. And it is the same between the True Church and the World Church system today. It is the same struggle that exists between the flesh and the spirit. *“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now”* (Gal 4:29).

We see that David’s only concern was to wait for God, *to do His will*. He did not hurry things up by killing Saul when he had the chance to bring about the fulfillment of the word of God, but waited on God to bring His own will to pass. And so, for a few decades in Israel, there was a conflict between the will of man and the will of God. There was a conflict between *the man of the flesh and the man of the spirit*, between the *house of Saul*

and the *house of David*.

“Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker” (2 Sam 3:1).

Amen and amen. May it be so with you and me. May the house of Saul in our lives grow weaker and weaker as the house of David wax stronger and stronger. May the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus from the dead wax stronger and stronger in us until we are completely engulfed and dominated by the life of God, swallowed up by the quickening power of His resurrection with nothing of flesh remaining in us”.

“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now” (Gal 4:29).

When Saul’s disobedience concerning the Amalekites was discovered, you will notice, he did not take responsibility. He tried to blame it on the people. He said, *“The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen.”*

C’mon, Saul, you’re the king, for God’s sake! Take responsibility and stop passing the buck!

But Saul repeated it. He played the “passing

the blame” game again. When Samuel arrived and Saul met him and told him that he had performed the commandments of the Lord, Samuel asked, *“What meaneth then the bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”*

Then Saul replied:

*“**They** have brought them from the Amalekites: for **the people** spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest **we have** utterly destroyed” (1 Sam 15:15).*

Notice that he said “*they*” brought them and “*the people*” spared the best. He was not taking responsibility, but blaming it on his people. It was the people that did it, not him, Saul. Also, notice the pronoun he used for the portion that pertains to obedience. He said “*we* have utterly destroyed” the rest. That, indeed, is the way of the flesh.

Samuel told Saul to wait and said that he would tell him what God had said. Then Samuel began by reminding Saul how he became king over Israel. He reminded him how he was found, exalted by God, and anointed king over Israel, and called to his attention the explicit instruction that God had given him concerning the Amalekites. Samuel then turned to him and sternly asked

him, *“Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?”*

Saul, instead of being penitent, remained unbroken and stiff-necked. He said, *“Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.”*

He insisted that he had obeyed the voice of the Lord even when the Lord Himself said he hadn't. Saul, contrary to what God and Samuel said, insisted that he had obeyed the instruction God gave him. However, in the same breath, he said that he had *“brought Agag the king of Amalek.”*

Wait right there, Saul! Did God instruct you to bring anyone or anything from Amalek? Definitely not. God's command was the total destruction of everyone and everything in Amalek. Yet Saul insisted, in broad daylight, that he had obeyed the voice of God.

In addition to this willful refusal to repent, Saul proceeded again to blame his disobedience, which he did not admit, on the people under him. He said:

“Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me,

and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

*“But **the people** took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal” (1 Sam 15:20-21).*

What a prototypical man of the flesh. According to Saul, he was innocent, but the people were to blame. They brought the sheep and the oxen. It was not he who spared these.

And Samuel said:

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king” (1 Sam 15:22-23).

Chapter 3

Lo, I Come

“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second” (Heb 10:6-9).

What did the Lord Jesus come to the earth to do? You may wonder why I opened this chapter with a question that has such an obvious answer. But does it? What did He really come to do?

One person might say He came to save us and to bring us eternal life. Another would say He came to pay the penalty of sin owned by us in Adam and to deliver us from the devil. Others might say that He came to fulfill

the promise that God made in the beginning as the seed of the woman and the seed of Abraham. Others might even answer that He came as the promised Messiah, the Lord Christ, the Anointed One. Yes, these are all correct, but it’s much more than all these rolled together.

Finding the complete and accurate answer to this question becomes easy if we listen to Him as He answers it for Himself. Let’s turn to Him and let Him speak for Himself. Let Him tell us what He came to earth to do!

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” (John 6:38, John 4:34, John 5:30)

In these verses of Scripture, the Lord clearly tells us what He came down to earth for. He began with the phrase *“I came down from heaven.”* Christ descended from heaven, took our nature upon Himself, and walked the earth in the form of a servant. At the end,

He was crucified and went through the most horrific death as a sacrifice for us.

"I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

That is, He came not to do His own will, as separate from His Father's (for His will, as man, was distinct from His Father's); He totally submitted to the Father's will. He further asserted that the pleasure of the Father was His meat and drink. The Father's will was His work and passion. That was His purpose in life and nothing else. That is why He came.

He did not seek to gratify any passion distinct from His Father's, but sought and performed the will of the Father throughout. He totally resigned Himself to the leading of the Spirit of God, saying, *"I can of mine own self do nothing."* This does not mean that He could indeed do nothing of Himself, but that He totally gave up His own will to follow the Father's. He had no private end to answer, no separate interest, no personal advantage to pursue.

Therefore, His judgment, actions, and decisions were totally directed by the Spirit of God. His judgment was therefore just, and the sentence He passed right; and He was indeed the Son of God, perfectly carrying

out the mission of the Father as He would if He were here Himself. He was *"God with us,"* our *Emmanuel*, the very image of the Father among us, and the *"sole expression of the glory of God"* (Heb 1:3, Amplified).

Let's get back to our opening question. If we were to stop the Lord Jesus by the shore of Galilee two thousand years ago and pose this question to Him, what would His answer be? Suppose we stopped Him and asked, *"What have you come to earth to do?"* No doubt, His answer would have been:

"Behold, I have come to do His will."

In fact, this is not hypothetical. Besides what He said along this line on several occasions as recorded by John in the gospels, we hear Him declare through the prophets:

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Heb 10:6-9)

The apostle, quoting from the prophets, here declared what the Lord said when He appeared on the earth to consummate our redemption. He said, *“Lo, I am come to do the will of God.”* Quoting from the Book of Psalms in the Amplified translation, the prophecy reads:

“Sacrifice and offering You do not desire, nor have You delight in them; You have given me the capacity to hear and obey [Your law, a more valuable service than] burnt offerings and sin offerings [which] You do not require.

“Then said I, Behold, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Your will, O my God; yes, Your law is within my heart” (Psa 40:6-8 Amplified).

This statement shows us that Christ freely offered Himself to this service, and that He was under no obligation. With the greatest cheerfulness, as reported by the prophet, He willingly put Himself under obligation, saying, *“Behold, I come in the fullness of time.”* To do what? To do God’s will. To accomplish what the sacrifices and offerings ordained under the Law could not do. And to the Old Testament saints He declared, *“Behold, I come. I promised to come and accomplish what the sacrifice of bulls and rams could not. I’ll come to satisfy the demands of justice and*

accomplish atonement for sins.”

To the saints who lived before He came, this was a promissory note of redemption by the Lamb slain from the foundation of the earth. The price was not yet paid, but was secured to be paid. And because He said, *“Lo, I come,”* through the prophets, the Old Testament saints knew him by the title of *“Ho Erchomenos,”* *He that should come* (Ps 118:6, Matt 23:39). This explains the question asked by John:

“Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?” (Luk 7:19).

They longed for the fulfillment of the promise: *Lo, I come*. They were constantly on the lookout for the promised Prophet who was to come, the Anointed One who would deliver Israel.

“I delight to do thy will, O my God!” was His earnest confession. This was his meat and drink. Doing the will of God was His pleasure. He freely and willingly offered himself to it. Obeying God and carrying out His will brought Him complete satisfaction. It was His delight, and on the other hand brought great delight to God. *“Thy law is within my heart,”* He declared. It was written there, and hence it ruled His whole being.

When the law of God is written in our hearts, His will is our delight. We'll be serving Him from the heart. We'll be doing what is pleasing in His sight, for God desires those who would serve Him to serve from the heart. He desires those who would worship Him to do so in spirit and in truth. This is important. When the Lord reveals His will to you and me, we must follow it to the letter even if we have to disobey the word of any man, whether he is a prophet or an apostle.

In the Book of Kings, there is a tragic record of a prophet who heard a clear word from God and began in obedience, but ended in disobedience because of advice from another prophet. God spoke to this younger prophet and sent him to Bethel out of Judah to cry against the idolatrous practices of King Jeroboam. He obeyed, and God confirmed His words right before their eyes.

“And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burnt upon thee.

And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken;

Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD” (1 Kings 13:2-5).

As written in the Book above, the king resisted the word of the Lord, reached forth his hand against the man of God, and his hand shriveled, and the idolatrous altar split asunder, pouring the ashes on the ground. The prophet later prayed for the king at his request and his hand was restored. After these miraculous events, King Jeroboam invited the prophet to come to his palace to refresh himself and receive a reward, at least for praying and restoring his hand. But the man of God refused because he had been commanded by God not to.

“And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink

water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

“So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel” (1 Kings 13:8-10).

There was another prophet of God in Bethel at the time, an older and more experienced prophet. This prophet, I would say, heard about what was happening and wanted a piece of the action. He wanted to have fellowship with the younger man of God from Judah. We are not told that he heard from God to invite the Judean prophet to his house. But the older Bethel prophet saddled his ass and went down to meet the man of God from Judah to compel him to come to his house.

Well, fellowship is good, and even great when it's with a prophet. But when it is against the will of God, it can be disastrous. This is an extreme example; do not expect something this tragic to happen to you or me, but we should learn from this to make adhering to the will of God our ultimate command.

So he rode his ass and caught up with the Judean prophet, who had already started for home by another route, as the Lord had

commanded him, and sought to bring him back home for lunch.

“But I can't do that,” said the prophet from Judah, “because God told me not to eat bread or to drink water in this place, and not to return home by the same road.” The older Bethel prophet said, “Wait a minute, I am a prophet too, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord to bring you home for some lunch, and to have a little fellowship.” His exact words were:

“He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him” (1 Kings 13:18).

He was lying, and the prophet from Judah believed him. He indeed was a prophet of God in Bethel. You might even refer to him as the resident prophet, the spiritual mayor, and he was old enough to mentor the man of God from Judah, as our system today would say. So the Judean believed the word of the prophet from Bethel, repudiated the specific command that God had given him, and returned with the older man to his house. He ate and drank and had fellowship.

In the midst of the prophets' fellowship,

the word of the Lord came unto the older prophet, saying:

“Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt” (1 King 13:22-25).

As it is written above, the prophet of Judah then left the house of his host in Bethel and went on his way. But shortly afterwards, a lion sprang out of the bush and slew him, tragically fulfilling the true prophecy of the lying prophet.

This message is difficult and sounds strange to our ears; and it’s really sad, but God wants you and me to know that when He speaks to your heart and mine, and we know it is the Lord, there is no prophet, no apostle, no priest, and no king who has authority to change what God has made clear to us. Counseling is good, mentoring is great, and fellowship with one another is profitable; and we are to “submit” ourselves one to another as we recognize the voice of the Lord. But the will of God for your life is part of your own inheritance from God. It is an individual privilege and inheritance that you should begin to appreciate more and more as you grow in Him. And when God indicates His will for you, no man has any right to intrude into this holy place.

I am sure God did not put the story concerning the prophet from Judah in the Bible to scare us. As mentioned above, this could be considered a very extreme situation, and we do not anticipate such happening among true brethren. Nevertheless, you and I have a personal responsibility to pursue and obey the will of God for ourselves. And our portion will not depend on whether the apostle or prophet that we’re in fellowship with is telling the truth or lying. In any case, when God indicates His will for us, it is final.

On the positive side, let us learn a lesson from the Book of Jeremiah, and his dealings with a precious family called the Rechabites. Let's read:

"The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

"Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink" (Jer 35:1,2).

Isn't that strange? By the Word of the Lord, Jeremiah went down to the house of the Rechabites, brought them into one of the chambers of the Temple, set wine before them, and said to them, "Drink ye wine." Can you see what is happening here? The renowned prophet of God brought these laymen into a holy place in the house of the Lord, set pots of wine before them, and told them to start drinking.

I can imagine Jeremiah, setting kegs of wine before them and saying, "Thus says the Lord to you, O House of Rechabites, 'I have placed pots full of wine before you according to the word of the Lord.' Now, start drinking!"

Here's the Scriptural record:

Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah,

the son of Habaziah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites;

And I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door:

And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine" (Jer 35:3-5).

Jeremiah wasn't laying a trap for them. He was simply doing what God told him to do, and God was going to use this as a lesson for the house of Israel. God knew the Rechabites, their convictions, and their uncompromising integrity. God knew they would not waver from following the *"faith of their fathers."* But we have no reason to believe that Jeremiah knew anything about this.

Can you imagine that? It must have been quite a test for these men, for they certainly recognized Jeremiah as an outstanding man of God, and did not hesitate to come to the Temple when he asked them to do so. But what were they to make of this command from the man of God? And it was in the

temple! What would they do about this command?

Perhaps somewhat apologetically, but without hesitation, they replied, “We will drink no wine.” Then they explained why.

“But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever:

Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.

Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us” (Jer 35:6-10).

How commendable! They had been taught by their forefather to leave wine alone, among other things. They were now grown men and on their own, but still held to and respected the teachings they had received

from their fathers.

May God help us to stay true to the teachings that we have received from our Father. And may the “faith of our fathers” continue to be alive and on fire in us. Amen. Let’s pause and sing:

*Faith of our fathers, living still,
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene’er we hear that glorious word!*

Refrain:

*Faith of our fathers, holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death.*

The faith of Jonadab the son of Rechab was still living in his descendants. After the Rechabites refused to obey the prophet and contradict the teachings of their fathers, the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah again, saying,

“Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD.

“The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink

none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me" (Jer 35:13-15).

like the Rechabites the sons of Jonadab, you will be blessed and your generations after you.

Then he went on to show how one godly man had so instructed his sons in the ways of righteousness that his sons embraced it, and clung to it, and nothing could shake them from their convictions, not even the Word of the Lord that came through Jeremiah the prophet. Whereas God had been rising up early and sending prophets to His people, saying, *"Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings,"* but they did not hearken unto Him. (Jeremiah 35:13-15.)

Let us notice the end of the story. God pronounced a blessing on the house of the Rechabites for all generations to come, for their courage and their unshakable stand for what they believed was right.

The apostle Paul left us with a similar admonition, saying that even if an angel should come to you and preach a different gospel, you should not believe. Do not deviate from what the Lord God has shown you in your spirit as His will. Do not swerve to the left or to the right. Stick dogmatically to the words your Father God has given to you, and

Chapter 4

In the Volume of the Book

“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law” (Heb 10:6-8).

B*ehold O’ heavens, and be attentive, O’ earth;
And ye places under the earth!
Listen, hear, and understand;
Here’s something worthy of attention,
Sit ye down, watch with earnestness;
For God invisible, came down in the likeness men;
The Almighty did not send but came,
Came Himself, Immanuel, God with us;
Descended from infinite glory to earth’s abode of misery;
Came, the Lamb for sacrifice, at the time appointed;*

*Appeared to accomplish what heaps of bullocks could not;
To fulfill the Covenant at the fullness of time;
In the eternal decree it is thus recorded,
In the volume of the Book it is written of Him.”*

“Understandest thou what thou readest?” That was the question the apostle Philip posed to the eunuch returning to Ethiopia from Jerusalem. The Ethiopian was reading a prophecy concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. He read but could not understand; neither did he know concerning whom the prophecy was written.

The angel of the Lord had spoken to Philip telling him to go southwards, toward the road that ran from Jerusalem to Gaza. And he rose and went, and caught up with the Ethiopian chariot.

“And he was [now] returning, and sitting in his chariot he was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah.

“Then the [Holy] Spirit said to Philip, Go forward and join yourself to this chariot.

“Accordingly Philip, running up to him, heard [the man] reading the prophet Isaiah and asked, Do you really understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:28-30 Amplified Version).

“How can I understand,” replied the eunuch, “unless someone explains it to me?” And he earnestly invited Philip to come up and sit beside him in the chariot. The passage of Scripture he was reading was this:

“He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

“In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth” (Acts 8:32,33; Isa 53:7,8).

After Philip joined the chariot, the eunuch began by asking Philip to instruct him about the person about whom this prophecy was written.

“And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” (Acts 8:34 Amplified).

Philip then opened his mouth, and beginning from this passage of Scripture, preached Jesus unto him. And this led the eunuch to salvation, and he was baptized by water on the way.

This passage of Scripture came from the fifty-third chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, which was written concerning our Lord

Jesus Christ, the *“Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”* In the volume of the *Book*, Isaiah prophesied several profound things about the Lord Jesus, many of which have been fulfilled.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed”(Isa 53:4-5).

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ” (Isa 53:6).

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken” (Isa 53:7,8).

In these verses of Scripture above, we see Christ being dragged like a criminal back

and forth before judges. First He was taken to the High Priest, where the council sought and found false witnesses against Him. Then, they dragged Him to the hall of Pilate. And from Pilate, He was dragged to Herod, and then back to Pilate. And as the prophecy above foretold, justice was denied Him.

“And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (Isa 53:9).

Then we see Him condemned, hanging between two wicked criminals though He had never committed any crime. The holy and blameless One was numbered with the vilest offenders. Indeed, it was His impeccable character and holiness that qualified Him for that horrific sacrifice. And then we see Him sharing the grave with the rich, buried in the rich man’s tomb for three days.

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall

bear their iniquities” (Isa 53:10,11).

“And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Act 13:32-35).

And thus we, like the Ethiopian, may ask the question: “Of whom speaketh the prophet this?” We may ask, “Of whom is this written?” And in the same manner, Philip would have opened his mouth and preached Jesus unto us. Because these things were written in the volume of the Book concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, the Anointed One.

“And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah” (Deut 33:8).

In the same vein, we hear Jacob blessing his children and prophesying on them. When

he got to Levi, he spoke the words quoted above. This is prophetic. Notice that Jacob was speaking long before the inauguration of the Law and the Levitical priesthood. He got this revelation of the will of God from the Holy Ghost and began to prophesy what has been written concerning the house of Levi. *“Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one.”* Here he was indicating the priestly office the house of Levi would occupy, a ministry that was yet to come. He was, by the Spirit of God, speaking that which has been written in the volume of the Book concerning Levi. He was speaking, in prophecy, the will of God as revealed to him.

It is important to note that Aaron did not choose himself for this honor. Neither did Moses choose him. Jacob did not nominate Aaron for this office either. It was God that did the choosing. None of the prophets in Scripture chose themselves for the office or got the anointing from another man. It's God that chooses and anoints. For *“no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron”* (Heb 5:4).

Contrary to what you hear today, no one receives a ministry anointing because they serve another man or are related to a ministry gift by blood. A man cannot pass

down anointing to you any more than he can baptize you with the Holy Ghost. Elijah did not choose Elisha; God chose him. Elijah did not give Elisha the double portion anointing; God gave it to him. Elijah did not send down fire from heaven on Mount Carmel; God did. But Elijah knew the will and purpose of God, and he just followed them. He already saw what Jehovah God planned to do, and he just moved along the will of God in his prayers and actions. Don't be deceived: you will not receive the double portion anointing by carrying a present-day Elijah's bags or mantle. God anointed Elisha. It was not Elijah that did it. God chose Aaron and the Levites: Moses did not.

Under the Old Testament, the first essential for priesthood was divine appointment. The honor of becoming a priest was not open to man's ambition. No man could take it for himself. No man could volunteer for the office; no one could assume it by favor from Moses, or by serving Aaron. That was true then, and it is still true today.

The priest ministered in such holy matters that only God could appoint him. So it was that Aaron was called of God to this task. He did not take it for himself, nor did Moses make him High Priest. God called him to this

work, and no one else could have done so. In the same manner also, *“Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to day have I begotten Thee...Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”* (Heb. 5:4-6).

What was true of Aaron was also true of his sons: they were called to the priesthood. What is true of Christ the High Priest is also true of His priestly house. We, the royal priesthood, are called of God. These things have been written concerning us in the volume of the Book.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Rom 8:28-30).

No one has to strive to make himself a prophet or to have an apostolic calling, for this calling was determined before the foundation of the earth. It is not a matter of trying to press your way into it. Just yield

to the sovereign dealings and the divine workings of the Father and He'll place you where you belong. However, anyone who is born of God and is in Christ Jesus is a member of the royal priesthood and has a destiny to be conformed into the image of the Son of God. This is the destiny of all who are in Christ Jesus. We are priests by that same oath that made our blessed Lord a priest forever *after the order of Melchizedek*.

Concerning ministry assignments, it is the Lord who chooses and ordains after the counsel of His own will. He chooses the servant, the type of service, the place, and the time. His choice may not appeal to us, this is why this message of finding the will of God and submitting to it is so important.

You know, if God had asked for our opinion in His choice for the first priesthood, we would not have suggested the house of Levi, much less Aaron for High Priest—Aaron, who was substitute leader for a few days and during those few days helped the people build the golden calf would be the last person many of us will consider for the position of high priest. In fact, he was the one who, at the request of the multitude, gathered the golden earrings and led in the fashioning of the golden calf. If the Lord had asked you

or me for our opinion, though we were not in conscious existence then, we would have advised Him otherwise.

Aaron's priestly anointing was by divine appointment. This is true of all the kingly anointings and prophetic anointings in Israel. They were not chosen by men, but chosen and ordained by God. "No man takes this honor upon himself except he that is called of God." Of course, we see men in Scripture who took the reins by force and declared themselves kings, or men chosen by the people regardless of the will of God. This was true then, and so it is now.

One of the many examples that come to mind is Adonijah the son of Haggith. This handsome boy exalted himself and gathered many followers and supporters, including many of the king's sons, Abiathar the priest, and even Joab the commander of David's army; and declared himself king in place of and contrary to the desire of his father David, and against the will of God. Do you know he became king? In the eyes of men he reigned over Israel, but not in the eyes of God.

"And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?"

For he is gone down this day, and hath slain

oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah.

But me, even me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called" (1 king 1:24-26).

Adonijah was a power-hungry usurper, a coup plotter who seized the kingdom from his father David. Though he was celebrated by the multitude, accepted by the king's sons, anointed by the priests who did not hear from God, supported by the powerful majority, and declared as king in Israel by the mass of people shouting, "God save King Adonijah," in the eyes of God he was no king. Yes, it's true that priests and prophets paid homage to him, as well as many members of the royal family, the king's sons, accepted him as king. But there was *a remnant* that knew the truth. And God always leaves Himself a remnant.

In the days of Ahab, when Israel was sold out to Baal and to the abominable gods of the heathen through Jezebel and the feckless king Ahab, God had Elijah and the seven thousand in Israel who did not bow their

knee to Baal or kiss the abominable gods. Yes, the Lord God said so: “*A remnant shall return.*”

Abiathar the priest, Joab the chief of staff, and the king’s sons were all with Adonijah and declared him king. They had slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and their proclamation of “God save King Adonijah” rang across the land. But *Nathan the true prophet* and the *Zadok-company* of priests were not moved. They were not with Adonijah, for they knew the mind of God.

Has God submitted His will to the committee of men? Can our great councils, like the council of Nicaea, make decisions for the Holy Spirit? Well, we may from our council of Bishops decide for God what He can or cannot do and specify what His will is. We, using our carefully selected criteria, select and ordain ministry gifts, and even anoint them. And, like Adonijah, we have the backing of the powerful majority of our day. We have the support of the rich elite. We therefore, in our delusion, think that God will go along with our ordination. Since we, the mighty and wealthy people of God have dedicated all these great things to the cause of His gospel, God cannot but bend His will to align with ours—so we think.

We erroneously think that since we ordain these ones in His name therefore our men-anointed apostles become His messengers, and our self-proclaimed prophets become His mouthpiece, and their prophecies His infallible word. Our celebrated pastors become His ordained shepherds, and our self-aggrandizing evangelists and smooth-talking teachers who teach modern and soothing messages, become His messengers. We have done all these things in His name, and declared all these things for Him, so He must accept them as His will even if we never consulted Him beforehand.

But will God accept these great works? Will God change His will to align with ours because of the multitudes of great things we have done for Him? Does this sound like what we hear from the Son of God, who is our perfect Example? Is God impressed by these tremendous things we are doing for Him? Is that the principal thing, or is doing His will the principal thing?

What is first and foremost? God definitely needs many tremendously mighty things done on earth by the church, but He will have them done after the counsel of His own will. They are not going to be achieved by the machinations of weak, wormlike man.

They are going to be accomplished by His riches in glory in Christ Jesus and not by the *“wealth of the nations.”*

We today are so full of ourselves, especially in the wealthy nations of the world. We are like the proverbial frog that lives in a well by itself and thinks it rules all the waters of the world. Think about how impressed God must be with the power possessed by this mighty ultra-bloated frog. Then you understand how much God thinks of our wealth and power when we trust in them as the means by which the gospel will conquer the world. And as one would laugh at this puffed-up frog, so does He at us when we think that because of our corruptible wealth we are performing the work of the ministry more effectively.

In the world, the phrase *“the end justifies the means”* is almost always applicable. Most corporations reward their people for bringing in profits and couldn't care less about how. Few dare to talk about integrity in business, and even for the few that do, you only need to take a cursory look at their top management before you see how much they live what they preach. But in the Body of Jesus the Anointed One, *the means* is just as important as *the end*. The end does not justify

the means. If the means is crooked, the end is corrupted. In the kingdom of Christ, you cannot get to the acceptable *“end”* unless you follow the outlined *“means.”* There can be no end without following the *means* outlined by God. And this is specified by *the will of God*. All must be done after the counsel of His will.

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Eph 1:11).

Chosen and Called of God

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee” (Heb 5:4,5).

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”(Eph 4:11-13)

It is He who ascended on high that appoints men into the ministry offices. He gave *gifts of men* to the church. He selected the gifts and gave them to the church. It is not by majority vote of the officiating ministers, not by the council of the denomination, not by natural heredity, and not by favor from an anointed minister that one may enter the ministry. It is *He who ascended on High* who gives these gifts of men to the church. You are either a gift chosen by Him and given to us or you are not. You cannot buy it. I cannot earn it by going to a seminary or getting local religious training. I have to have been appointed by God and anointed by the Holy Ghost for this mission.

As stated above, it’s possible for me to, like Adonijah, declare myself in one of these ministry offices. I may even have many renowned men and women, like Joab the chief of staff and Abiathar the priest, attest to my authenticity and support and submit to my authority. I may even have multitudes of the king’s sons(royal priesthood) as my followers and be highly celebrated by the religion of the day, and yet, like Adonijah, not be recognized by God or by the men and

women who know the mind of God.

Yes, God will leave himself a *remnant*, like the Nathan-company. They may be unknown and unrecognized and lack a voice, but they know that Adonijah is an impostor, and that he was not appointed by God, but by the aristocrats of the day.

Yes, it’s true I may declare myself or be declared as a mighty prophet or apostle or any other high-sounding title, and I may even do and build some incredible monument for the name of God, and not be chosen by God but be “an Adonijah”. It’s sad that ultimately, all I will receive as a reward is whatever praise I receive from men today. As far as God is concerned, all my mighty works will be like rubble before the refining fire, and like Adonijah, my name and office will not be recognized by God, and will not be written in the “*Chronicles of the kings of Israel.*”

There is one statement of the Lord Jesus that both puzzled and frightened me the first time I read it. It’s like the story of the prophet from Judah discussed in the previous chapter. In the seventh chapter of the Book of Matthew, from the twenty-first verse:

*“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the **will of my** Father which is in*

heaven.

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?”

“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt 7:21-23).

The first part is covered. The will of God concerning entering into the kingdom is accepting Jesus Christ, who is the will of God, as one’s Savior and Lord. As many as have done this have done the will of the Father, and are in the kingdom. But the next two verses are more difficult to comprehend.

In looking at the second verse, it is not correct to say that these fellows lie about what they claim to have done in His name. For no one will stand before Him, who knows all things, and on the day when every work shall be made open, blatantly lie concerning what they did. He did not deny that they did those things they claimed. They will say they prophesied in His name, cast out devils in His name, and did many wonderful works for Him and in His name. But looking straight at them, He will deny them and command them to depart from Him.

Could He be talking about those who did not do His will concerning accepting Christ as their Lord and Savior? If so, then that is clear. However, these men claimed to have cast out devils in the name of Jesus, prophesied in the name of Jesus, and done many wonderful works. If indeed they were not born again, then by what spirit did they do these things? If they were born again, we know that the core of the issue is what He stated in the earlier part of the passage: that God is not and will not be pleased by those who do not follow His will. When we know His will, we need to obey it. We should not be like the prophet from Judea. Of course, we know that if we are born of God and are in Christ Jesus, we are saved and shall never be cast out. However, if we do all these wonderful works outside His will, we will be saved, all right—but as one who has passed through fire. All our wonderful works will be burnt, and we’ll receive no reward for them. No wonder the apostle Paul wrote to us saying:

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every

man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor 3:12-15).

It is important, my dear friend, that in all our service and ministry, we see and pursue only the will of God. It is only this that will earn us rewards when He comes. If you are satisfied with the rewards and accolades of men on this side of eternity, then you need not pay attention to the will of God. You may go ahead and build monuments for yourself in the name of Jehovah whether He says so or not.

But this is the sum of the matter: *that no man takes the honor of true ministry to themselves but that the call is from God.* The service is chosen by God, and at His appointed time. The place of the offering, the type of the offering, and the mountain of sacrifice are all chosen by Him. It is not by human wisdom or achievement, *"not by might nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord."*

Remember the memorable event when God tested Abraham in the offering up of his son as a burnt offering. It was God who chose the offering, the time for the offering, and the

place. In Genesis 22:1, we read:

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him"

If it was Abraham's choice to make, he would not in a million years have chosen his only son for the burnt offering. But it was not his to decide. Neither did he know that God had a surprise and a provision for his obedience waiting in the thicket on Mount Moriah. And the mountain of burnt offering was also chosen by God.

Therefore, my dear, don't choose your own mountain. Wait on the Lord and let Him lead you, just like He said to Abraham, *"upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."* It is when we follow His lead that the mountain

of burnt offering will indeed become a place that shall be called "*Jehovahjireh: as it said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen*" (Gen 22:14).

Chapter 5

We Are His Handiwork

“The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them” (Prov 20:12).

The village elementary school I attended in the sixties required every student to take “handwork” as a subject from the first grade to the seventh. We were required to submit a completed craft once a week, for which we received a grade. At the end of the year, each student submitted one for the final exam. I was very diligent at completing my handwork and submitting punctually, but my products were nothing to write home about. I was not very good at it. No matter how hard I tried, my final products were mediocre at best.

But there was this boy in my class who, as far as craftsmanship was concerned, was in a class by himself. For his handwork, he always submitted a professional-quality piece. On a fair scale of 1 to 10, if I was given

a 5 for my product, he should have received an 11: that is, 110 percent to my 50. His products, whether woven baskets or ropes made out of twine or brooms for cleaning, were always professional-quality. They were always smooth, flexible, and strong. He knew where and how to select the right straw in the farm or bush, how to peel off the right part, how to condition it for the weaving, and how to accurately and artistically weave it into a beautiful shape. And when you held his final product in your hand, you could see and feel the smoothness and skillful artistry, whereas you had to be careful rubbing your hands around my basket or you might have some unpleasant feeling from the rough edges. His products were like the type you might admire and pay premium prices for in art and craft stores. In those days, whenever I thought about handiwork, I would always remember his as masterpieces. Compared to mine, his would be up there with Leonardo da Vinci’s.

Do you know that Scripture says we are God’s masterpiece? We are His handiwork created in Christ Jesus.

Let’s visit the entire passage from the Amplified Bible:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and

*that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
“Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

*“For we are his workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus unto good works, which God
hath before ordained that we should walk in
them” (Eph 2:8-10).*

The eighth verse of the second chapter of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians tells us that we have been saved by grace through faith. We did not earn our salvation by our works or any sacrifice on our part. It all came to us through what God did for us in Christ Jesus. God did all the work, so none of us have anything to boast about. Salvation is God’s work and His doing.

The next verse in this Ephesians passage continues the message, saying:

“For we are God’s [own] handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live]” (Eph 2:8-10, Amplified).

This is a familiar verse of Scripture that is often quoted by believers, but let’s listen closely to what the Spirit is saying to us

through this verse. The Spirit just finished telling us that our becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus is all God’s doing. Then, in this next verse, He continues by saying that we are God’s handiwork, His workmanship. This new creation that is born anew in Christ Jesus is God’s masterpiece. You are God’s masterpiece. Many would say that the Mona Lisa is Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece, but it pales in comparison to the masterpiece God has crafted and is making of you in Christ Jesus. Listen to the verse again:

*“For we are his workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus unto good works, which God
hath before ordained that we should walk in
them” (Eph 2:10).*

Can you hear what this verse is saying? We are His masterpiece created in Christ Jesus unto good works. What good works? Which good works?

He answers: *“Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* The Amplified version renders this section as saying *“that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them.”* That is, God recreated us in Christ Jesus to do good

works, but there are specific good works which He has foreordained specifically for you and me to do. In His plan, He mapped out some specific work for you to do and some specific work for me to do, and my responsibility is to work so closely with Him that I know His will and align with that specific good work which He has aforetime mapped out for me. I am not to go off and do my own will or choose a good work that I like, even if it is the greatest good work known to man. I will not be doing His will, and that will not earn me a reward.

The good works He is talking about are those that He has preplanned for you and me from the foundation of the world. It was preplanned when He decided to bring us forth. It is written in His book and in His eternal purpose that you and I will be created and will perform those particular good works. That is the will of God for you and me in terms of ministry. We need to find it and walk in it. We must not veer from it to the right or to the left.

Let's repeat this. Our responsibility is to walk so closely with God that we get to the place where we submit totally to His plan and purpose for our life and do not meddle with His plan by trying to do our own great

works for Him. He is working in us to create a unique masterpiece. He is working on us to form a vessel of honor for good works which He has foreordained for us. We are the clay in the hand of the great Potter. The Potter has the image of the final product in His mind. The clay does not. The responsibility of the clay is to yield, to be malleable or pliable in the potter's hands so He can complete the masterpiece and unveil it to the whole creation that is breathlessly waiting to see.

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Thou art the potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after thy will,
while I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Search me and try me, Savior today!
Wash me just now, Lord, wash me just now,
as in thy presence humbly I bow.

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!
Wounded and weary, help me I

pray!

Power, all power, surely is thine!
Touch me and heal me, Savior

divine!

Have thine own way, Lord! Have
thine own way!

Hold o'er my being absolute sway.
Fill with thy Spirit till all shall see
Christ only, always, living in me!

By Adelaide

A. Pollard 1862-1934

The great artistic painters and sculptors of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance world created masterpieces. They individually autographed these original and unique creations, and professional collectors are trained to recognize these originals and value them. Some of these originals are kept in great museums of the world, while others are owned by the stinky rich. But just as there are unique originals made by these great artists, there are also copies made by impostors and con artists.

In the family of God, all His children are originals, handcrafted and autographed by the great I AM. They have all been curiously and delicately made by the great Creator. There are no duplicates or copies. Each is a

unique creation from the Hands of the Great Artist. The Psalmist, singing in the spirit, says:

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Psa 139 :14-16).

You have been curiously and wonderfully made by God. You are His handiwork, His handicraft. Your substance was before Him, and out of this He made you carefully, uniquely, individually, and secretly for Himself and for His divine purpose. Your unique parts and spare parts are written in His book, and He is continually fashioning and refining them until Christ is formed in you. This is true for you, and thank God, it is true for me too.

God is at work in each of us to complete and perfect the Body which He has formed for Christ. But we members of the church

have a part to play in this work. We have to submit to the operations of God in us. We have to be pliable and obedient. We have to be attentive to what He's saying and doing. We need to come to that place where we have a hearing ear and a faithful heart, so His eternal purposes are accomplished in us.

This is in line with the prophecy that is the central text of this little book, from the fortieth chapter of the Book of Psalms. The same prophecy is quoted in the Book of Hebrews in a slightly different form, but the spirit is the same in both passages, though the New Testament passage seems to contain a lot more. In the Book of Psalms, it reads as follows:

"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psa 40:6-8).

The prophecy from the Book of Psalms begins by saying, *"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened."* Notice how this is quoted in Hebrews 10:5: *"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst*

not, but a body hast thou prepared me." In Psalm 40:6 it says, *"Mine ears hast thou opened,"* and in Hebrews it says, *"A body hast thou prepared me."*

When the Lord came to the earth, He was given a body. He took upon Himself our humanity. Born as a baby in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth, He identified Himself with us and became a servant. And then He became a sacrifice. That was the literal body God prepared for Him. But we also know that God, in His eternal plan, has prepared Him another Body. God, who sees the end from the beginning, already can see the complete glorified Body of Christ unveiled and manifested. And Christ Jesus can see this too. And seeing this, He said, *"I and the Children whom God hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts which dwelleth in mount Zion"* (Isa 8:18). Indeed, a Body has God prepared for Him.

But in the prophecy from the Book of Psalms, He said, *"My ears hast thou opened."* Here He's talking about obedience. We know the Lord walked in total obedience while He was here on earth. It was not necessarily automatic, for He had His own will, but He submitted His own will and followed the Father's at

all times. He was never disobedient, but His obedience was tested throughout.

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb 5:7,8).

This passage says that the Lord Jesus learned obedience by the things which He suffered. It’s not that He was ever disobedient, but that He was proved. His obedience was tested and proved. In the desert of temptation, during His laborious ministry, and in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was tested and proved. His perfect obedience was proved through all the sufferings. Now, God is working on us, little children born after Him, in Him, and in the same family, to get us to that same quality of obedience that’s in Christ. He is forming and creating a “hearing ear” and a “seeing eye” in us, so that we also will be able to say, *“My ears hast thou opened.”*

Here is the summary: we have been born again by God, conceived and born of the Spirit individually. The work is all of God and nothing of man.

But the work is not over yet. God is still at work in each of us, forming and crafting the nature of Christ in us. He’s delicately

working in and on each of us, doing his sculpting and crafting in us to bring about the masterpiece that He has in mind. We must cooperate and submit to His will. He is a persevering craftsman, a determined potter, and a patient husbandman. He will mould the clay into the vessel of honor that He has in His blueprint from the foundation of the earth. And when all of us are complete, according to His calendar and His will, the Body of Christ with Jesus Christ as the Head will be revealed.

Yes, the whole of creation will see this unveiling of His masterpiece and exclaim in marvelous wonderment. Creation and all the elements of nature are waiting—and so are we. We are longing for the unveiling, the manifestation of the Sons of God.

Chapter 6

To Do Thy Will

Where might we find the will of God that we may walk in it? How can I know the mind of the Father? How can I be led by the Spirit of God? What is the purpose of God for my life? What should I do, and where should I go to find His plan for me? How can I get to that place in my life where I can hear Him behind me saying, *“Here is the way, walk ye in it?”* These are among the most common questions you hear from sincere children of God, and there never seem to be satisfactory answers. Most of the time, preachers and counselors seem to help the seeker identify what the will of God is not, and where it is not, but they are mute as to what it is and where it can be found. As to what it is, the answers often leave the seeker more confused than before. This book does not pretend to have an answer either, but it will point, without fail, to where the will of God can be found.

One might glibly answer that the will of God

is in the Bible. This is correct and is definitely where we must begin. The foundation of everything we seek is in the word of God. However, there are many things in our individual lives that are not specifically spelled out in the pages of the Bible, yet we have to make concrete decisions concerning them. This becomes even more difficult when there are multiple equally appropriate alternatives from which to choose. Sometimes, it is a go/no-go dilemma and one needs to receive a definite word on what to do. At other times, the road on which the Lord has been leading us suddenly divides into three or more, and we desperately desire to hear Him say, *“Here is the way, walk ye in it!”*

Above all, we want to know that we are walking in the will of God in our daily service and ministry. We do not want to spend a lifetime seemingly laboring for God, only to find out at the end that we were only doing our own thing and not His will. Our goal in life should be to do only the things He tells us to do. Our goal should be to please Him, like Christ, and not to please ourselves.

“For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever

things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Rom 15:3,4).

In all things Christ pleased the Father, and we, His body, are to follow in His steps. We are to please the Father and not to please ourselves. Even Christ, who was a perfect man, pleased not Himself. *“Not my will but Thine be done”* was the theme of His prayers and ministry, and it must become the theme of yours and mine. It must become our meat and drink and the air we breathe.

“My meat,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent me and finish His work.” “You cannot serve God and Mammon,” the Lord warned in the Gospels. He said that if we obey the will of one, we will surely hate the will of the other, because God’s will and man’s will are always on opposite sides. There cannot be two masters in the same ship. One must surrender to the other. Paul declared, *“If I yet please men I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ.”* There is no communion between the will of God and the will of man. To love the one is to repudiate the other, and to serve the one is to despise the other. We must, therefore, like our Master and Forerunner, seek out the will of God and make Him the

principal commander of our daily words and actions. This will be the beginning of our growth to become like Him.

Jesus Christ is the will of God. The works that He did and the words that He spoke were not His: *they were given to Him by the Father.* All His wonderful acts were the acts of God. *“The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.”* All His mighty statements were the words of His Father. He Himself was *“the Word of God.”* The blessed Christ was not merely a preacher of the Word of God: He was and is the Word of God. The same thing is true of His works. He did not merely perform the works of God: He is the work of God.

He obeyed God, not like a robot under the control of another, but like a Son who purposed in His heart when He came into the earth to do God’s will and not His own. When He came into the world, He declared, *“Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.”*

Christ was never guilty of acting on His own. He never used the authority and power given to Him at will. He only used it when God told Him to do so. He was subject to constant pressure to show off and make Himself known to the world, but He refused. Satan tried to get Him to act on His own and show

His power as the Son of God on the mount of temptation, but He refused. His family advised and implored Him to show Himself to the world, *“for no one does these types of things in secret,”* but He did not bulge. Even the disciples wanted Him to be acclaimed as the Messiah and accept the will of the people, but He refused. It was not for lack of power of decision or weakness that He said, *“I can of mine own self do nothing”* (John 5:30), but rather because of the decision He had made when He entered into the world and said, *“Lo, I come to do THY WILL, O God.”*

Therefore, as Jesus walked in total union with the Father, the Father’s will became His will, and the Father’s works became His works, and there was never any separate desire on His part. It was in the utmost obedience to the Father that He obtained this kind of union, and it was not easy to resist all attempts, whether human or Satanic, to act on His own good judgment, even as the Messiah that He is.

There is nothing dearer to the heart of our Father God than for us to be united with Him in will and purpose. His desire for us is that we come to that unity that is found in Christ, who said, *“I and my Father are one”* (John 10:30). The Lord Jesus, while He was here,

spent every moment in oneness with the Father. It should be your goal and mine to walk in His steps, for it is when we get to that place where we are one with the Father that we’ll experience unity in the Body of Christ. This, indeed, is the panacea for all forms of disunity and division that we’ve seen in the church since time immemorial.

Fellowship based on forced or necessary physical proximity, as in a workplace team, a sports team, a political party, or even most group in religious organizations, cannot attain this true unity, because each member of the group is constantly asking, *“What is in this for me?”* The Scripture is right: *All men seek their own.* You will find this to be true in every case except in a group of saints filled with visions from above, who have learned to be heavenly-minded and thus seek His mind Who is above. In fact, no unity of the flesh can be said to be true unity except when the partners are indeed united in mind and spirit. It’s true that there are many couples today who are very much united in the flesh, but are truly as divided as the nations of the earth.

To achieve true unity in the Body of Christ, we the members must possess the mind of Christ. It is when we become one with the

Father that we'll experience perfect unity of fellowship with one another. This will be transparent unity, without guile and without hypocrisy. Then we'll truly have deep fellowship with one another. No wonder the apostle, in his letter to the church about walking in the light and fellowship with one another, states that our fellowship is with the Father, with His Son Jesus Christ, and with one another.

The unity that exists between the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father is that true unity of the mind and spirit. The mind that dwelt in Christ was not His own, but the mind of the Father. There is no doubt that if the same mind that was in Him dwells in you and me, we also will immediately become one with the Father in thought, word, action, purpose, and being. We will think as He thinks, do as He does, love as He loves, and understand as He understands, and each of us will be able to, like our blessed Lord, boldly say, *"I and my Father are one."*

It is therefore important, dear saint, that we count progress toward attaining the mind of Christ as our utmost goal. All other things are relatively of little or no value. Let's make the mind of Christ the uppermost in our seeking—for he who has the mind of Christ

is one with the Father, and is a son of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7

The Making of the Sons of God

The handsome young lad came running into the room. Out of breath, sweat streaming down his ruddy face, he came in, his eyes sweeping across the room. He found the room crowded with nine people. All his seven big brothers were there, his father Jesse was sitting quietly in a corner, and a curious-looking old man sat in the center of the room. As he stepped in, all eyes were on him. His big brothers in their military regalia from Saul's army gazed at him with sneers of disgust. Surprised by the crowd, he turned to his father.

"Father, you sent for me?" David asked, with suspicious hesitation.

"Son, Samuel the prophet, the man of God from Shiloh, is here and want to see you," Jesse replied.

Jesse had made all his seven sons, whom he considered likely candidates for the

throne, pass before Samuel, but God did not choose any of them. He started with Eliab, a tall and handsome man with good stature and countenance. His stature and countenance looked so fitting for a king that even Samuel on seeing him said, "*Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him.*" But the Lord said it was not so. After the seventh son, Samuel had to ask Jesse if he had any other son he might have forgotten somewhere. Jesse replied that there was one left—one he had not considered as a candidate. He was forgotten out there, left out, a remnant, uninvited because no one considered him to be a viable candidate for kingship. But the one who was not invited to the party became the *guest of honor. And as it was then, so it is now.*

"Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah" (1 Sam 16:13).

Hardly noticed, David went back to his sheep. But there was a glow on his face, and something was happening on the inside. Anointed of God! What did that all mean? He did not know, but he knew that something wonderful had fallen on him, and so the

anointed of the Lord returned to his sheep with singing unto the God of Israel.

David received his first anointing for rulership when he was just a kid. He was the anointed of the Lord, all right, but he was immature and not ready for the throne. He still needed to go through significant training and preparation in the wilderness before entering into full dominion. He would spend the next decade or more learning to get acquainted with moving under this new anointing. In the fields with his sheep, he would undergo the training of a shepherd. He would learn to care for the flock in preparation for becoming the shepherd of Israel. He would learn patience through all the troubles that would incessantly surround him. Through this, and with time, he would become mature and fit to rule the kingdom for which God had destined and anointed him.

And so, in the field of training with his sheep, David sang of the Lord his Shepherd. Words of praise flowed from him like a river, and his spirit was constantly edified. Revelation rose from his hearts and flowed forth through his songs. He began to see the Lord as the great Shepherd, and the need for a Shepherd-King for Israel. Through this training, as he

matured, he developed a great love in his heart for the sheep—so much so that when a lion came and took a little lamb from the flock, he fearlessly attacked and slew the lion to rescue the lamb.

The word of the man of God would come to pass, but little did the young king know that years of painful experiences were needed to take him to the place of maturity where God wanted him to be as king. He would learn patience and endurance through the things he would suffer.

We, like David, have received the firstfruit anointing from God. The Lord Jesus, when He ascended on high, sent us the Holy Spirit anointing, which Scripture says is the “earnest of our inheritance.” Yes, the Scriptures declare that “*When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men*” (Eph 4:8). An anointing oil from above has been poured upon us, and we are anointed for rulership, chosen and anointed to reign with Him. Gifts and supernatural abilities are received, prophecies and revelations flow in songs, and even ministry gifts manifest in the midst of the congregation. But this has come upon spiritually immature children of God. They are immature, not yet grown-up sons. They

cannot sit on the throne yet. They must go through the training that turns boys into men. They must experience the program that God has designed specifically for *“the making of the sons of God.”*

Like David, many of us believers have received spectacular anointing from above. Spiritual gifts are given and revelations imparted. And like David, when we received them, we did exploits. But reality around us makes us realize we’re not yet on the throne. Anointed to rule, yes, but look at us hiding in bushes, moving from cave to cave, being hunted by Saul and struggling for survival. What a king!

In the agony of the spirit and under the daily pressure that seems to be about to crush us, like David, we ask God, *“When will You bring about the fulfillment of Your word? We know it’s your will to give us the kingdom, but when, O Lord, when will this come to pass?”*

We’re tempted to slay Saul and hurry it up, but the David Company will do no such thing. David is no longer a kid. He is becoming a man—a man after God’s own heart. The David Company is becoming like unto a mature son of God, who will only do what pleases the Father. The David Company will wait for the Lord. They will wait upon

the Lord, and have confidence in his word. In the midst of all their trouble, and in their Gethsemane experience, their only prayer, like the pattern Son, will be, *“Not my will, but thine be done.”*

If you and I had an option, we would probably choose to skip the painful process David went through between his *“anointing in the house of his father”* and the *“final enthronement as king over the twelve tribes of Israel.”* But there is no such option. There is no skipping a grade. You and I must pass through the entire training to qualify for the manifestations of the Sons of God. Even the perfect man, the Lord Jesus, went through tests of obedience, and passing them all, became *“the pattern Son,”* leaving us an example to follow (Heb 5:7-9).

“Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel.

So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Jehovah: and they

anointed David king over Israel.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years” (II Sam 5:1-4).

Finally, we see God’s processing of David completed. He’s now thirty years old, a fully mature man. The elders of Israel gathered at Hebron and, echoing the words of Jehovah declaring him the Shepherd of Israel, anointed David as king over Israel. You may ask, “Why? Had he not been anointed by Samuel years before?” Yes, but that anointing was upon a youth. David was a teenager when he was first anointed. Now he is thirty, a mature man of stature, ready to take the reins of government.

We see a parallel here with Joseph the dreamer, son of Jacob. He first received a revelation of rulership as a teenager, but did not know that a world of processing lay between that revelation and the time when he would actually become a ruler. He, like David—or should we say, David, like him—went through unpleasant experiences for more than one-and-a-half decades before reaching the designed destination. Joseph was thirty years old when he sat on Pharaoh’s throne and became a ruler in Egypt. I think he was thirteen or so when he

had his famous dream.

The Lord Jesus was thirty years old when he appeared by the River Jordan and was baptized by John, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and he began ministering in the fullness of the Spirit. Thirty is symbolic of full maturity, and all creation is waiting for the maturing of the sons of God.

A priest from among the sons of Aaron cannot step into the holy place until he is thirty years old. Though he has been chosen of God to wear the ephod, he has to wait until maturity. He has to wait until he’s a fully grown man like the mature, bearded Aaron. Then the anointing oil of maturity is poured on him. It is like the anointing oil that was poured upon the head of Aaron, “*that flowed down upon his beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments*” (Psa 133:2). It is an anointing at maturity, an anointing for sons, an anointing for the Overcomers that will rule and reign with the Firstborn Son and the Chief Overcomer.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present

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

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

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

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom 8:16-23).

Yes, we begin as children of God, born and anointed of the Spirit. And the Spirit of God that lives and abides with us also speaks to us in our spirits, bearing witness to the fact that we are children of God. Yes, we are children of God, born of God and anointed. But we are not ready for rulership until we have gone through the processing with Christ. It is then we truly become joint heirs and experientially sit on the throne with Him. The verse of Scripture quoted above renders it this way: *“And if children, then*

heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” Note that there’s a requirement for reigning with Him. It is not automatic. It is only those who go through the processing with Him that will reign with Him. *“If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him” (2 Tim 2:12).*

It is true that the training we’re talking about here is not pleasant. But the next verse assures us that these sufferings are not comparable with the glory to be revealed in us if we follow these painful paths of obedience. It says the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. In your case or mine, our suffering may not be like that of Joseph, who was thrown into prison for an offense he did not commit, or David, who was chased from cave to cave for years, and always just a few steps ahead of death at the hand of Saul. But nonetheless, the processing and the making of the sons of God is not going to be a walk in the park for any of us. It’s going to require some painful obedience from you and me. And on several occasions, it’s going to be painful to the flesh; we will have to learn obedience through suffering. But if we submit to His processing, and suffer with Him, we shall be

glorified together.

The glory to be revealed in us is the marvelous wonder for which the entire creation is waiting eagerly and patiently. This is when the children of God who are undergoing this maturing process will reach the maturity found in the Elder Son, the Pattern Son, their Lord, Jesus Christ. And this company of sons with Christ as the Head will be glorified together, and revealed to bring deliverance to the whole of creation. This is the manifestation of the sons of God that creation has been longing for.

Yes, the Body of Christ has received an anointing for rulership. It guarantees us the throne, for the “earnest” is the guarantee, the foretaste, the pledge. But we must, like David, go through the maturing process before glorification. Yes, another anointing is coming, and it comes upon the fully matured, those who have come to *“the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”* (Eph 4:13). This anointing is for dominion and power. No more just killing bears and lions and Goliaths; this anointing is to set creation free. This anointing is to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Yes, we see JESUS. We see the divine

authority manifested in His life. The winds and waves obey Him. The fig tree withers at His command. Devils flee at His word. Multitudes of fish of the sea plunge into the nets in obedience to Him. Sickness bow in submission. And death, even death, cannot hold its prey in His presence. For He is the King, the absolute Ruler of the universe.

Hear now, for the Lord God Almighty is telling us that the time is at hand, even close at the door, when there will not just be only one beloved Son, but a multitude of sons after the same order. These sons are in preparation, and the day is at hand when they shall be revealed. The day is at hand when they shall be ready, and they shall be unveiled, shown forth to the world. And in the day of their manifestation, the earth and the whole of creation shall rejoice. And the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This indeed is the plan of God in sending His only Son: that He would walk on the earth as the will of God, make His mind known, perform the will of God, and bring many sons into glory just like Him. And these ones, like their Forerunner will do only the things that please the Father. They will carry out His will on earth.

Indeed, we saw the First and only mature Son of God carrying out the will of the Father when He was here. He told us again and again: *“I am the Son, I do nothing separate from the Father. I am in my Father and I do only the things He tells me to do, and do all things in conjunction with Him. I am the Son to whom the Father reveals all things, and by whom He does all he does. Where the Father leads me, I go; what He tells me I say; what He bids me, I do. I am led by His Spirit.”*

He is also telling us that the road to becoming mature sons of God is paved with obedience to the Father. The children of God that will partake in the *manifestation of the Sons of God*, spoken of by Paul the apostle, are those who have become mature in doing the will of the Father. The manifested sons are those who have reached the place where they no longer have their own will, but do the will of the Father at all time. The Lord is telling us *“that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God”* (Rom 8:14).

In the house of God, there are babes, there are adolescent youths, and there are sons, mature sons. This has nothing to do with gender for there is neither male nor female in what we are talking about here. We all after new birth, grow from one stage to the

other as we get to know the Father’s heart and participate in what is dear to Him. As we grow in Him, we begin to know the things that please the Father, and as we make His desire our ambition, we develop in doing His good will. We seek the toys of the flesh less and less and seek the heavenly substance more and more as we pass the babyhood stage. We begin to seek His will. We pray less and less for things, as He gradually becomes our passion. Our prayers begin to approach what He taught us—*“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* His will begins to consume us. Now we are on our way to being fully led by the Spirit of God. We are on our way to mature sonship.

Sons of God are not made by continual association with religious people or the religious system of the world. They are made by continual association with the God the heavenly Father. They make themselves available to Him to listen to His voice, to read His word, to enquire of His wisdom, and to ask of His understanding. *“One thing have I desired of the Lord,”* said David, *“that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple”* (Psa 27:4).

The world is yet to be governed by a race of sons of God, every one in the image of Christ, and every one a brother of Jesus the mature Son. These ones will reign in Christ over the whole earth in the coming kingdom of God and of His Christ. And the whole earth *shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*

