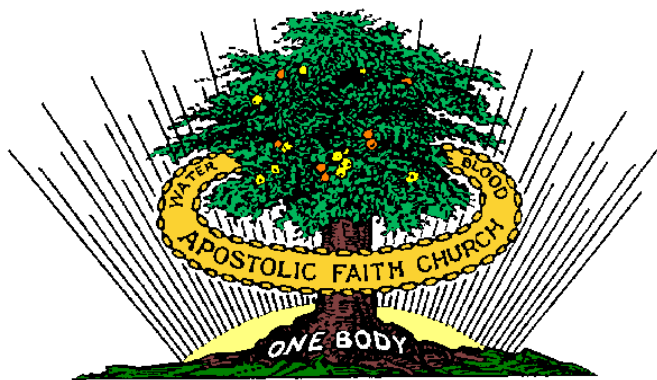


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Showers of Blessing

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The Word Made Flesh

Many people have been profoundly affected when they realise that the Most High God was pleased to introduce His Son into the world in such a lowly position in society, as to present Him lying in the manger of a stable. One astonished individual is quoted to have observed that those around Him should have at least put up a brass plate, announcing whom He was!

However, had that been done, what difference would it have made? Who would have believed the report? Only those who had first had the event privately revealed to them, would have taken any serious notice. To have stated that within lay the long-promised 'sent one' of God, of whom it had been prophesied would become the sovereign deliverer of the nation, would not have persuaded anyone to believe it was so: while some devout persons might have considered the claim sacrilegious.

Again, the Jews were not aware that this especially anointed One, their Messiah the Prince (Daniel 9:25), was also to be the Son of God: so such a claim would seem the more preposterous.

Of course, God could have convinced both the local inhabitants and the whole nation at once; if He chose, by such a dramatic demonstration of power with signs, wonders and angelic manifestations; that all would have accepted His birth.

In direct consequence, the whole nation would have rushed to worship Him, out of fear, if nothing else! This would not have brought true repentance of heart, even if it produced an outward appearance of a form of godliness. The heart condition of most would have remained much the same.

It was important then, as now, for God to prove the people, as to whether they really cared about serving their Creator or not. He would in no wise intend to force into an abject form of righteousness, anyone, even though He could do so.

As the Father of the nation, He could obtain no pleasure from coerced obedience; nor would He receive any from a people who were ever disobedient and gainsaying. As a parent, the only joy He could derive from all His loving-care over them, would be their willing obedience: those who would worship in Spirit due to their love of His truth.

All the laws of God are sacred. Their standards are absolute, and every one of them made for our good and protection, in order to promote our long-term happiness, wellbeing and good success.

People are seldom aware when they are being tested by God. Such tests have to be conducted in this way, otherwise the genuineness of the individual cannot be proved, and the results would be artificial. So it was with Israel as a nation, she knew not the time of her

visitation because of an evil heart of unbelief.

We read about the many Kings of Israel and Judah, and of how few of them did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. The nation was in due time judged as being unworthy of their inheritance, because they had polluted it. There were some who did right in the sight of the Lord; but not with a perfect heart. A gracious hand was stretched out all day long to a stiff-necked and gainsaying people.

We have in our midst again the Word of the Father now in flesh appearing. The battle fought out in our hearts now, as then is: are the things being spoken of God, or are they of men? Are they of the Christ, or are they imposters?

The Lord our God, He changes not! It is still the case with individuals as with nations - whatsoever is sown, the same shall be reaped. Our righteous judge has to be equally fair to all - and He is - and is infinitely long-suffering: but He is not mocked. All who are the Lord's have to go into the sieve and undergo shakings, to determine who do and who do not serve their God.

The Word comes unto His own, but how do His own receive the Word? We read of those of old who sadly after rejoicing in Him - the Christ - the revealed Word of God, walked no more with Him. What happened?

Our Lord explains: that some seed falls by the wayside, and the subtle come and take it out of their heart, just as they are beginning to believe it.

Some falls on stony ground, and the word of truth is believed for a time, but the heart lacks sufficient depth for it to root in; and when a testing time of trouble arises and scorches them, because of the Word, they are quickly offended, and their faith in the Word withers away.

Some seed falls among thorns. These hear the Word and go forth; but the cares of the world, and the delight of riches and the pleasures of life choke the Word: and such bring no fruit to perfection.

Other seed falls upon good ground. Such hear the truth and by understanding keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. Some thirty fold, some sixty and some a hundred.

May we all hear the unchanging truths of these parables, and so run that we may obtain.

Let us go forth into the New Year, bearing with a lively faith, the Spoken Word and the written word for every nation: realising that the Word of God is a living force which alone can take us into tomorrow, with full confidence.

May we all endeavour to learn to put our hand into the hand of the Word of God come again; fearing nothing: for if the word is for us, we may with full assurance of faith, stand victorious)

Article written by the late Pastor R. Pain, first published in Showers number 3527, 30/12/82.

