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God's Glorious Attributes HIS NAME IS JEALOUS

Part 14

By Rayola Kelley

Years ago, a certain celebrity walked away from God after hearing her pastor state that, "God is a jealous God." She voiced her insult towards this truth by saying that a God who is jealous is not a God she wants to believe in and serve. The question I have is why did she take offense over this attribute of God? Is it because her concept of God was unscriptural? Is it because she was looking for a reason to reject the holiness of God so she could walk into unbelief?

Paul warned of a time when, *"they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"* (2 Timothy 4:3-4). It is clear that this celebrity had itching ears. It is not that she had a hard time believing that God is a jealous God; rather, she chose not to believe it in order to justify her itching ears that were attracted to the New Age, which included possessing a Christ consciousness instead of the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, God in the flesh.

This celebrity was not necessarily insulted by the truth because she had been exposed to it for years, but suddenly she was awakened and challenged by it. It made her uncomfortable because she might have to consider God in another light that would tear up the silly concepts she already possessed about Him; and sadly it became obvious that she would rather hold to her foolish notion about God so she could control and adjust her beliefs about Him to fit her narrative.

Another reason this celebrity possibly felt justified in walking away from God could come down to her understanding of jealousy. God's jealousy and man's jealousy are not the same. Jealousy is a natural response, but the reasons and manifestation

behind it differs with the spirit that is in operation.

This celebrity probably considered God's jealousy in light of man's jealousy, causing her to falsely judge and accuse Him. Sadly, after she justified stripping God of His glory in her mind, she used her celebrity platform to preach and promote New Age concepts to millions, and unless she repents, she will find out how God's jealousy will manifest in His judgment of her.

When we make mention of jealousy, we all know what it is. It is one of the most powerful emotions we can feel. It is hard to face because who wants to admit they are jealous? After all, unjustifiable jealousy is often a manifestation of insecurity that is often transposed on the one the jealousy is directed at, along with speculation that turns into accusation, anger that ends in vengeance, and obsession that becomes tormenting.

In order to understand how jealousy works in God, we need to understand how it works in man in order to bring forth a contrast. When you look up the word "jealousy" in Strong's Concordance, such words as zealous (passionate response), anger (antagonism), covet (earnest), and envy (motivation) are used to define it. It is a desire that appears to be provoked into action. What we will see is that God's jealousy is provoked, while man's jealousy is often a matter of pride that goes awry.

The Bible is clear what man's jealousy is. Let us begin with the Old Testament and New Testament counterparts of each other: Proverbs and James. These books both contain wisdom. *Proverbs 6:34* states, *"For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance."* We are shown in this Scripture how intense jealousy is. Unabated, it turns into rage and will seek vengeance and as *Song of Solomon 8:6* points out, it will prove to be as cruel and insatiable as the empty, lifeless grave.

The New Testament often refers to jealousy as "envy." Jealousy will

envy what it wants but cannot have. It is often based on pride which manifest itself in indifference or cruelty. *James 1:13-16* states, *"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."*

Jealousy for man comes out of comparing something that is regarded as being inferior that exists in his life with something that is considered superior in someone else's life, which creates envy. It is important to point out that Jesus was delivered up by the chief priests because of envy (*Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10*). These religious leaders saw that their religious kingdom was being threatened by the Lord, and that they would lose power over the religious masses. It is from this premise that jealousy will prove to be treacherous and will justify sacrificing anything, whether it be truth or the Son of the Living God, to maintain influence and power.

Paul experienced the treacherous, wretched fruits of such "religious" envy as pointed out in *Acts 13:45* and *17:5*, and we can clearly see this same envy operating today in some religious circles, by certain religious leaders. Man is being exalted over Jesus, experiences over truth, causes over righteousness, and personal doctrines over godly wisdom. At this point men will do wicked deeds, including crucifying the righteous, in the name of God.

The Apostle Paul makes this statement, *"He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising"* (1 Timothy 6:4). Pride is at the core of such jealousy and is often allowed to take a foothold because of how something makes a person feel. In other words, it is not a matter of what is true; it all comes down to how

it makes one feel about self. As previously pointed out if something makes a person feel uncertain, insecure, and vulnerable, there must be something wrong because the feeling is intense and seems logical, but the problem is, it is rarely justifiable because during its escalation it becomes blinded by irrational feelings and conclusions.

The real motivation behind envy is the natural spirit in which self sits on the throne and pride reigns from it. *James 4:5* confirms that it is the natural spirit in us that lusts to envy, and when envy is given an audience, pride will step on the scene, giving arrogance the right to logic out that the person who possesses that which is considered superior, may be condescending or undeserving of it. From the pinnacle of arrogance comes haughtiness in the form of resentment because it is in some way unfair. The resentment of haughtiness descends into spite that proves to be unkind, judgmental, and cruel. *Proverbs 27:4* describes the fruit of envy in this way, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy."

Envy is part of the works of the flesh and is always present when carnality is in operation (*1 Corinthians 3:3*). Paul feared seeing it among the Corinthian believers, knowing that it would produce strife and that those who walk in it would never inherit the kingdom of God (*Galatians 5:21; 2 Corinthians 12:20*). Once envy takes root, it begins to invade our being like a noxious weed, setting us up to feel robbed, mistreated, overlooked, and abused, causing us to live in a state of malice and envy (*Titus 3:3*). The problem with envy is that it begins like a small seed. It seems natural to be envious of what others may have, but it can take captive affections that become a tormenting desire, producing a sense of unfairness. This can turn into bitterness and strife, culminating in resentment that can turn into anger, resulting in insanity that turns into rage. This small seed will produce paranoia, delusion, division, and destruction. This is why *Proverbs 14:30* calls envy, "the rottenness of the bones."

The question is what are we as believers, who possess an eternal inheritance, envious of? It is easy to become envious towards a sinner who seems to be unfairly rewarded for being bad, but in what way are they

rewarded and by whom are they being rewarded? Let us be honest, much of our envy is directed towards images erected by the world and things that are temporary. We can easily desire to possess the false images put on display by this world and own lifeless things that add nothing to our eternal inheritance, while coming under the god of this world, Satan. Ultimately, we will be required to sell our soul, and Jesus made it clear in *Matthew 16:26*, "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The Bible gives us clear instructions about this matter. We are not to let our heart envy sinners or the workers of iniquity, knowing their end; rather, we are to fear the Lord all the days of our lives (*Psalms 37:1; Proverbs 23:17*). We must avoid being envious at what is foolish that stands judged and of worldly prosperity that will prove to be temporary; and, it is for this reason we are told not to envy those who oppress others and to not choose their wicked ways (*Psalms 73:3; Proverbs 3:31*). Envy clearly perverts all just judgement and this is why Peter instructs us in *1 Peter 2:1-2* to lay aside all envy and desire what is pure.

Clearly, envy is sinful, but what about covetousness? To covet something can be a delight, to not only ourselves, but to others: an honorable longing where one will not settle for less but will press forward to what is excellent; or, it can be a point of envy where one will have to defraud someone to gain something that is not rightfully his or hers to gain. The last commandment of the ten commandments is clear that we are not to covet what belongs to our neighbor, whether it is a spouse or possession because it would require us to commit some type of trespass, fraud or theft, to possess it (*Exodus 20:17*). However, we can covet that which is excellent such as the best heavenly gifts, but we do so in the right spirit (*1 Corinthians 12:31*). In other words, we covet honorable things, not out of competition or to gain some type of notoriety, but to enhance the quality of our spiritual life and character for the purpose of benefiting others.

When you study envy, it is never associated with God because it is fleshly, nor will you find coveting ac-

credited to the Lord because He is just and perfect in all of His ways; therefore, He has no need to long for or desire something that is more excellent or worthy of pursuing because He is the ultimate end to all that is good and excellent (*James 1:17*).

It is for this reason we are told in *Exodus 34:14*, "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." This brings us to what will provoke real jealousy in man and God and that is unfaithfulness.

Jealousy towards a spouse was considered such a serious matter that a judgment was set forth about it in the Old Testament in *Numbers 5:11-31*. The man could not just operate in suspicion about his wife's faithfulness, it had to be justified because it would slide into something that was considered dishonorable. The Lord provided a means to test if a woman was unfaithful to her husband. However, if the woman was guilty of adultery, there was a judgment put in place where consequences would fall upon the unfaithful wife, taking any personal vengeance out of the husband's hands. Vengeance belongs to the Lord because He will be just in all matters (*Romans 12:19*).

If you could question the aforementioned celebrity at the beginning of this article and ask her if the one who shared her life preferred someone over her, would she be jealous? If she had any feelings for the person and valued the significance of her place in his life she would. No person wants to share their spouse with anyone else. A relationship between a man and woman should be special where the two of them hold a very important, intimate place in each other's lives and hearts. That place should be honored, guarded, and maintained at all times.

As we know, one of the commandments was to not commit adultery. Jesus stated that if a man lusts after a woman with his eyes, he has already committed adultery. God is clear about His attitude towards adultery: those who openly committed it were to be put to death because it polluted both the people and the land. This sin falls into the sin of fornication, (all illicit sex), which is a sin that is committed against one's body, defiling the inner man because of unholy agreement (*Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Matthew 5:27; 1 Corinthians*

6:17-20, and see 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

God made marriage the means in which a man and a woman could become one in agreement (same spirit) in unity (same mind), in purpose (same will), and in relationship (as one, completing each other). The Apostle Paul explained how marriage was to serve as a revelation of the mystery of Christ and the church, His bride (*Ephesians 5:29-33*).

This brings us to God and His relationship with Israel. He chose her, called her, redeemed her, and entered into a covenant, a binding relationship with her. He adorned Israel as only a loving husband could in a vineyard prepared for her (the Promised Land), but Israel became unfaithful and pursued other gods.

God had clearly warned the Jewish people that any idolatry would provoke Him to jealousy. God's jealousy is associated with His holiness and His glory will depart from people and the land when sin is reigning. All things must be pure to be accepted by Him. Clearly any sin, whether it be idolatry (graven images) and fornication (which includes sodomy), would meet with His jealousy. After all, He was rightfully jealous over His name, His people, the land, and Jerusalem. He proved to be a loving fair husband, and because of who He is and His faithfulness towards them, He deserved no less from them. To lightly esteem Him, use His name without awe and respect, forsake the covenant, and pollute His land and temple, would mean His jealousy would burn like a fire, proving to be a consuming fire that would not stop burning until all judgement has been executed and corruption has been purged from the land and the temple (*Exodus 20:5; Deuteronomy 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; 32:15, 16, 21; Joshua 24:19; 1 Kings 14:22-24; Psalms 78:57-58; 79:5; Ezekiel 8:3, 5; 16:28, 42; 38:19; 39:25; Joel 2:18; Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8; Zechariah 1:14*).

As the nation of Israel slid into spiritual fornication, God sent prophets to warn the people of the grave consequences that would fall upon them, but they did not listen. They continued to chase after other gods, and in the case of Judah, they even tacked Jehovah onto their mixture of religious activities as if to "throw some type of bone" at Him to pacify Him.

All the time, their spiritual adul-

tery was provoking the Lord to jealousy that would end in anger, judgment, and vengeance. He would become a jealous husband who in *Jeremiah 3:8* served papers of divorce to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, allowing the people to be slayed and scattered to serve as an example to Judah, the Southern Kingdom, as to what would happen to the people if they did not repent of their idolatry.

In playing the spiritual harlot, the people of Judah became foolish by provoking the Lord in greater ways. In the end, Judah would become a greatly "chastised wife" with Jerusalem and the temple stripped of its glory and burned, the leadership brought down in utter defeat, some of the people taken into captivity, and the rest tasted death due to pestilence and famine or were slaughtered in the streets of Jerusalem.

The question is how can people who declare they know God betray and walk away from Him to serve other gods? The people of Judah presumed that since they were the chosen people, in the chosen land and living in the chosen city that God surely wouldn't judge and destroy His city and temple. What they did not understand is God in His holiness could do no less. He did not need them to fulfill His promises to Abraham, for He would simply raise up another generation to fulfill His promises to the great patriarch.

Here comes another question. Has God ceased to be jealous about His name, over His people, and His land in the dispensation of Grace? Are people who are calling Him by name provoking Him to jealousy with their worldly preferences, idolatrous pursuits, wicked practices, and downplaying the corruption that is defiling the land?

God's jealousy became a fire to His people, but as you study you realize that God has always had a remnant. He either delivered them from His judgment or marked them so they would be delivered through it. For those who call Him by name we need to make sure we are part of the remnant, that we share in His jealousy over His truth, His people, and His kingdom so that we will stand for what is right, withstand the corruption of this present world and continue to stand regardless of how wickedness takes center stage, knowing in the end we are standing on the winning side. †

WHAT WE ARE MADE FOR By Oswald Chambers

. . . Jesus took . . . them up on a high mountain apart by themselves . . . -Mark 9:2

We have all experienced times of exaltation on the mountain, when we have seen things from God's perspective and have wanted to stay there.

But God will never allow us to stay there. The true test of our spiritual life is in exhibiting the power to descend from the mountain. If we only have the power to go up, something is wrong. It is a wonderful thing to be on the mountain with God, but a person only gets there so that he may later go down and lift up the demon-possessed people in the valley (see *Mark 9:14-18*). We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises, or for the other beautiful attractions in life—those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life, and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength. Yet our spiritual selfishness always wants repeated moments on the mountain. We feel that we could talk and live like perfect angels, if we could only stay on the mountaintop. Those times of exaltation are exceptional and they have their meaning in our life with God, but we must beware to prevent our spiritual selfishness from wanting to make them the only time.

We are inclined to think that everything that happens is to be turned into useful teaching. In actual fact, it is to be turned into something even better than teaching, namely, character. The mountaintop is not meant to *teach* us anything, it is meant to *make* us something. There is a terrible trap in always asking, "What's the use of this experience?" We can never measure spiritual matters in that way. The moments on the mountaintop are rare moments, and they are meant for something in God's purpose. †



WAIT
By Jeannette Haley

“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”
Psalm 27:14

One of the topics that is a big part of the American scene is the subject of diet and obesity. Leading factors in weight gain are many, including genetics, engineered junk foods, food addictions (namely, sugar), pharmaceuticals, growth hormones and antibiotics, pesticides, chemical sweeteners, processed foods, overeating, stress, hormonal imbalances, adherence to the FDA recommended daily food intake (which is upside down) and lack of adequate water, to name a few. While weight is a major concern, there is another “weightier” subject that Christians need to seriously consider, which can be summed up in one little, not-too-popular word, spelled “w-a-i-t.”

Most of us are busy people. Time is short, and seemingly getting shorter as we age. On top of that, we all have obligations, duties and deadlines. All is fine as long as we can manage to keep our little train of life chugging down the track, but when all our well-laid out plans are suddenly interrupted and our “engine” is forced to slow down to a stop, we find ourselves drowning in a backwash of frustration. Whether it’s a computer problem, a car problem, a home appliance problem, or a plumbing problem (like we recently experienced) or any other problem that we can’t fix, there’s no avoiding the fact that we have to wait for the right person to rescue us and solve the problem. Then there is the biggie; in other words, our health! Waiting to regain health and strength is a whole other subject unto itself. Generally, however, we usually end up with some idea of how long we have to wait before a problem is solved which can give us a hopeful glimpse of the “light at the end of the tunnel.”

Having to wait in times of temporary disruptions and inconveniences is one thing, but the kind of waiting the Bible talks about is something else entirely because it involves our total dependency upon the sovereignty of God. In our natural human state, this is something we try to avoid. Oh, we talk and sing about “waiting on the Lord” so we can “mount up with wings as eagles,” but in reality, we hope that our

time of such waiting is a very short one, especially in times of great distress, danger, sickness and suffering, or concerning disheartening, out-of-control situations, or in on-going turbulent relationships. *Psalm 13:1, 2* begins with the Psalmist crying out, “*How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?*” As we read this verse, we can easily feel the angst and frustration he was experiencing.

No doubt in these perilous times there are many men and women of good character standing against the rising tide of pure evil and insanity that are asking the same questions. Thankfully, in verses 5 and 6 David had found the answer, “*But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.*” There is no spiritually opposing force on earth that is greater, wiser, more powerful, or that somehow has the ability to exalt itself above or beyond the height, breadth, scope or depth of God and His Word. For example, if you want to read a description of Fake news and those who support it, read *Psalm 12* (and other like passages of Scripture.) The Word of God contains the spiritual explanations, answers and solutions to every situation. “*Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth*” *Psalm 37:7, 8, 9.*

Fifteen months ago, when I got “bucked off” a collapsing kitchen stool and was badly bruised and painfully injured, after going to the Lord about it, I knew He had heard my cry for help and healing. It was so clear to me that I half expected an instantaneous miracle. Instead, the Spirit said, “WAIT.” My first impulse was to question within myself, “Why?” I knew I would be healed, so why did I have to wait? Looking back on that time, I realize that waiting is a powerful discipline and test of faith. When we have a sudden burst of faith in a given situ-

ation, it’s easy to assume that our moment of inspiration is enough to carry us through until we fly over the finish line. But it just doesn’t work that way because God wants to do a very deep, growing and lasting work in us so that we will be strong: rooted and grounded in Christ and able to stand in abiding faith no matter what assails us. *Colossians 2:7*, says, “*Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*”

Oswald Chambers said, “One of the greatest strains in life is the strain of waiting for God. Tenacity is more than endurance; it is endurance combined with the absolute certainty that what we are looking for is going to transpire. Tenacity is more than hanging on, which may be but the weakness of being too afraid to fall off. Tenacity is the supreme effort of a man refusing to believe that his hero is going to be conquered. The greatest fear a man has is not that he will be damned, but that Jesus Christ will be worsted, that the things He stood for – love and justice and forgiveness and kindness among men – will not win out in the end; the things He stands for look like will-o’-the-wisps. Then comes the call to spiritual tenacity, not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately on the certainty that God is not going to be worsted. If our hopes are being disappointed just now, it means that they are being purified. There is nothing noble the human mind has ever hoped for or dreamed of that will not be fulfilled. One of the greatest strains in life is the strain of waiting for God. ‘Because thou hast kept the word of my patience.’ Remain spiritually tenacious.”

We all love God’s promises, but how many of us seriously consider the conditions that go along with them? God’s wonderful promises make us feel good, but the conditions, not so much. Conditions mean that there are certain requirements to be met on our part in order for the promise to come forth, and more often than not one of those conditions involves waiting on God. God promised Eve that He would provide a savior and a redeemer, and some teach when Eve bore Cain and declared, “*I have gotten a man from the LORD,*” that she believed he was the promised one. How disappointed she must have been when Cain proved to

be a murderer! The Bible tells us that Adam lived for 930 years, and in that time he “*begat sons and daughters*” *Genesis 5:4b* so we can only imagine how long Eve waited for the promise to be fulfilled. Hopefully she clung to her faith, and came to the realization that God would fulfill His promise in the “fullness of time,” which He did.

When the Lord called Abram to leave his country, kindred, and father’s house he was 75 years old. God spoke to him and gave this promise, “*I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing*” *Genesis 12:2*. We see in the story of Abraham that there was first a separation, and then preparation through a 25-year waiting period before Isaac was born to him and Sarah in their old age. We all know that Sara convinced her husband that they should “do something” to “help” God keep his promise, hence Ishmael came on the scene and we also all know the ongoing problems that has caused for both Israel and the world.

After their long wait, it is interesting to note that God changed their names to indicate the fulfillment of his promises to them. (Study *Genesis 17*.) Changing their names gave them both a whole new identity and purpose, just like when God makes all things new when we repent and receive Jesus into our hearts. Our walk is a walk of faith which means we must learn to wait on the Lord, trusting that He will fulfill all His good Word to us without our meddling into His way of accomplishing it.

In *Exodus 24:16* we read of Moses who went up into Mount Sinai and waited for the Lord for six days. How many of us could settle ourselves enough to wait on a mountaintop, covered by a cloud, for a week without doubting God, or ourselves? Besides, sitting in a foggy atmosphere is depressing. Moses couldn’t even enjoy the view, and he certainly didn’t have a cell phone to occupy his time, or even a selection of snacks from a vending machine. There were no books to read, no television to watch, no music to listen to and certainly no FOX news to keep him informed of what the rest of the world was doing. He didn’t even have a service dog! Moses was in an intense waiting period! But, guess what? This really was no ordinary cloud for “*the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and*

the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights” *Exodus 24:16-18*.

The LORD had said to Moses “*Come up to me into the mount, and be there*” (vs. 12a). I love the intimate, personal invitation from God to “*Come up to me...and be there.*” Jesus said in *Matthew 11:28a* “*Come unto me.*” He promised, “*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*” *John 6:37*. When God calls us to come, we must rise up, and be prepared to “go up” and “be there” (or wait) for when He calls us to Himself, it means to come up higher. “*The Lord is high, and lifted up, and his train fills the temple*” *Isaiah 6:1b*. Waiting on the Lord is a time of coming higher, a time of preparation where the things of the world are left behind and where our hearts are stilled and settled in faith and hopeful expectation that what God is going to reveal to us is more of Himself.

King David is an example of waiting in action; that is, much of his life involved waiting, but he was never unoccupied. David had to wait about 15 years from the time he was first anointed by Samuel to the time he became king over Judah. Then it was another seven years before David was anointed king over all Israel. *2 Samuel 5:4* says, “*David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.*” Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began His public ministry. (See *Luke 3:23*). Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. (See *Genesis 41:46*). “*From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.*” (See *Numbers 4:3*).

I remember way back when I was young, and zealous to serve the Lord. Back then I had no clue just how to go about that, but I knew God’s hand was upon me. The problem was, my goals and my priorities were upside down, but that’s another story. So, when I turned 30, I was hoping that somehow

a “ministry” would open up to me. I knew the world was a mess full of lost, hell-bound people, and needed changing, and I was willing to go out and be another “great evangelist” if it was the Lord’s will. I waited for three years for “something” to happen. Then I figured 33 was the right number for things to happen since Jesus was crucified at that age. Well, as you all know, nothing spectacular happened in my Christian life then either; in fact, it was just the opposite. Finally, when I hit 40, I had been through a lot of trials and testing, so I figured that now I was all ready to step into a big ministry and take on the devil and change the world. Obviously, that never took place, but soon after I met Rayola, and ever since then our wonderful Lord has taken us on a spiritual journey that is amazing. By my 50th year, I recognized that God had brought me on an incredible journey, and that He had everything under control in spite of myself. This is a journey that will continue until my last breath because through all the years of “waiting” I have learned that what is most important in a person’s life is not who you are, what “great things” you may do or where you go, but Who you know, and that is Jesus Christ. He must become our all in all, every day. Realizing that can take a long time, and involve a lot of waiting, but once a person enters into that place in God, his or her whole perspective on life changes, and you discover how true these words of Jesus are, “*But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted*” *Matthew 23:11, 12*.

When it comes to prayer, think about the prophet Daniel and how long he had to wait for his prayer to be answered even though as soon as he prayed, his prayer was heard. The delay was because of a great battle in the unseen realm between Michael the archangel and the prince of the power of the air over Persia. The key is, Daniel’s faith held strong through the 21 days that he waited for the answer. We must rest in faith, knowing that God hears our prayers, even though sometimes the answers are delayed, some even for a lifetime. Waiting is a real test of our faith!

Jesus, concerning prayer, said in *Matthew 6:7-8*, “*But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the hea-*

then do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." Sometimes God answers our prayers before we pray them, but as stated, other times we must wait and believe even if it is for a lifetime. Peter wrote to the persecuted saints, *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"* 1 Peter 1:7. The writer to the Hebrews tells us, *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6.)

A. W. Tozer said, "What then are we to do about our problems? We must learn to live with them until such time as God delivers us from them...we must pray for grace to endure them without murmuring. Problems patiently endured will work for our spiritual perfecting. They harm us only when we resist them or endure them unwillingly."

Oswald Chambers said, "Every time you venture out in your life of faith, you will find something in your circumstances that, from a commonsense standpoint, will flatly contradict your faith. But common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense. In fact, they are as different as the natural life and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture out with courage on the words of Jesus Christ, while the realities of your commonsense life continue to shout, 'It's all a lie'? When you are on the mountaintop, it's easy to say, 'Oh yes, I believe God can do it,' but you have to come down from the mountain to the demon-possessed valley and face the realities that scoff at your Mount-of-Transfiguration belief (see Luke 9:28-42). Every time my theology becomes clear to my own mind, I encounter something that contradicts it. As soon as I say, 'I believe "God shall supply all [my] need," the testing of my faith begins (Philippians 4:19). When my strength runs dry and my vision is blinded, will I endure this trial of my faith victoriously or will I turn back in defeat?

"Faith must be tested, because it

can only become your intimate possession through conflict. What is challenging your faith right now? The test will either prove your faith right, or it will kill it. Jesus said, 'Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me' (Matthew 11:6). The ultimate thing is confidence in Jesus. 'We have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end...' (Hebrews 3:14). Believe steadfastly on Him and everything that challenges you will strengthen your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith up to the point of our physical death, which is the last great test. Faith is absolute trust in God—trust that could never imagine that He would forsake us (see Hebrews 13:5-6)."

The Bible is full of examples of men and women whose faith was severely tested by long periods of waiting. Consider the nation of Israel and their long periods of waiting upon God for the promised Messiah, who, when He came, was only recognized by a few. Think of the miracle of restoring the Jewish people to their God-given land after 2,000 years of exile, while those of us who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb are still waiting for the return of Christ to set up His earthly kingdom.

Keep in mind the ten virgins who went forth with their lamps to meet the bridegroom. Five were wise because they took oil for their lamps, and five were foolish because they did not. All ten of them knew they were going to wait for the bridegroom, but the five foolish virgins weren't prepared for a long wait and so they ran out of oil. To the Church in these end days, let this be a clear warning that those "who endure to the end shall be saved" but they must have what it takes to keep their faith "burning" until the trumpet sounds!

In attempting to write this article on the subject of waiting, I discovered that waiting goes hand in hand with faith. To wait in a manner that is pleasing to God will always involve faith, and such faith will be tested, tried and stretched to the utmost during long periods of waiting. Waiting before the Lord cannot only be a time of testing of our own faith, but also a time of testing the faith of others which may even result in separation. This is because people who have their own creeds and set ideas of how God works often become annoyed, critical,

and even judgmental of the person who is patiently waiting for the Lord, such as was Job.

Thus, we should never give in to the feelings, fears, and failings of others when we are suffering though a long trial that involves waiting upon the Lord, for faithful is He who promised, and who will bring it to pass, for it is He who keeps our life in His hands. †

ANDREW MURRAY QUOTES

"Here is the path to the higher life: down, lower down! Just as water always seeks and fills the lowest place, so the moment God finds men abased and empty, His glory and power flow in to exalt and to bless."

"Humility is nothing but the disappearance of self in the vision that God is all."

"Humility is the displacement of self by the enthronement of God."

"God cannot hear the prayers on our lips often because the desires of our heart after the world cry out to Him much more strongly and loudly than our desires for Him."

"Men sometimes speak as if humility and meekness would rob us of what is noble and bold and manlike. O that all would believe that this is the nobility of the kingdom of heaven, that this is the royal spirit that the King of heaven displayed, that this is God-like, to humble oneself, to become the servant of all!"

"The only humility that is really ours is not that which we try to show before God in prayer, but that which we carry with us, and carry out, in our ordinary conduct; the insignificances of daily life are the importances and the tests of eternity, because they prove what really is the spirit that possesses us."

"Humility is the only soil in which the graces root; the lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure. Humility is not so much a grace or virtue along with others; it is the root of all, because it alone takes the right attitude before God, and allows Him as God to do all."

"How different our standard is from Christ's. We ask how much a man gives. Christ asks how much he keeps."

DOES "ABBA" MEAN DADDY?

By Lynette Hughes

A distinctive New Testament revelation is that through faith in Christ, God becomes our personal Father. Father is used of God in the Old Testament only 15 times while it is used of God 245 times in the New Testament. As a name of God, it stresses God's loving care, provision, discipline, and the way we are to address God in prayer.

The Aramaic term Abba appears in traditional Jewish liturgy and Jewish prayers to God. It is Arabic for "father." It appears three times in the New Testament (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). In each case it is followed immediately by the Greek word 'Pater' which means 'Father.' It is not the Greek word for 'Daddy.' The Greek language has a word for 'Daddy' – the word 'pappas' – but that is not the word the New Testament uses to translate Abba. Instead, the word 'Abba' was used by Jews as a personal name for invoking YHWH as the father of Israel and most familiar to the Jewish saints of the New Testament times. The best way to translate "Abba, Pater" is "Dear Father," or even "Dearest Father." 'Abba' refers to the spiritual relationship with God and 'Pater' to the less formal term adopted in Greek society that indicated parental love and respect. According to the majority of Hebrew and New Testament scholars the closest equivalent for the word Abba would be, "My Father," "Dear Father," or "Dearest Father."

Romans 8:15 ESV says, "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" And Galatians 4:6 ESV reads. "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Abba was not merely a word used by young children. It was also the word that Jewish children used for their parents after they were fully grown. Abba was a mature, yet affectionate way for adults to speak to their fathers.

When His disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He revealed the proper way we are to address God. "OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name...." (Matthew 6:9). "Go into your closet and pray to YOUR Father."

Jesus taught His disciples the proper way to address God, and He never referred to His Father as Daddy, yet He was in a more intimate relationship with God than anyone else.

The 'abba-daddy' myth began in the early 1900's by Joachim Jeremias, a New Testament scholar who suggested Abba might translate to Daddy. And now it's believed by millions of people who are led to believe this gushy sentimentality. Most scholars are adamantly opposed to such a translation. The claim that Abba means "Daddy" is misleading and clearly runs the risk of speaking to God without the proper reverence and respect He deserves.

When one considers the extreme reverence in which the Old Testament believers held God, to the extent that they would not even say or write His name, which is why they referred to Him as YHWH, one simply has to wonder at those who so flippantly refer to the Almighty as 'Daddy'. It would be of utmost disrespect to address the Pope as Daddy even for those of us who believe that his position is man-made. Calling God "Daddy" is not only an inaccurate understanding of the expression, "Abba Father," it fosters an attitude of disrespect and an unholy familiarity.

The Church today is plagued by an unholy familiarity with God. We barge into His presence as we would come into the presence of a man. We pretend that He should accept any form of worship that seems right to us. We sleep through the worship service and daydream about our common affairs because we fail to recognize we have entered into the presence of the God of all creation. Speaking to Him with the title, "Daddy" is just another example of our failure to worship Him as Glorious and Almighty, full of Splendor and Majesty. †

By Jack H. Kirkland

I have a sense of brokenness today. Some the recent posts here on Facebook and some of the experiences I have had over the past few years have only served to intensify my heart's cry for revival within the church. The charlatans on TV, and those behind so many pulpits today, are leading men and women down a path of "super spirituality" that has as its end emptiness, and destruction.

I am Pentecostal. That makes me

no better than any other child of God, but I have a belief and experience in the powerful working of the Holy Spirit in our day. I believe in spiritual gifts. All of them. I welcome and embrace the operation of the Holy Spirit in the church.

Difficulty arises out of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit due to the fact that it is near impossible to divorce the awesome work of the Spirit from emotion. When He moves, there is invariably an involvement of human emotion. That emotion has been expressed in various ways over the years. Mostly in Pentecostal circles it has involved uninhibited expressions of praise, shouting and dancing in the Spirit, and so on. I welcome that. It is in that atmosphere of worship and praise that I have seen the Holy Spirit do wonderful things in the lives of people.

The problem nowadays is that clever manipulators have bypassed the operation of the Holy Spirit and have begun to appeal directly to the emotion. What we have as a result is hollow shout, empty souls, disillusioned seekers, and the whole process becomes destructive within the church. The manipulators usually have their own personal gain in mind when they operate. Spiritual shallowness, and a lack of the knowledge of God's Word have created the atmosphere in which this occurs.

We have learned to mimic the operation of the Spirit, manipulate the emotions, and produce something that resembles Pentecost. The resemblance is only external! There is no conviction of sin. There is no transformation of the heart. There is no reverence produced by being in the awesome Presence of God. There is no fear of God. People can live like the devil all week long and get into this false worship on Sunday. On Monday they are right back in the world, living undisciplined lives and satisfying the appetites of the flesh.

Gifts of tongues and interpretation have been mimicked and the interpretations have become generic and general. Prophecy is given out over individuals that makes them feel good, but nothing ever comes of it, and the same people are back in line for their "word" in the next service. I have heard of messages in tongues being "interpreted" just to make people feel good. Ladies and Gentlemen, THIS IS NOT PENTECOST! †

RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

Q: "What are inordinate affections?"

A: The word, "inordinate" certainly carries some not-so-pleasant connotations, yet such feelings are very much in operation in today's world. In one way these feelings create some type of ecstasy, while in another way they create torment and suffering. On the one hand, people become caught up with what they feel while swinging from limbs of expectation, while on the other hand, they find themselves crashing against some immovable object of reality that causes hurt, despair, and depression to their soul.

It is important for Christians to recognize when they are ready to be taken captive by, or have innocently become entangled in, something that is "inordinate" because it will eventually literally suck the life out of the environment and relationship, and leave in its wake great frustration, resentment and destruction. In such an environment a wrong spirit is in operation such as seduction and uncleanness, and the fruits of any relationship in which inordinate affections operate will prove to be bitter, causing the relationship to become toxic.

There are only two places in Scripture that the word "inordinate" is used: *Ezekiel 23:11* and *Colossians 3:5*. *Ezekiel 23:11* has to do with inordinate love towards idols and in *Colossians 3:5* it has to do with affections that are unclean because they are associated with the insatiable appetites of the flesh.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance attaches to "inordinate" such words as sensual, passion, lust, experiencing sensation, impression, or amorousness, which has to do with being strongly moved towards or enamored by someone or something. When you look up the word, "inordinate" in the dictionary, it means "disorderly, unregulated, exceeding reasonable limits, immoderate, and excessive." Clearly, these are words and definitions that try to describe an intense desire that turns into unabated lust where the person can become totally consumed by the passion behind their attraction to someone or something.

Inordinate points to unhealthy and ungodly relationships. Its love becomes idolatrous, demanding, and jealous and its enamored affections become possessive and controlling.

Inordinate love proves to be dishonorable and its affections end up becoming obsessive. The problem is once people feel the ecstasy of inordinate love or affections, they never want to lose it because it produces sensations or impressions that temporarily cause all insecurities, loneliness, past rejections, and etc. to disappear, but once the person to whom the inordinate affections are directed towards is not present, all the bad feelings return. At such times, those who have been taken captive by these affections, manipulate events to once again gain that ecstasy. In a sense, inordinate affections become like a drug in the emotional arena, and like any drug it ultimately will take the addicted person on a wild emotional ride that always leaves him or her empty, miserable, and bound to a destructive path.

To avoid inordinate love, we are to choose to love the Lord with everything in us, realizing that His love is pure, honorable, kind, and sacrificial and that we are to be an extension of His love to others. To avoid falling into the traps of inordinate affections, we must mortify daily the "old man" in us with his insatiable and insane appetites.

It is hard for believers to believe they can be taken captive by such affections, but the truth is we are subject to them and can easily become victim to them if we are not guarding our heart, discerning the spirit in operation, and setting our affections on things above (*Colossians 3:2*). †

CHALLENGES By A. W. Tozer

Our Lord commands us to pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest field. What we are overlooking is that no one can be a worker who is not first a worshiper. Labor that does not spring out of worship is futile. . . .

It may be set down as an axiom that if we do not worship we cannot work acceptably. The Holy Spirit can work through a worshiping heart and through no other kind. We may go through the motions and delude ourselves by our religious activity, but we are setting ourselves up for a shocking disillusionment some day. . . .

Fellowship with God leads straight to obedience and good works. That is the divine order, and it can never be reversed. †

Spiritual Warfare By Dave Hunt

Question: *There is a teaching in the church called "spiritual warfare" that is rapidly growing in popularity. It is even taught that by "binding" in the name of the Lord the "territorial spirit" controlling a city, Christians can take over that city for God. The reference in Daniel 10 to the prince of Persia withstanding the angel Gabriel seems to support this teaching. What is your response?*

Response: Today's teaching about "spiritual warfare" has no biblical basis, either by precept or example. Yes, "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" prevented the angel (presumably Gabriel) for three weeks from coming to Daniel (*Daniel:10:12-13*).

Daniel, however, was seeking prophetic insight, not the "binding" of the "territorial spirit" over Persia. Nor did the angel instruct him to wage such "warfare." In fact, nowhere in the entire Bible is the idea even suggested that certain demons have special authority over certain cities or territories and that they must be "bound."

The angel's mission was to inform Daniel of last-days events affecting Israel (*10:14*)—information that would become part of Scripture and which the "prince of Persia" tried to keep from Daniel. There is no hint that "binding" this demon would have delivered Persia from satanic influence or that Gabriel's victory over this demon (with the help of Michael the archangel) had any effect upon the spiritual climate in Persia or aided in the salvation of a single Persian.

Paul never tried to "bind territorial spirits" in bringing the gospel to the world of his day, so why should we? And although the apostles "turned the world upside down" (*Acts:17:6*), there is no hint that a single city was ever "taken for God," as some preachers are falsely promising today. In Corinth, for example, where Paul spent 18 months, God gave him special protection and blessing because He had "much people in this city" (*Acts:18:9-10*).

The issue was not one of *delivering Corinth* but of *calling a company of believers out of it*. Nor did Paul's success change the destiny of Corinth or of any other city or nation. Such teaching simply has no basis in the Bible but comes from the imagination and ambition of men. †