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August 2015 "When God Rises" (Part One)

Dear Friends,

One of the things most Christians seek God about is the next step in His will for their lives. I'd like to pass along some illustrations the Holy Spirit shared with me about what to expect as He leads us further into God's will. He revealed this to me by using events from the story of Israel being led toward the Promised Land.

The Battle Within

²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: ²² He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people. (Exodus 13:21-22)

³⁴ Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁶ And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: ³⁷ But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸ For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys. (Exodus 40:34-38)

The Israelites traveled through the wilderness as they were led by the Cloud of the Lord. Unless the cloud moved, they stayed put. But as the cloud began to rise, they had to begin taking down their tents and packing everything - including the tabernacle - for the next phase of their journey. Every day they were aware of the cloud's presence; but until the cloud moved, they remained at their encampment.

The tabernacle represents our born-again spirit. The cloud represents the Holy Spirit. We must seek to stay in fellowship with Him on a daily basis. The more we strengthen that fellowship, the more sensitive we will be to His leadership. Then, the day will come when we sense the Holy Spirit stirring - our "inner cloud" rising - as He is preparing to lead us deeper into the will of our Father.

This means we are in for some changes. These changes will be different for each person relative to God's specific will for that individual. Some of these changes may be small, such as lessening the amount of time we watch television. However, some of the changes may have a major impact on our life, such as changing the church we attend, changing jobs, relocating to a new city, state or country or some other significant altering of our present circumstances.

The greatest battle we will face during this time is with our emotions. Change sometimes requires a level of faith in God we're not used to exercising. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is stirring within us at this time because He knows we have the faith necessary to move forward. We must cast down the imaginations and every high thought of fear, failure and confusion that will try to distract us from the knowledge of what God is doing in us and where He is wanting to take us (2 Corinthians 10:5).

You Are Not Alone

⁹And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹⁰So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹³And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. (Exodus 17:9-10, 13)

⁹And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. ¹¹And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. (Exodus 33:9, 11)

Moses faced a huge task. After leaving home to become Israel's leader, going before Pharaoh to seek their release, witnessing the plagues devastate Egypt and experiencing the Red Sea miracle, he was now looking at a battle against a war-like people knowing full-well that the Jews had no military experience.

But seemingly out of nowhere we are introduced to a young man named Joshua. The first time scripture mentions him is in Exodus 17:9. Though young, we see that he was ready to step into a place of critical authority and lead Israel to victory. We also see that Joshua "departed not out of the tabernacle" where the presence of God had settled. Additionally, Joshua is identified as Moses' servant (Exodus 24:13 refers to him as Moses' minister).

The Holy Spirit explained to me that as we are being led into the next phase of God's will we are not going to be alone. Yes, God will be with us, but He will also send a "Joshua" into our lives whenever we need one. These Joshuas may be male or female, young or old, but they will be spiritually ready to assist us in the battles and challenges we face. A Joshua will not seek to be an authority over us, but will work with us. Also, a Joshua will be someone who does not "depart out of the tabernacle," meaning, he or she will have a lifestyle of pressing into God. A Joshua is one of the greatest gifts and blessings we will ever receive from God.

Discovering Korah

¹And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. ²And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (Numbers 12:1-2)

²⁶And they [the spies who had searched out the Promised Land] went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto

the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. ²⁸Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. ²⁹The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. ³⁰And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. ³¹But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. ³²And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. ³³And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. (Numbers 13:26-33)

*¹Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: ²And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: ³And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?
(Numbers 16:1-3)*

Moses had faced enough challenges already. Then suddenly, his own flesh-and-blood brother (Aaron) and sister (Miriam) rose up against him. After that, men who were eye-witnesses to the truth and blessings of what God had promised ignored His word and exalted their emotional interpretation of the circumstances over God's faithfulness. If that wasn't enough, men who had gained respect in the eyes of the Israelites rose up to essentially overthrow Moses. I have no doubt that Moses was somewhat shocked by the actions of all these people, something he did not at all expect to happen from within the camp.

In order for God to move us to the next level in Him, we must have matured spiritually to the point we are ready for His promotion. Praying in the Spirit is just one of the vital keys necessary for this maturing to take place. As this growth takes place and the Holy Spirit begins stirring within, we are going to become more and more aware of "Korahs" living "within the camp of our flesh" that we did not know existed.

Our flesh has a tendency to rebel against the things of the spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote about this inner battle in Galatians 5:16-25. We will come face-to-face with issues in our lives we do not realize are strongholds. Sometimes, these problem areas will be things we had never considered to be a fault; other times, they will be habits or behaviors we have grown very accustomed to in our lifestyle. Regardless, we must be prepared for this harsh awakening within as we progress in the Lord.

The Death of the Rebellion

²⁶And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, ²⁷How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. ²⁸Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: ²⁹Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, ³⁰Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. ³¹But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. (Numbers 14:26-31)

Over and over again, the Jews had refused to believe and trust God in spite of all He did to free them from Egypt. Finally, God said that all those age 20 and older were going to die in the wilderness and not make it into the Promised Land. However, all those under age 20 would enter the Promised Land. The closer they got to their destination, the more the generation of rebellion, doubt and unbelief died.

This must have been difficult as people watched their friends and family members die, but it had to happen if they were going to inherit God's promised possession. It took 40 years for all the 20-and-older people to die; this means that, other than Joshua and Caleb, the oldest people to enter the Promised Land were 59. A new generation had grown to the point they were ready to step into their God-appointed destiny.

As we continue to press into God and as the Holy Spirit is leading us to the "Promised Land" of the next phase of the Father's will, more and more of the flesh is going to be purged. "Korahs, Miriams and Aarons" of rebellion to obedience to God that had been dwelling within will die. "Spies" in our soul that had been spreading evil reports of unbelief and doubt will perish.

It can be difficult as we lay aside things we used to enjoy and tolerate. But the things of the flesh must be put to death if we are going to cross over into the next stage of God's will. A "new generation" of spiritual development must rise up within us so we will be ready to step into the next chapter of our God-appointed destiny.

Next month I'll be sharing more of these illustrations. However, you may want to request a CD of the sermon in which I taught these things. It is titled, "When God Rises," and you can order it using the form on the next page.

May the joy of the Lord be your strength and may His presence fill your life!

In His Grace,

Jim

***** 2016 Spring Prayer and Power Conference *****

The dates for our Spring 2016 Prayer and Power Conference are Sunday, April 24 through Friday, April 29. Our host hotel will again be:

Country Inn and Suites (Fairborn South)
3971 Colonel Glenn Highway
Fairborn, Ohio 45324
(937) 429-2222 Fax number is (937) 427-2204
www.countryinns.com/fairbornoh
email: cx_fabo@countryinns.com

Discounted room rates are \$94 per night, plus tax. When you contact the hotel you must ask for the Grace Christian Center conference rate in order to receive the discount. Our Group Block Code is **0321GRACEC**. There are many events taking place in the Dayton area from March through June and hotels fill very quickly. I strongly suggest you make your conference reservations as soon as possible.

For those traveling from other countries, do not forget that our ministry will not be providing finances for you to attend. You are responsible to pay for your airplane ticket, hotel room and meals. Do not plan to come here and then ask for financial assistance.

If you have any questions about the conference send them to PastorJimGCC@gmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing you in April!



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