

Prison, Praise and Promotion - Part 1
(Don't you love alliteration?)
Joseph Herrin (08-06-2011)



Letters Received in Jail

Matthew 25:39-40

“When did we see You... in prison, and come to You?” The King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.”

The above photo gives testimony to the great grace the Father manifested toward me during the 74 days I recently spent in jail. I received nearly 100 letters from far and near. Letters arrived from people I know well, such as my daughter. Letters also arrived from saints I had never met, nor corresponded with previously. Letters came in from my home state of Georgia, and as far away as New Zealand, Nigeria, and England. My daughter also forwarded to me many of the e-mails that arrived in my inbox.

It was a great source of comfort and encouragement to receive the assurance from so many that they were praying for me. As you can imagine, jails are filled with some of the most vile and unrestrained men. Because they have not restrained themselves, society has put them behind bars. The section of the jail I was in housed approximately 90 men. Some were charged with murder. Others were accused of child molestation, assault, burglary, drug trafficking, and various other transgressions.

My daughter came to see me every day. On her first visit she was given visitor badge #91. When I saw it I immediately knew the Father was testifying of His promises from Psalm 91.

Psalms 91:1-15

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to Yahweh, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!" For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you

with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day; Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon. A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not approach you. You will only look on with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. For you have made Yahweh, my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place. No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your tent. For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, that you do not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and cobra, the young lion and the serpent you will trample down. "Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name. He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him."

The environment in jail can be quite raucous. Many a day I felt like Lot, whose righteous soul was vexed as he sat daily in the gates of Sodom (II Peter 2:7-8). The Scriptures testify that "a quiet and gentle spirit" are precious in the sight of God (I Peter 3:4). Of the Messiah we read, "He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets" (Matthew 12:19). Yet, in the jails and prisons of this nation one encounters a very different spirit. Men's normal conversations are shouted to one another. Profanities and obscenities fill the air from morning until night. Rebellion toward the prison staff continues unabated as men taunt, revile, mock, insult, and argue over the pettiest matters. Truly the tongue is a channel of great evil, it is a world of iniquity. Even when men's bodies are confined behind bars they prove their sinfulness by letting their tongues give vent to every foul and filthy thought that enters the mind. The atmosphere in jail is a virtual sewer, defiled with the evil things that arise from souls that have been given over to wickedness.

On more than one day I witnessed men violently attack one another. Two days before I was released I watched a man come down the stairs at lunch time, walk over to another man seated and eating. Without a word the man punched the seated man viciously in the side of the head, knocking him out of his chair and onto the ground. He then swung at him again when the man attempted to get up. The guard on duty then intervened, leading the attacker back to his cell until he could be transferred to isolation.

Despite this environment, I abode without concern for my own safety. I was confident that Yahweh would watch over me, and He was faithful. Like Daniel in the lions' den, and a sheep among wolves, the Shepherd of the saints watched over me with rod and staff. In time it will be revealed how much the prayers of the saints availed on my behalf. I know that many were praying. I have had many enemies, and numerous trials during this season.

Upon arriving in court I once more took no lawyer with me. I offered no defense, and made no charges or arguments against others. As the Father has instructed me from the very first, I followed the example of Christ described by the apostle Peter.

I Peter 2:19-23

For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it

patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously...

Over the course of the years I have found it easier to entrust my life into the Father's hands. I have come to understand that it is appointed unto all who walk as Christ's disciples to suffer many things while in this earthly tent. All sons of God must be perfected through suffering. Christ is our pattern man. He demonstrated great patience in submitting to all that man would do unto Him. His confidence remained unshaken in the love of His Father in heaven. The apostle Paul strengthened the resolve of the Christians with the following words:

II Timothy 3:10-12

Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! *Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Yahshua will be persecuted.*

People of God, the Spirit of Christ has been testifying that the earth is beginning to enter the season of time that is described as "the beginning of birth pangs." Many witnesses to this have been observed both in the heavens and upon the earth. In October of 2003 I wrote of a great solar flare that came from Sunspot 486 which was directed straight at the Earth. The Spirit at that time directed me to Psalm 48:6.

Psalms 48:6

Panic seized them there, anguish, as of a woman in childbirth.

Just three months prior to this another sign in the heavens was given as Mars made its closest approach to the earth since man was created. Mars is the red planet, symbolizing bloodshed and warfare. It is orbited by two moons named Phobos (Fear) and Deimos (Panic). The Spirit was testifying that mankind is entering the end of the age, and the earth must go through such tribulations as have never been experienced before (Mark 13:19). More recently, on February 27 2010 a massive 8.8 magnitude earthquake shook Concepcion, Chile, giving another testimony to the time of the end and the beginning of birth pangs.

Following this a series of earthquakes have rattled Christchurch (Christ's church), New Zealand. While I was in jail I received several precious letters from an elder brother who lives in Christchurch. He provided further testimony to the aftereffects of the quakes. The damage has been far more widespread than originally thought. It was known almost immediately that the major cathedrals in the city could no longer remain standing. They would have to be razed. What was damaged during the first quake was left irreparable by the second, and much more destructive shaking that followed five months later. No one died in the first quake. This was the grace of God. That He gave them five months to consider their ways and to repent, is a testimony of His further grace. Yet, as I have

observed in jail, giving mercy to men seldom leads them to repentance. Most spurn the mercy of God, mocking Him by their continuance in evil.

Much of the Central Business District of Christchurch will have to be demolished, including many of the tallest buildings in the city. The sports stadium, a world class conference center, and other centerpieces of the life of this city sustained devastating damage.

These things stand as a parable for the church of Christ. A church that loves comfort, pleasures, and money and has habitually turned the people of God away from serving as houses of prayer to become merchants and moneychangers will in this last hour experience the New Zeal of Christ.

John 2:15-17

When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "*Zeal for Your house has consumed me.*"

The zeal of God is often manifested in great violence upon the earth, a violence that is matched by the destruction wrought by major earthquakes.

Ezekiel 38:19

"In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake..."

I have observed in jail that a great many men will not turn away from sin until they have been greatly shaken. Even then, many will harden their hearts and the only remaining course the Father will have with them is to break them suddenly, and without remedy. Such stubbornness exists even in the church. Though God will shake Christ's church, many will have no heart for repentance, but will think only of returning as quickly as possible to the profligate, worldly lifestyle that invited the former judgment. Like America when the towers fell, they will respond with the words of rebellious Israel:

Isaiah 9:10

"The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars."

See the following article for this testimony of America's arrogance:

<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2009/04/road-signs-part-3.html>

The earthquakes in Christchurch have disclosed many hidden faults that the residents there did not formerly know existed. Certainly this is a parable of the Church. In many places the people have built their homes upon the sand, and liquefaction and shaking in these areas has caused thousands of homes to have to be abandoned. The number of commercial buildings that must be demolished is staggering. The following recent article is pregnant

with symbolism relating to the church and the hour that is now at hand. I encourage you to read it through spiritual eyes.

7,500 earthquakes shake resolve in New Zealand city
NICK PERRY, Associated Press
Updated 11:15 a.m., Monday, July 18, 2011

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — It's been 10 months since the first big earthquake struck New Zealand's second-largest city. It's been nearly five months since a far more devastating one killed 181 people and crippled the downtown. And it's been just a few hours since yet another aftershock startled Christchurch residents during the night.

"I stop breathing," said Sheridan Cattermole, a bartender and a mom. "I get pins and needles all over. I either freeze or run. I just want things to be back to what they were like this time last year. I had my vege garden, and my sunflowers."

Seismologists have recorded 7,500 earthquakes in Christchurch since September — an average of more than 20 a day. The rumblings are rattling the psyche of the still-battered city. They have left the land under thousands of homes unsafe to build on. Some people have left town entirely. Yet many have proven resilient, and some now see a reconstruction boom on the horizon.

Christchurch is the disaster that the world forgot. When the deadly quake toppled the iconic Cathedral spire and flattened buildings in this city of 390,000, people around the globe paid attention. But two weeks later, the massive earthquake and tsunami that left more than 23,000 dead and missing in Japan took center stage.

In New Zealand, the quake in Christchurch is reverberating. In a country of 4 million people, the cost of the quakes — estimated at more than \$12 billion — amounts to 8 percent of annual economic output. Compare that to Hurricane Katrina, whose costs were less than 1 percent of U.S. gross domestic product. Christchurch will likely eclipse the Japan disaster in cost per person.

And nobody knows if the worst has passed. Not even the experts.

When Kevin Furlong, a professor of geosciences at Penn State University, came to Christchurch on a sabbatical last year, he thought he would be studying earthquakes in the abstract — not living through them.

The quakes in the city have not followed the classic pattern, he said. Typically, a big quake hits and is followed by a series of ever-diminishing aftershocks.

In Christchurch, the initial Sept. 4 magnitude-7.0 quake didn't cause widespread destruction because it was centered 30 miles (50 kilometers) west of the city, but it helped trigger at least two distinct new quakes on different fault lines, each with their own pattern of aftershocks.

First came a deadly magnitude 6.1 quake on Feb. 22, which was centered almost directly under a residential area and flattened buildings that had withstood the earlier quake. Then a 6.0 magnitude quake struck on June 13. Though no one died, it was a psychological blow to people trying to rebuild.

Earthquakes are maddeningly difficult to predict, Furlong said. There's no way of knowing whether there's more to come, he said, though the odds improve with each day that passes without a major event.

New Zealand geologists estimated last week that there was a 23 percent chance another big quake would hit within a year, down from 30 percent last month.

"I've become much more attuned to what the public wants to know: 'When will it stop and why are we having them,'" Furlong said. "To be honest, it's really frustrating. You just can't answer those very appropriate first-order questions."

That uncertainty is no comfort to people like Cattermole. She and her husband Pete, a cabinetmaker, and their three young children remained in their home in the working-class suburb of Bexley long after most neighbors had left.

As recently as late June, they were sleeping in the living room to escape the muck creeping through the walls and floor at the sunken rear of their home. Their ruined possessions lay in a heap in the front yard, awaiting an insurance assessment.

All around, buckled homes sat abandoned atop a sea of mud and sand. A makeshift blue water pipe snaked along the sidewalk. The few who remained announced their presence with cardboard signs like the Cattermoles': "3 Children & 2 Adults Still Here."

The problem: a phenomenon called liquefaction, when an earthquake forces underground water up through loose soil.

"It's the same physics as quicksand," Furlong said. "Whole acres turn into something of a liquid. Houses sink. Water and mud jet up through the surface. You get cracks, sand volcanoes, flooding."

He said that geologists are reassessing the importance of liquefaction after the devastating impact it has had on Christchurch.

Cattermole and her family endured long stretches without fresh water and, with the sewer system broken, used a portable toilet on the street or a chemical toilet inside. "There's so much stress around, you can just see it," she said.

They have since found a rental home and are moving out.

Their previous home was among more than 5,000 condemned by the New Zealand government last month because of liquefaction. Most are in the city's low-income eastern suburbs. Thousands more are likely to be condemned in what will force a major redesign

of the suburbs.

The government has offered to pay homeowners for their losses, but many, Cattermole included, fear they will be priced out of new homes.

"There's a plentiful supply of Rolls Royce-priced sections, but they're not affordable for people on Toyota Corolla incomes," said Hugh Pavletich, a longtime Christchurch property developer and critic of the city's land-use policies. City officials say they're working hard to ensure there's plenty of affordable new land for displaced residents.

It's hard to gauge what long-term effect the quakes will have. School enrollment is down about 7 percent — an indication of families leaving — and the economy is fragile. Retail sales are down about 11 percent from pre-earthquake levels, and unemployment claims are up about 14 percent.

The center of the city remains off-limits behind chain-link fences and will stay that way for months, possibly years.

Demolition crews are planning to tear down about 1,000 hotels, office buildings and other unsafe structures. So far, they've taken down fewer than 150. City officials estimate it will take nine months just to demolish the 26-story Hotel Grand Chancellor, which has been teetering since February. When the city center reopens, fewer than half the buildings will remain.

The new downtown is likely to be much lower. Christchurch residents appear to have little appetite for high-rises these days. "The magic number I'm hearing is three stories," said Connal Townsend, chief executive of the Property Council of New Zealand, which represents commercial property owners.

Around the country, building owners are bracing for big insurance premium increases, particularly for older structures, Townsend said. Homeowners are also likely to see earthquake insurance rates climb significantly.

The Port of Christchurch in Lyttelton, which handles almost all the region's freight, has been unable to secure any earthquake insurance since June. The port's chief executive, Peter Davie, said he is essentially crossing his fingers, hoping that no more damaging quakes hit.

Even the Christchurch City Council has been unable to secure new earthquake insurance for much of its infrastructure.

Still, many are hoping that the billions of dollars flowing in from government and insurance payments will stoke a boom within a couple of years.

As the city looks to rebuild, Townsend said much will depend on the vision of city leaders: A bold reconstruction plan would inspire confidence and investment, while a second-rate one could scare away investors.

Attention is turning to Roger Sutton, a former energy executive who took a pay cut in June to become the first Christchurch earthquake czar, with broad planning powers.

Asked if he was worried whether new earthquakes could cause more damage, Sutton shook his head and said, "Hopefully, there's not much more to break."

[S o u r c e : <http://news.yahoo.com/7-500-earthquakes-shake-resolve-nzealand-city-161243790.html>]

There is so much I could comment on in this article, and all that is being signified for the church of Christ, that it would require a great many pages simply to share it all. In a nutshell, Christ is about to shake His church. Judgment must begin at the house of God. What will remain when all is over will be unrecognizable from its former earthly glory. Even as the temple rebuilt by those returning from Babylon was a mere shadow of the glory of Solomon's temple, so too will the true body of Christ be much more humble in coming days. She will no longer evoke an earthly glory in her grand cathedrals, megachurches, entertainment complexes and conference centers. She will no longer be the envy and admiration of the world. But neither will she continue to be a den of demons and unclean spirits. She will be swept clean by the zeal of Christ.

Perhaps it seems that I am chasing rabbits here, for I began this post by discussing my recent imprisonment. Yet, there is a common thread in these things. Yahweh has been attesting for some time that His people have but two choices. They can fall on the Rock and be broken, or the Rock will fall on them and scatter them as dust (Matthew 21:44). To build our house upon the Rock, we must fall upon the Rock. Those who do not fall upon the Rock will be as those who build their houses upon the sand. When God shakes the earth, they will not stand.

In 1999 I received an invitation from Christ to fall upon the Rock. For many years I had spent my Christian life avoiding this necessary abasement. The Spirit of Christ entreated me to surrender to follow wherever Yahshua might lead me. I was terrified at the prospect, for though my spirit was willing, my flesh was very weak. If I could have seen all the experiences Christ would lead me through I would certainly have turned back before I even began. Yet, He mercifully shielded me from the knowledge of those things. "Sufficient unto the day is the trouble thereof."

Christ led me one step at a time. I have followed through the fire and the flood, and I have found the grace of God abundant the entire way. We serve a compassionate Father who is very tenderhearted toward those who are beset with fears and much weakness. He will lead us slowly, even as Jacob led his flocks, lest they should suffer in the long journey before them (Genesis 33:13).

During the past 12 years, the Father has led me with much patience. I began the journey a much more fleshly man than I am now. The way of the cross strips away the flesh of man. As the flesh has been stripped away the journey has become easier. Things that would have caused my soul much distress in previous days no longer trouble me. This has enabled the Father to increase the heat of the fire and the severity of the trials. Yet, none of this has been intended for my harm. He seeks only to purify His sons that they might not suffer loss when

they stand before Him. He has encouraged me to continue following, to not shrink back, for He attests that there is a prize that awaits all who endure until the end.

I have many things to share of these past recent days, but I want even more to speak of those things that are to come. The Spirit is testifying that great things are at hand. In the midst of days of great shaking there will also be great progress in spiritual things made among a remnant of the people of God. Many will fall away, even as many are leaving the vicinity of Christchurch, New Zealand. Those who endure will come through transformed. They will be a humble people, and a people full of the Spirit of God. These will not seek worldly things for themselves, but will lay down their lives for others. By their love, will all men know that they are disciples of Christ.

I look forward to sharing these things in coming days. Please continue to lift me up, for I still face numerous threats, and there are adversaries. I am confident, however, that He who has promised is faithful. Yahweh will perform every good thing He has spoken to me. He will also raise up in the earth a people who will be to the praise of His glory. We will truly see in days ahead a people who will do exploits in the earth. They will be known for their love for God and their love for one another. These ones will be lovers of truth, and will depart from error and return from apostasy. Christ will lead the weakest, most common, and despised in this earth, and He will bring them to Zion. Great things lie ahead. Let us look forward with great anticipation.

If you hear the voice of the Spirit of Christ inviting you to follow Him down unknown ways, paths that appear to promise many trials and afflictions, do not shrink back. Take courage. There is One who will walk with you all the way! Every soul must be tried in these days. Most will not yield to follow the Spirit of Christ. These will trust in things that can and will be shaken. The wise will lay down their lives. They will fall upon the Rock, and because they do, Yahshua will make sure that they are still standing when the storm has passed over them.

Matthew 7:24-25

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.”

People of God, we cannot will away the storms that must come. Even now the dark clouds are amassing upon the horizon. The news today reports that America, the reserve banker to the entire world, has had its credit rating lowered. The once unassailable bastion of prosperity is being criticized for her profligate lifestyle, her unwillingness to live within her means. The nations fear that her collapse will bring down the entire world financial system. The Spirit bears witness that these fears are well founded.

Where is your confidence in this hour? Are you leaning upon an arm of flesh? Are you dependent upon the government to grant you “social security?” Would you be unsettled with all the stress and fear that a collapse of American society would bring? Or are you already leaning upon the One who is ever faithful and cannot be shaken? An hour is at hand

when all things that are hidden, even those faults deep within the earth of this flesh, must be exposed. Our Father desires sons who will stand. Trust Him. Lean upon Him. He will lead you through many storms, but He will deliver you through them all.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days!

Prison, Praise and Promotion - Part Two Joseph Herrin (08-07-2011)

The Pause that Perfects

Matthew 5:48

“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

James 1:4

And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.



Houston County Jail Pod



Houston County Jail Cell
(My Home for 134 Days)

Twice I have been sent to jail. The first occasion was for 60 days. The second for 74 days. Both times I was held at the Houston County Jail in Perry, Georgia. (This is pronounced Howston County - It is Georgia, not Texas.)

The photos above show the jail when it was newly opened about 8 years ago. Much of the shine has gone off of it now, although as jails go, it is a nice facility. The pod I was in looks identical to the photo above. It had forty cells, with bunks for two men in each cell. I was in a top bunk. The pod normally held closer to 90 men. Some slept in what they call “boats.” These are plastic shells that sit on the floor and hold a mattress. They only use the boats on the lower level. Since I was upstairs I had only one other cell mate.

For approximately 20 hours a day we were confined to our cells. We came out for break times and meals. All the inmates on the pod ate at the same time, but the breaks were staggered between the upstairs and downstairs. We had one break in the morning for an hour. Another after lunch for an hour, and a slightly longer break in the evenings when the men were permitted to use the showers.

The roommate I had for the entire time on this most recent stay was a young black man who had very little spiritual interest. He slept much of the day. I was able only on rare occasions to engage him in some spiritual discussion. I received a paperback KJV Bible when I arrived. It was small print, and I did not bring my reading glasses. I held it close to my nose and read through most of it while I was there. The pages were thoroughly marked up with underlining, asterisks and notes when I left.

Twenty hours a day in a cell can be wearying. I often stood at the window and looked out on the center of the pod, which was empty most of the time. It was my window on the world. As I mentioned in the previous post, the most vexing thing was to observe the daily rebellion of the men, and listen to a near constant din of profanities and obscenities. Many of the men would loudly proclaim the lyrics of whatever obscene rap song came into their mind. I have spent my life memorizing Scripture verses. Satan has been busy leading others to tattoo their bodies and minds with imprinted impurities.

My heavenly Father acknowledged that He was aware that my experience there would include many weary days. After I had been there about a month, a sister in Christ from England sent me a letter that included the following poem.

God Meant It Unto Good (Gen. 50:20)

"God meant it unto good"- O blest assurance,
Falling like sunshine all across life's way,
Touching with Heaven's gold earth's darkest storm clouds,
Bringing fresh peace and comfort day by day.

-

'Twas not by chance the hands of faithless brethren
Sold Joseph captive to a foreign land;
Nor was it chance which, after years of suffering,
Brought him before the monarch's throne to stand.

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An Eye all-seeing saw the need of thousands,
And planned to meet it through that one lone soul;
And through the weary days of prison bondage
Was working towards the great and glorious goal.

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As yet the end was hidden from the captive,
The iron entered even to his soul;
His eye could scan the present path of sorrow,
Not yet his gaze might rest upon the whole.

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Faith failed not through those long, dark days of waiting,
His trust in God was recompensed at last,
The moment came when God led forth his servant
To succor many, all his sufferings past.

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"It was not you but God, that sent me hither,"
Witnessed triumphant faith in after days;
"God meant it unto good," no second causes
Mingled their discord with his song of praise.

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"God means it unto good" for thee, beloved,
The God of Joseph is the same today;
His love permits afflictions strange and bitter,
His hand is guiding through the unknown way.

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Thy Lord, who sees the end from the beginning,
Hath purposes for thee of love untold.
Then place thy hand in His and follow fearless,
Till thou the riches of His grace behold.

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Then, when thou standest in the Home of Glory,
And all life's path lies open to thy gaze,
Thine eyes shall see the Hand which now thou trustest,
And magnify His love through endless days.

--Freda Hanbury Allen

Throughout this time of testing, weary as it was at times, I never found any fault, or complaint with God. My spirit has rested contentedly in the knowledge that He chooses all of the experiences of His sons very carefully. All are intended for our PERFECTING as sons.

Jeremiah 29:10-11

For thus says Yahweh, "After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," says Yahweh, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Yahweh has often sent His people to Babylonian places, filled with the noise and commerce of sin and confusion. Yet, He does not leave them there. I recognize that were it not for the grace of God restraining, disciplining, and directing my life all of these years, I would be as wicked and vile as the most beastly man in jail. As the apostle Paul testified, "In my flesh dwells no good thing." "Sin dwells in my flesh."

My Father has been gracious in patiently leading me to a mortification of the flesh over the course of many years. He has treated me as a son, scourging me, for He loves me and desires that I share His holiness. It is His earnest desire that those whom He has called will not suffer loss on that day when they stand before Him, so He disciplines us now, and leads us through many afflictions that we might be perfected through suffering.

The Father gave me a remarkable testimony of His commitment to “present every man perfect in Christ” while I was in jail. On May 24th, the day I went to court, the judge mentioned no fewer than three times that he was of a mind to send me to the jail for 30 days. I made a calendar while in jail and noted that my 30th day would fall on June 22nd (6/22). These numbers were significant to me for a number of reasons. The Father has shown me that 6 represents the flesh man, and 22 signifies flesh cutting. Also, six years previously the Father had given me a prophetic word off the Internet indicating some things He would perform in the life of my family. I printed that word off and carry it in my Bible. The date is on the bottom of the page (6/22/2005).

I had an anticipation that I would certainly hear something from the Father on that date. My hope was that I would be released from the jail, for my first 30 days there were particularly trying, and I experienced numerous attacks from the adversary early on. I was a bit downcast the day before (which was 6/21) when my daughter made her weekly visit to see me. Kristin asked the guard if he could tell her when my release date was. He looked in the computer and said there was no release date entered.

In the back of my mind had been residing a nagging thought that there was an area of obedience to the Father that was lacking in my life. He had told me some years previously that I needed to get down to 165 lbs. and remain under that weight. I had gotten down to that weight about two years previously, but I had since put some weight back on. The thought lay heavily (pun intended) upon my mind that the fulfillment of some of God's promises were contingent upon my obedience in this area.

On 6/22/2011 I was called by the guard and told that I needed to report to Medical for the screening every inmate is supposed to receive during their first 30 days. Upon arriving there, the first thing the nurse did was ask me to stand on the scales so she could weigh me. She recorded my weight at 186 lbs.. I knew immediately that the Father had ordered my steps with great precision that day. I knew I would not be released until I lost the weight.

I had already made up a list to go to Store Call that day, and I had planned on purchasing numerous snacks. How quickly God is able to motivate us to obedience and make changes to OUR plans! I had prayed some weeks before, asking the Father to help me to get down to 165 lbs.. I could think of no better way for Him to assist me than to let me know that my release from jail was predicated upon my obedience in this matter.

From that day I began giving most of my meals away. I began to exercise daily, doing stomach crunches on my bunk, and walking around during our break times. I was able to observe that I was making progress after a short time. God's grace was such that I was not bothered by headaches, or hunger pangs. My battle was mental. In my boredom I would often think of eating, but I would reason as follows: “That meal, though it would taste good, will last but a moment. Then you will regret the rest of the day that you forfeited the progress you could make today in losing weight.” With such a thought I found it easy on many days to walk downstairs, get my food tray, then walk over to some fellow inmate and hand it to him. Without breaking pace I would return to my cell and know an inner satisfaction that comes from ruling over the flesh and walking in obedience to God.

Sixty days went by from the date I first arrived. I felt that I must be getting closer to the weight goal God had given to me, but I had no scales to weigh myself on. The Father began speaking to me much around that time of those things He would have me to do upon my release. I knew the end of my time in jail was near then, for the Father had spoken to me similarly the first time I was jailed, and He fulfilled everything He spoke to me while in jail. (I will share these upcoming things in a future post.) One day the Father gave me a powerful affirmation to that which He was speaking regarding the ministry in these days ahead. He spoke through a National Geographic magazine I was reading. A picture and caption on page 818 was used by the Father to speak much.

I pondered whether the page number itself was some type of testimony. I wondered if it could be referring to August 18, but I had no clear word from the Father on this. Like Mary, I pondered these things in my heart, waiting until the Father should bring greater clarity. I resolved, however, that even if I had to wait until August 18th to be released, I would do so patiently, spending my days in contentment before the Father.

It was a great surprise to me when on the morning of August 5th (a Friday), the guard for our pod opened my door and said, "Mr. Herrin, you can pack your things and leave." I was not expecting to hear such words for another couple weeks. It left me somewhat stunned. In my mind I was saying, "Lord, what does this mean? Today is my 74th day in jail, and I don't know any significance to the number 74. Why today Lord?"

The jail staff processed me out quickly. I then called Randy Simmons to come pick me up. My daughter was in Pennsylvania for the week, so she was unavailable. I spent the afternoon with Randy, and a woman named Veronica who has been ministering to the homeless on the streets of Macon. Randy had met her, as he has been doing street ministry in Macon for some time.

The next morning I awoke with the question still on my mind? Why 74 days Lord? As I lay there the answer came. The first 30 days were what the earthly judge had determined for me. The Spirit of Christ directed me to subtract the 30 days from the 74 days. I suddenly realized that 44 days were added by my heavenly Judge for me to lose weight. The number 44 is $22 + 22$, indicating a double portion of flesh cutting. It had taken me 44 days to lose the weight Yahweh required of me.

Back in 1999 the Father spoke to me about a ministry He was preparing me for. As I looked over a large field of grass at a sod farm, I observed a man mowing the grass with a tractor. I had only a few months before surrendered to follow Christ wherever He would lead, and already I was walking through much affliction. I had encountered much strife from brothers and sisters in Christ. I longed for some peace in my life, and wistfully said, "Lord, if only I could have a job like that man mowing grass. I could then be content, for there would be peace and quietness, and I could spend my days in fellowship with you." The Spirit spoke back very clearly, "I have indeed called you to be a cutter of grass, for all flesh is as grass. Yet, in order for me to use you to remove the flesh from others lives, you must first permit me to remove the flesh from your life."

I wrote those words down, for I had gone to that very spot to hear the Father speak to me.

I had a notepad and pen in my lap. The Father's words were bittersweet, for I longed to be used of Him, but I dreaded the flesh cutting I would have to endure.

Twelve years have now passed from that day. At the peak of my fleshliness I weighed 285 lbs. on a 5'-9" frame. Now I weigh a much healthier 165, and I am aiming for 155. God has not only removed the flesh from my physical body, but He has been working to transform a carnal man into a spiritual creation.

Yahweh chooses our trials with great deliberateness. He sees both the visible and the hidden faults in the lives of His children. He will lead each of us down paths designed to fulfill the words spoken by John the Baptist:

John 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

As I look back upon the past twelve years, I am grateful that the Father has not spared me these necessary afflictions. Paul, in writing about the Father disciplining His sons, declares that God's discipline produces, "the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11). If there is one word that sums up the state of my soul today, it is the word "Peace."

Hosea 6:1-3

"Come, let us return to Yahweh. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, that we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know Yahweh. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth."

I feel like I have walked a long journey in wilderness places, but now the promise of rain is before me. These will be rains of refreshing. How precious is the rain to those who have known a dry and weary land in which there is no water? I praise God for the dry places, for now the season of fruitfulness will be all the more pleasant.

(More to come.)

Prison, Praise and Promotion - Part Three
Joseph Herrin (08-08-2011)

Walking in the Fear of God

II Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

The Father has been speaking many things in the past couple months, and I have anticipated the opportunity to declare them to the body of Christ. I want to share some experiences that both Randy Simmons and I have had that have been revelatory.

Randy and I both spent a number of years at the Macon Rescue Mission. Our time there overlapped for the most part, and we came to know many of the same men. One man we both are familiar with is Sam. I would guess that Sam is in his 50s. He is a tall, lanky individual, who has always struck me as being an unpolished country boy. Sam worked for me when I was managing the Mission's thrift store. I used him to repair appliances and small engines, as well as to clean up donated items. He had some talent and initiative in these areas, and I sought to use men according to their abilities.

Sam was a good natured man, but he seemed to be perpetually chained to drinking and living on the streets. He was put out of the Mission on numerous occasions for drinking, but after a time the manager's would let him back in. He was in and out most of the three years I was there.

I left the Mission at the Father's direction in February of 2008. Shortly before I left, I bumped into Sam. He was no longer in the Mission, having been put out again. I needed some work done on my van at the time and asked him if he would consider doing it, and I would pay him. Sam agreed. Sam had formerly done some good work, but I came to notice that his workmanship was flagging. He replaced a coupling going to the van's transmission, and left a number of bolts out. This was discovered when I took it in to have the oil changed. Performing a tune-up, he crossed some of the spark plug wires resulting in the van backfiring badly.

The last day I asked him to work on my van I knew I would be gone until late. Sam told me the work would not take too long, so I paid him before I left, and asked him to leave the keys at the Mission when he was finished. I returned that evening. Sam had never even started on the work. He also had walked off with my keys, and no one knew where he was. Fortunately, I kept a spare key and was able to access my van and drive it. I was not angry, but I was disappointed for Sam's sake.

I didn't see Sam for a long time after that, but Randy would run into him occasionally on the streets of Macon. Sam expressed shame at what he had done in taking the money I gave him, and going and getting drunk. Randy assured Sam that I was not offended with him, but that I desired his welfare.

Earlier this year Randy saw Sam on the streets, and had a number of conversations with him. Sam said that things were getting hard. He had been run out of the vacant house he used to sleep in. A company that used to give him odd jobs, and let him hang out, said they didn't want him around anymore. Randy told Sam that God was seeking to bring Sam to make some changes in his life. It was time to get off the streets and begin walking with the Lord. Sam listened politely, but he was not ready to put forth the effort to change. Randy told Sam that things would get worse for him if he resisted what God was doing.

The next time Randy saw Sam, Sam had been beaten up. He looked rough. His face was swollen and bruised. Things were getting worse indeed. Much worse. It wasn't much longer and Sam was ready to cooperate with God and make changes to his life. Randy's grandfather invited Sam to come and stay with he and Randy at his home. God had revealed this to be His will in an unusual way. A stray dog had come up in Randy's grandfather's yard. He had a homemade tag around his neck that read, "I am Sam." The dog took up immediately at the home.

After just a couple days at Randy's grandfather's home, Sam had sensed the leading of God to return to a town in North Georgia from which he had come. He was apprehensive about returning, but Randy encouraged him. Randy took Sam around town to see if one of the ministries there would supply him with a bus ticket to get home. The Mission agreed to do so without hesitation. Sam has kept in contact with Randy, and he is doing well. He has been working construction jobs in the area, and has been attending church and praying.

More recently Randy has been running into other men on the streets, some of which he has known from the Mission, and some from the streets. Repeatedly, it has been evident that God is moving in these men's lives, putting them in circumstances and situations designed to make their sinful lives difficult, to prod them to seek change. Randy has spoken to a number of men about the Lord. Most have not been willing to change, and Randy has told them things will soon get worse if they don't.

Randy had spoken with one man named Skip, whom we both knew from the Mission. Skip gets a monthly check from the government. He purchases liquor and then disappears down by the river for days with some of his buddies. Randy was riding his bike near the river one day recently and saw Skip coming up from the woods. Skip collapsed to the ground right in front of him. Skip told Randy that he didn't think he was going to make it this time, that he was going to die. He asked Randy to call an ambulance for him. Randy did so, and Skip was put in the ICU. Due to alcohol induced circulation problems, Skip came very near to losing his legs, and still finds some difficulty in getting around. He is not yet at the end of his stubborn ways, but he is much more humble and contrite. He is listening and considering more carefully the things Randy speaks to him about the Lord.

Randy spoke to another man who goes around in an electric wheelchair, often too drunk to stand up. Randy told him that he couldn't continue on like that. The man told Randy that if he needed someone to counsel him he would ask. A couple days later the man was drunk, and someone tried to go through his pants pockets to steal his money. They ended up dumping him on the ground where he broke his hip.

Another man got a monthly check from the government. Randy had been speaking with him. This man also was stubbornly resisting the wooing of the Holy Spirit. Randy shared with him on a number of occasions. The man got a hotel room, but then let a woman from the streets move in with him. Randy told him he should not do so. The next time Randy saw the man he reported that the woman had stolen \$700 dollars from him. He could not pay for the hotel room, and had nowhere to go. He would not get another check until the next month.

While I was in jail, my cell mate was a young black man. I will call him D. D is 22 years old. He had previously spent 13 months in jail facing a murder charge, but the D.A. was unable to prove the case. They had not dropped the charges, but were no longer pursuing the case. After getting released, D got into more trouble. He was trafficking in drugs and also had received stolen merchandise. He had been in the jail about 4 months when I arrived. He was my cell mate the entire time I was there.

D showed honor to me as an older man and as a minister. Whenever his friends would stop by the cell he would ask them to not curse because I was a minister. Yet D had no real interest in spiritual things. I spoke to him once or twice soon after I arrived, but it was quickly evident that he was not interested. I gave him some newsletters that contained the book "Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ," but after a week he had only read a few pages. I asked for them back so I could share with others who had expressed interest in reading them.

D wanted me to pray with him every night before we went to sleep. He wanted me to pray that he would get out soon, and that he would be shown leniency in his sentence. D had four children from a couple different women, none of whom he was married to. He missed seeing his children, and wanted to see his family. He had no maturity about him at all, however. He had been raised in a society where mothers and grandmothers pampered the children, and nothing had ever been expected of him. He did not finish school, but played video games, hung out with friends, and partied.

I spoke to D a number of times about honoring God with his life. He had some Christian influence in his life, but he did not want to give up his fun. He spoke as if dealing drugs was not a serious offense. He said that he never robbed anyone, or assaulted anyone. He only sold people drugs at their request, and to him that was not a bad thing to do.

How easy it was for D to gloss over the ruined lives that resulted from his trade. Girls were prostituting themselves to get money for drugs. Children were being aborted due to drug driven immoral conduct. Children would go to bed hungry, or uncared for, because their parents or care-givers had spent their money on drugs. Some of his "clients" were regularly shoplifting items from Walmart, and other stores. They would seek to pay for the drugs in merchandise, but when the drug dealer required cash they would take the items back to the stores and get customer service to refund them money they had never paid. Others were burglarizing automobiles to get money for drugs. D also told me of two of his friends in the drug business, one 19 years old, and another 23 years old, who had both been murdered in the past year. It was far from a victimless crime.

D told me about his desire to get a new lawyer so that he could get a bond and be released. I prayed for D in this regard, and soon afterwards he was able to get a lawyer. I noticed, however, that D's confidence was in the lawyer, not in God. I continued to tell him that he must make changes in his life if he expected God to show him mercy and favor. I prayed with D, asking God to grant him mercy as he went before the courts the first time with his new lawyer for a motion hearing. God granted him mercy. Two of his charges were thrown out. When D returned he was ecstatic, but he did not honor God. Instead he went all over the jail boasting about how he had told his lawyer what to do and how his lawyer had made fools of the D.A.. The rest of the day he was insufferable to be around. He was loud, and raucous. His conversation was more profane than I had observed it. The prison guards had to shout at him over and over because he was being so loud (and this is in a very loud place) that he was obnoxious to everyone.

The Spirit spoke to me. "You see that leniency does not lead men to repentance. I showed D mercy and he is mocking me with his response." The rest of the day and the next I thought about things I needed to share with D. I waited for the right time to do so. Tuesday evening we were in the cell when he brought up the topic of his court appearance. I told him plainly that I was disappointed with him, that he had asked God for mercy and then spit in His face. All day he had gone around singing obscene rap songs, hanging out with the most intransigent offenders in the jail. He was not doing anything that gave evidence that he intended to change. I asked him why God would desire to let him out if he was not going to put forth any effort to try to honor Him?

D remained respectful of me, but I could sense his annoyance at my words. He told me that his grandfather had told him similar things, but he told me that he needed to live his own life, and make his own mistakes. He said his grandfather had a saying, "Hard heads lead to sore butts." I was appalled at his cavalier attitude. He was telling me plainly that he was committed to his stubborn ways, and would not change until situations became so intolerable that he was willing to put forth some effort.

I told D that I could no longer pray for the Lord to show mercy and leniency to him. I told him that my prayer for all men was that their lives might honor God, and since D had no desire to do so, I could not ask for Yahweh's mercy.

The next day D had another court date. He did not anticipate that there would be anything to it, but he came back in a very dark mood. Gone was all the rowdy, boastful, foolish talk. His lawyer had told him previously that he could get him a bond within a week. A probation officer had told him that day, however, that they would recommend that he be denied bond because he was at risk of re-offending. He also learned that two serious felony charges would be pressed against him in court.

D's lawyer had told him that Thursday he would get him on the court schedule for a bond hearing, and that he thought there was a very good chance that he would be able to get out at once. Thursday morning came, and D was not on the court schedule. He heard nothing from his lawyer. How quickly a situation can change!

D had been boasting earlier in the week about getting out on Thursday. He had been telling

various inmates what things he was going to leave them. He was speaking as if all had already been accomplished. He thought his new lawyer was going to perform all he desired. His confidence in the arm of the flesh was such that he had put away all fear of God. I told D that this was not wise. I counseled him to not count his chickens before they hatched. He looked at me when I said that and told me that his grandmother had told him the same thing just a little while earlier. D had been talking about getting out before I was released. Friday morning the guard opened our cell door. D looked at him with anticipation. The guard then looked at me and said that I was released, and I could go home.

An odd thing happened the evening before my release. I would at times play cards with D. Being locked in a cell together 20 hours a day, I knew it was difficult for him to not have some social interaction, some diversion to spend his time. I taught D how to play Crazy 8s, a card game I had learned as a child. He liked the game, and every few days he would ask me if I wanted to play. We always played until one of us won five games.

The first three times we played, D won five games to four. Five denotes grace. Four denotes humility. It was during this time that I was praying for God to be gracious and merciful to D, and God was indeed doing so. After I spoke to D about his mocking God, and he spurned my counsel, we played cards only one more time. I won that night five games to zero. I received grace, and he received nothing.

Yahweh has been testifying solemnly through many examples that he cannot continue to show mercy, leniency, and grace to a stubborn and rebellious people whose hearts are given over to sin. To do so will not lead them to repentance. We live in an hour when hard heads will incur a loss of grace. Judgment will fall. Stripes will be borne. Yet even in this, many will not repent, but will harden themselves against God.

I anticipate in these days to see God moving quickly to judge those who do not respond to His hand of correction. An intransigent spirit will result in severe judgment.

Galatians 6:7-8

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

PostScript:

Markets

US Indexes		Market Movers	
Index	Last	Change	% Change
Dow	10,809.85	▼ -634.76	▼ -5.55%

Immediately after posting this blog I noted the news headline about the stock markets

dropping today. Note the precise percentage of change to the Dow Jones Stock Index today. Three fives together denote a fulness of grace. What then does it denote when this figure is negative? It signifies a removal of grace. Such is the hour we live in.

The article also stated:

U.S. stocks have fallen 15% during the past two weeks.

15% is 5+5+5. The grace of God is being removed for Yahweh's leniency has not led to repentance. The article further reported:

The VIX -- Wall Street's so-called "fear" index -- jumped 44% to 45.98, the highest level since early 2009.

44 is 22+22, indicating a double portion of flesh cutting. I wrote about this number just yesterday.

Quotations from: http://money.cnn.com/2011/08/08/markets/markets_newyork/

Prison, Praise and Promotion - Part Four
Joseph Herrin (08-11-2011)

Please note the date on this post. Today is the 11th day of the 8th month. It is also the year 2011. The number eleven denotes the following:

it is the number which marks, disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration.
[Source: http://philologos.org/___eb-nis/eleven.htm]

The Father has been speaking much to me through this number of late. Shortly after I was released from jail and had retrieved my cell phone from my daughter's house, my phone rang. I was surprised because I didn't think anyone knew I was out yet. It was a friend from the Atlanta area (Joe Boes). He said he had checked my status on the jail's website and it reported that I had been released at 11:11 A.M. that morning. Following is a screen shot from the Houston County Jail's website.

Name of Defendant	Sex	Race Description	Birth Year	Jail Location	Date & Time Incarcerated	Date Released
HERRIN, JOSEPH BRADLEY	MALE	WHITE (INCLUDES MEXICANS AND LATINOS)	1961	HOUSTON CO DETENTION CENTER	5/24/2011 10:18	8/05/2011 11:11

You may note that the last THREE numbers to the far right at the bottom under "Date Released" are 11 11:11. One of the first things that occurred nationally, and internationally, upon my release, is that the U.S. lost their triple A bond rating, and this has sent shockwaves through the world economy. Monday of this week the U.S. stock market fell drastically, over 600 points and yesterday (Wednesday) it declined a further 519 points. In the past two weeks the markets are down nearly 20% and have erased approximately two trillion dollars of wealth from the markets.

Today, is the 11th of August. Being the 8th month it signifies new beginnings. New things are not always pleasant and prosperous. In today's *Streams in the Desert* devotion I found the following written.

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. 3:17, 18).

Observe, I entreat you, how calamitous a circumstance is here supposed, and how heroic

a faith is expressed. It is really as if he said, "Though I should be reduced to so great extremity as not to know where to find my necessary food, though I should look around about me on an empty house and a desolate field, and see the marks of the Divine scourge where I had once seen the fruits of God's bounty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord."

Methinks these words are worthy of being written as with a diamond on a rock forever. Oh, that by Divine grace they might be deeply engraven on each of our hearts! Concise as the form of speaking in the text is, it evidently implies or expresses the following particulars: That in the day of his distress he would fly to God; that he would maintain a holy composure of spirit under this dark dispensation, nay, that in the midst of all he would indulge in a sacred joy in God, and a cheerful expectation from Him. Heroic confidence! Illustrious faith! Unconquerable love!—Doddridge.

[End Excerpt]

I believe the Spirit to be testifying that such days are near at hand. A people who have known great prosperity are soon to know great poverty. Famine, both natural and spiritual, is soon to stalk the land. What will be the response of the saints? Will their faith be sufficient to lead them to wait contentedly before Yahweh? Will they be at peace, or manifest great panic and distress? The prophet Habakkuk is an example of one whose heart attitude was honoring to the Father.

I would share something that Yahweh has been testifying to me. I have often shared that God has been raising up some men and women to be forerunners. These have been as explorers and pioneers, walking down an afflicted path before their brothers who must shortly follow. Yahweh confirmed this through the camper van He providentially provided for me back in 2005. Vehicles symbolize ministry, and the van was an Explorer Van. It had a Pioneer sound system in it, and the tires were Pathfinder Trail tires.

In the Bible, Joseph, the son of Jacob, is a type of that forerunning ministry that has been prepared for this hour. Joseph was sent to Egypt to suffer BEFORE HIS BROTHERS. A day came when a worldwide disaster (a great famine) drove Joseph's brothers to Egypt as well. Joseph testified:

Genesis 45:6-8

"For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God..."

Yahweh has great care for His people. See how He sent a man before the family of Jacob to preserve their lives in a time of distress. Back around 1999 the Spirit of Christ spoke to me and told me to begin using my first name, which is Joseph. Up until that time I had always been called by my middle name (Bradley). Yahweh testified that my name was significant, and He wanted me to use it. It was at that same time that He directed me to begin a ministry of writing. From the beginning I have signed my name on my books and writings as Joseph Herrin. The last name Herrin is derived from the German Herren, which is the word equivalent of the English "gentleman." My name means, "the man, Joseph."

I did not choose this name, but God chose it for me. Even as Yahweh spoke of that calling on Joseph's life through dreams in the night, He has spoken to me through the name I was born with. We find in the Bible that this is not unusual, for many Bible characters had names that spoke prophetically of their ministry or experiences.

I have never believed that I am "THE Joseph" God has raised up to help guide His people through this hour, but I believe firmly that my heavenly Father has testified that I am one member of a Joseph Company that He has been preparing "for such a time as this." This is not to boast, but simply to believe what Yahweh has repeatedly testified to me. Humility is not believing we are nothing. It is agreeing with what Yahweh testifies to us, and about us.

My experiences since that day in 1999 when Yahweh told me to begin using the name Joseph, has in a great many ways paralleled the experience of the son of Jacob who bore the same name. Most recently I have even found myself placed in jail. This was an experience of Joseph in the Old Testament. Solomon testified:

Ecclesiastes 1:9

That which has been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.

Yahweh delights to work through types and anti-types. He often repeats experiences in the earth, permitting men today to understand His ways as they examine what He has done in the past. I believe the Spirit to be testifying that days of distress are near at hand. He has gone before His people by raising up some who have already walked through much distress while their faith failed not. These will be used of the Father to strengthen the faith of others with the intended result spoken by Joseph, "to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance." Was Joseph boasting to speak these words? Or was he simply acknowledging that which the Father was accomplishing through him?

My purpose for writing such things is that the saints might understand the hour that they live in. Great distress is at the door. We are entering an hour of "*disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration.*" A special correlation exists between the number 11 in the Bible, its symbolic meaning as described in these italicized words, and Joseph. Joseph was the 11th son born to Jacob. He was raised up by God for a time of distress.

Joe Boes sent me a remarkable testimony the day after I was released from jail. He said that he was checking for my release daily, for God was setting before him a testimony that led him to expect that I would soon be released. Joe reads David Wilkerson's daily devotions. For a number of days leading up to my release, David Wilkerson's devotion had every day focused on the life of Joseph. Following is the remarkable transcript of these devotions.

GOD IS DOING A NEW THING

by David Wilkerson | August 1, 2011

How often have you heard Christians say, "God is doing a new thing in his church"? The "new thing" they refer to may be called a revival, an outpouring, a visitation, or a move of God.

Yet very often, this “new thing” dies out very quickly. And once it has faded, it can’t be found again. In this way, it proves not to be a move of God at all. In fact, Christian sociologists have tracked many of these visitations and discovered the average span of life of such an event is about five years.

Personally, I believe God is doing a new thing in his church today. Yet this great work of the Spirit can’t be found in just one location. It’s happening worldwide.

God will not begin a new thing in his church until he does away with the old. This biblical principle, proven throughout centuries of church history, is found in both Testaments and governs any true move of God. As Jesus put it, he won’t put new wine into old wineskins (see Mark 2:22).

The principle of doing away with the old and raising up the new was first introduced in the Old Testament at Shiloh. During the time of the Judges, God established a holy work in that city (see Judges 18:31). Shiloh, where the Lord’s sanctuary stood, was the center of all religious activity in Israel. The name Shiloh itself means “that which is the Lord’s.” This speaks of things that represent God and reveal his nature and character. God spoke to his people at Shiloh; it was there that Samuel heard God’s voice and where the Lord revealed his will to him (see 1 Samuel 1).

The Lord stopped speaking at Shiloh because the priest had become lazy and sensual and the city had become corrupt. God told Samuel, in essence, “Shiloh has become so defiled, it no longer represents who I am. This house is no longer mine. I’m finished with it.” So the Lord lifted his presence from the sanctuary and wrote “Ichabod” above the door, which means, “The glory of the Lord has departed.”

The Lord completely did away with the old but once again, he raised up a new thing. After that, the temple in Jerusalem became known as “the Lord’s house” and God spoke to his people there.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

[Source: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/14315#>]

Note: The date of the above devotion is 8-1, signifying a time of new beginnings. The devotion is titled “God is doing a new thing.” David Wilkerson wrote this devotion prior to his death on April 27th of this year. Yahweh is speaking prophetically through this saint even from the grave.

God is testifying that the church has become defiled. Its present state has come to an end. He will now judge it. He has further emphasized this by the profound testimony of the earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand. This new thing will appear very bitter to many, but for a remnant it will result in a great salvation.

THE JOSEPH COMPANY
by David Wilkerson | August 2, 2011

Let me show you the Joseph Company—a body of last-day believers wholly given to the Lord. They commune with God daily and are led by the Spirit in every detail of their lives. At this moment they are coming out of great trials to enter a place of revelation, wisdom and fruitfulness. God is working in them, giving them his truth and knowledge, and very soon he is going to call upon them as he did Joseph!

For the most part, the church today is experiencing widespread spiritual famine: shallow sermons, dead hearers, "lively" worship that is not backed up by righteous living.

God has always worked far in advance of every spiritual famine in his church. In every generation he has moved ahead to prepare a way out for his people!

The seventy-five members of Jacob's clan would have died in the great worldwide famine (and the promise of Israel would have been destroyed) had God not been working ahead of it all. In fact, some twenty years before the famine hit, God was already setting in motion a plan to save his people from destruction.

God sent Joseph ahead to Egypt! For twenty years God worked on this man—isolating him, trying him, preparing him for a place of authority—because Joseph was to become the life-saver of God's chosen. He kept Joseph from the limelight in order that he might be ready for a coming day of chaos and death!

Beloved, just as surely as God isolated Joseph, he has a Joseph Company today that is hidden from all eyes. These are in the furnace of affliction, prisons of testing, battlegrounds of trials and temptations. They are dying to this world, wanting nothing of its fame, honor, money or pleasure. And they are growing hungry to become more intimate with Christ, to know his heart and his voice.

You may not understand all the mysterious testings, trials and troubles in your life. But if your heart is fully set on following Christ, you can rest assured God has purpose in it all: He wants to bring you into his Joseph Company!

[Source: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/14316>]

Note: Every word of this devotion is profoundly important for the hour we live in. Pay attention! Be alert and sober! This is what I have testified. God has raised up a Joseph Company to minister to Yahweh's remnant during a season of great spiritual famine. This company of overcomers have been laying up spiritual bread for years. Soon the famine will be severe and those who are hungry will begin to seek out those who have the Bread of Life. This will occur in conjunction with a time of great distress in the earth.

JOSEPH AND GOD'S FAVOR
by David Wilkerson | August 3, 2011

Does our heavenly Father favor certain of his children? Does the Bible say God is no respecter of persons? When it comes to salvation and his wonderful promises, God treats

all alike but he also puts his special favor on those who respond wholeheartedly to his calling and yield their lives to him entirely!

Job said: "Thou hast granted me life and favour" (Job 10:12). David said: "For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield" (Psalm 5:12).

Our heavenly Father puts a special garment on those who completely give him their heart: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

Joseph responded to the Spirit's call, surrendering all, and as a favor from his father he received a robe that set him apart. But that favor of his father was costly! It cost Joseph relationships and brought him rejection, misunderstanding and mockery: "All his brethren . . . hated him" (Genesis 37:4).

Why did Joseph's brothers turn on him? The key is in verse 11: "His brethren envied him." When they saw the robe Joseph wore, they knew it spoke of favor, righteousness. And they hated it, because it reminded them of the Spirit's call they had rejected! Joseph was a reproach to their halfhearted lifestyle!

You see, Joseph's brothers sat around indulging in petty gossip and self-centered talk. Their hearts were occupied with lands, possessions, the future, but Joseph's was elsewhere. He spoke of the things of God, of supernatural dealings. God had given him dreams, which in that day was synonymous with hearing the voice of God.

Lukewarm believers around you will want to talk about their cars, houses and jobs, but you'd rather talk about eternal things, about what God is saying to you. Soon you'll become a reproach to their halfheartedness. They will envy you because you represent the call of the Holy Ghost they turned down!

Yes, Joseph was of a different cloth and that difference made him hated and envied among his brothers. And, beloved, the same will happen to you if you are sold out to Jesus!

[Source: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/14317>]

Note: People of God, it has not been forecast what devotions would be published on David Wilkerson's blog. There was no way I could know he would be posting these messages at this hour. Yet, the Father has orchestrated all things perfectly. While I was in jail I wrote only one blog post. It was titled "*The Garment of Humility*." It was a revelation of those garments Joseph was given to wear. If you have not read the article, I exhort you to do so.

<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2011/06/garment-of-humility.html>

Yahweh is now looking for other sons (both male and female) that He can honor. These will be ones who will yield their lives entirely to Him. This will be a costly surrender, but it will result in great promotion and honor in the end. Though this remnant will be hated in this

life, they will be granted glory and ruling authority in the ages to come. Yahweh is even now at this hour beginning to invite many sons to wear garments of humility now that they might soon receive the pure linen garments of the overcomers in Christ.

EVERY WORD AND PROMISE WAS FULFILLED

by David Wilkerson | August 4, 2011

Joseph was in one of his darkest hours—lonely, downcast, about to give up his dreams, questioning his place in God. Suddenly, the call came from one of the king's guards: "Joseph! Get cleaned up—Pharaoh is calling for you!"

In that moment, I believe the Spirit of God came mightily upon Joseph and his heart leapt with excitement. He was about to understand what it was all about!

As Joseph shaved and trimmed his hair, he probably thought, "This is the beginning of what God promised me. Now I know I heard from him! The devil has not been in control and my life hasn't been wasted. God has been directing everything the entire time!"

In a matter of minutes, Joseph was standing before Pharaoh, listening to his dream. Joseph gave the interpretation of the coming famine and told Pharaoh he had to gather and store the nation's grain: "Someone must be in charge of the storehouses. You have to find a man who's full of wisdom to oversee it all" (see Genesis 41).

Pharaoh looked around and then turned toward Joseph: "You! Joseph! I appoint you second ruler. Only I will have more power in the kingdom than you. You will oversee it all!"

How quickly things had changed! The day came when Joseph stood before his brothers and was able to say: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Genesis 50:20).

"God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (45:7-8).

Dear saint, very soon you're going to understand your present fiery trials. God is going to bring you into the promise he gave you and suddenly it's all going to make sense. You'll see that he has never forsaken you. He had to take you this way, for he has been training you, preparing you, teaching you to trust him for everything. He has planned a time for you to be used—and that time is just ahead!

[Source: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/14319>]

Note: Although I believe brother Wilkerson has discerned much about Joseph, I do differ with him on a point he brings out here. Brother Wilkerson writes as if Joseph had given up hope, that his faith had failed in his bitter experiences and times of waiting. From both Scripture testimony, and my own experience, I can tell you that this was not the case. The

Bible records the following of Joseph:

Psalms 105:19

Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of Yahweh tested him.

The word rendered here as “tested” is the Hebrew “tsaraph.” It means “to fuse metal, to refine.” Unbelief does not produce a purified product. Only faith, standing firm in the midst of injustice, disappointment, distress, and delays can produce something that has been refined and purified.

James 1:2-4

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

If faith fails in testing, it is not yet perfected. Faith is only perfected as it does not fail during testing and delays. Abraham’s faith was considered perfect before God when after many years he continued to believe that God was able to fulfill what He had spoken. Though Abraham’s body was as good as dead, and Sarah was aged and barren, yet his faith grew stronger, not weaker.

Romans 4:19-21

Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

No man can attain to promotion unless he has believed God, and honored Him with his faith. While I was in jail a sister from England sent me a poem I published a few days back. It included the following lines.

*Faith failed not through those long, dark days of waiting,
His trust in God was recompensed at last,
The moment came when God led forth his servant
To succor many, all his sufferings past.*

I can attest in my own experience that faith has not failed. Rather, it has grown stronger with time. My confession, even in jail, was ever “Yahweh you are faithful. Surely You will fulfill every word You have spoken. What you have testified, You will bring it to pass, for you are faithful and You fail not.” I am fully persuaded that Joseph, the son of Jacob, also had a strong confidence in Yahweh, and that it was stronger near the end of his trials than at the beginning.

JOSEPH'S GREATEST TRIAL WAS THE WORD OF GOD!

by David Wilkerson | August 5, 2011

"He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant . . . until the time

that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him" (Psalm 105:17, 19). Joseph was tested and tried in many ways but his greatest trial was the word he had received!

Consider everything Joseph endured: At only seventeen, he was stripped down and cast into a pit to starve to death. His cold-hearted brothers laughed at his pleas for mercy and sold him to Ishmaelite traders who took him by caravan to an Egyptian slave market and sold him as a common slave.

Yet Joseph's greatest trial wasn't his rejection by his brothers or even the human indignity of being made into a slave or being cast into prison. No—what confused and tried Joseph's spirit was the clear word he had heard from God!

God had revealed to Joseph through dreams that he would be given great authority that he would use for God's glory. His brothers would bow before him and he would be a great deliverer of many people.

I do not believe any of this was an ego trip for Joseph. His heart was so set on God that this word gave him a humble sense of destiny: "Lord, you have put your hand on me to have a part in your great, eternal plan." Joseph was blessed just by knowing he would play an important role in bringing God's will to pass! But the circumstances in Joseph's life were just the opposite of what God had put in his heart. He was the servant—he had to bow! How could he believe that he would one day deliver multitudes when he was a slave himself? He must have thought, "This doesn't make sense. How could God be ordering my steps into prison, into oblivion? God said I was going to be blessed but he didn't tell me this was going to happen!"

For ten years Joseph faithfully served in Potiphar's house but in the end he was misjudged and lied about. His victory over temptation with Potiphar's wife only landed him in jail. During such times he must have pondered the awful questions: "Did I hear correctly? Did my pride invent these dreams? Could my brothers have been right? Maybe all these things are happening to me as discipline for some kind of selfish desire."

Beloved, there have been times when God has shown me things he has wanted for me—ministry, service, usefulness—yet every circumstance was the very opposite of that word. At such times I thought, "Oh, God, this can't be you speaking; it must be my flesh," I was being tried by God's word to me but God has given us his promises and we can trust them, all of them!

[Source: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/14320>]

Note: I will not belabor the points I made before. Certainly there is a *temptation* to disbelieve God. Satan would entice us to respond in unbelief, to wag our tongues in unbelief and discontent with the way Yahweh has ordered our circumstances. Yet, those who would progress on to perfection will of necessity come to rule over their tongues. These will "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." They will not permit their minds to entertain thoughts that are unworthy of Yahweh. They will not accuse Yahweh of lacking love, of not caring for them, of being unjust. Such a response will fit no man for entry into their inheritance in Christ. Rather, those who do such things will die in the wilderness.

I am persuaded that Joseph ruled over his thoughts. He ruled over his tongue. As a result, he also was brought to a place of ruling over all that Yahweh desired to entrust to his care. This last post was published the day I was released from jail. Joe Boes told me that what struck him is that it is written in the past tense, as if things have already been accomplished. For example, the title reads “JOSEPH'S GREATEST TRIAL WAS THE WORD OF GOD!” No wonder Joe checked that day to see whether I had been released. What a blessing for me to learn that Yahweh had released me precisely at 11:11 A.M..

We serve a God who does all things with precision. At the appointed time He will perform all His will. I have oftentimes been amazed at the preciseness of what Yahweh does. We read the following of the children of Israel being released from bondage in Egypt.

Exodus 12:41

And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Similarly, Yahshua, the Passover Lamb of God, was crucified at the precise time that the Jewish priests were offering up the Passover lambs on the day of Passover. My testimony to many a man in the jail was that I was not concerned about my release date, for I was confident that when Yahweh wanted me set free, the prison doors would be opened. I was content to wait upon Him.

People of God, I believe the Father is testifying that many things are at hand. Those who have been being prepared for a Joseph ministry will now begin to see doors opened for the fulfillment of things Yahweh has spoken to them for many years. Though the days ahead will be calamitous and distressing in many ways, it will also be an hour of unprecedented salvation. Yahweh will purify a people who will be a praise unto Him in this earth.

The hour is at hand. Let us be expectant. Stand in faith. Listen carefully to the voice of the Spirit of Christ. Be quick to obey all He has spoken.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

Prison, Praise, and Promotion - Part Five
Joseph Herrin (08-19-2011)

The Trying of Our Faith

James 1:2-4

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The faith of the saints is exceptionally precious in the eyes of Yahweh. Faith is a demonstration of a man or woman's trust and confidence in God. This faith, in order to grow stronger, and become purer, must be subjected to testing. It is in the fire of affliction that our faith in God is not only proven, but it is able to increase.

I Peter 1:6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Yahshua Christ...

My recent experience of spending 74 days in jail included a number of trials, some of them severe. I understood that these trials were an opportunity for me to show confidence in the goodness of Yahweh. In this He glorified, when He finds His sons enduring with patience many distresses, their confidence unshaken in the reality that their heavenly Father sees all, and His love does not fail.

On May 24th I was required to appear before the courts of man. My wife, who departed from me seven years ago was seeking payment for an alimony award. The only way I could fulfill this decree was to turn aside from the ministry that Yahweh has instructed me to fulfill, and to seek secular employment. In the three times I have been called to appear before the courts of man, I received instruction from the Spirit of Christ to give no defense, but to follow the pattern of Yahshua as revealed in Scripture.

I Peter 2:19-23

For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps*, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously...

We read of Christ when He was brought before the Jewish rulers, and before the Roman rulers Herod and Pilate, that He gave no defense. Although many accusations were made against Him, He acted as a lamb that is silent before its shearers, which quietly and meekly

yields to be led to the slaughter. His response was so contrary to the fallen nature of man that Pilate marveled as he observed it.

Matthew 27:12-14

And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so that the governor was quite amazed.

It should be noted that Yahweh does not provide any assurances to the saints, if they entrust themselves to the One who judges righteously, that He will defend them and deliver them from suffering. Indeed, the saints are in many places told that they will be bound over to various kinds of suffering as they remain faithful to Yahweh, refusing to violate their conscience before God and man. Christ entrusted Himself to the Father, and He was crucified. Peter declares to the saints that it will find favor with God if they follow in His steps, enduring with patience the things appointed to them.

In this hour it is vitally necessary that the people of God cast off every false doctrine flowing from a perverse prosperity gospel, and gird up their minds to endure patiently all that they will be called to walk through. The doctrines of a sensual church in this hour of apostasy declare that it is not the will of God for His people to suffer. There are legions of ministers, teachers, and prophets who declare that suffering is always to be resisted, sometimes militantly. Many are the Christians in this hour who are stocking up on guns and bullets, not heeding the words of the Spirit as written by the apostle Paul.

II Corinthians 10:3-4

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh...

Yahweh has an entirely different goal in mind than does the natural man. His ways are not man's ways, neither are His thoughts man's thoughts. In the kingdom of God, suffering is appointed to every person who would be a disciple of Christ. That the church seldom has conflict with this dark world system reveals the tragic fact that there are at present very few disciples. The church has adopted a mind where they view suffering as an enemy, rather than as part and parcel of the cross which is Yahweh's chosen instrument to transform fleshly men and women into spiritual creations.

When I was brought into the courts of man I received instruction from the judge to return to secular employment in order to satisfy the request of my wife for alimony. To do this I would have to lay aside the ministry Yahweh has appointed to me. The Father has in many ways affirmed to me that it is His will that I minister full-time, being free to go wherever He sends, and to do whatever He requires. To maintain a good conscience before the One who bought and purchased Me with the blood of His Son, I could not fulfill the instructions of the court.

Because I hired no lawyer for my defense, and presented no arguments, those who were acting with enmity were free to do whatever they desired against me. I did not resist. I

yielded freely to be taken to jail. My wife's lawyer also announced that he was pursuing through the legal system to take possession of my checking account, and PayPal account. The judge heartily endorsed such a course. I spoke not a word as this new threat was spoken, for I had already committed my life, my ministry, my all, to the One who judges righteously. Unto Him I will make my plea, and raise my petition, looking not to the arm of the flesh for succor.

You can imagine how Satan came against me with many threatening thoughts. Yet, it is at such times that we are able to exercise those true weapons that are supplied to the saints. The weapons we have been given are spiritual, and they are powerful to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. When Satan comes with his threats, and whispers many fearful things into our minds, then we are able to counter his attacks with the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

When I was being processed into the jail, the deputy interviewing me was checking off various questions on their standard form. One of the questions was "Are you taking any medication?" I told the deputy that I was taking one aspirin a day as I had experienced a heart attack a few years back. I thought it would be good to continue taking the aspirin while in jail, so I mentioned this to them. I did not realize that this would lead to a further trial.

The next day as I was now situated in the cell which would be my home for the next ten weeks, I was called down front at what is referred to as "med call." It is amazing how many inmates are on medication. Many of them are taking psychotropic medications to help them deal with anger, depression, etc.. Fully one third of the men in the jail section I was in were taking some form of medication.

When I stood in front of the nurse to receive my aspirin, she inquired about my heart attack, asked how I was feeling now, and said she wanted me to be seen in the infirmary to have my blood pressure checked. This was very unwelcome news for me. Many years earlier, around 1998, the Father told me that He wanted me to look to Him for my health. He led me to cancel my health insurance, to forego medical treatment for various physical problems, and to trust Him. The Father has used the ailments of my body as a scourge in my life to goad me into obedience that I might rule over the flesh.

For much of my life I have been overweight. At the very peak of my fleshly indulgence I weighed nearly 285 lbs. on my 5'-9" frame. I was very obese, and this served as an outward symbol of my spiritual condition. I was not ruling over the flesh, but was indulging it in many areas. Consequently, I was packing a lot of extraneous flesh.

Over the years the Father has chipped away at this flesh. When I was 285 lbs. I began experiencing the symptoms of diabetes. It was at the same time that Yahweh told me to cancel my health insurance. I did so, but my symptoms persisted. My blood sugar was checked one day (I worked in a hospital as a computer manager), and it was 370 when it should be no higher than 120. The ER physician advised me to see a family physician and get on a diabetic regimen, likely to include insulin. Yahweh instructed me otherwise, so I never pursued the matter further among the medical profession.

Yahweh then told me to cut the fats and sugars out of my diet. I obeyed, and within a few short months I had lost 50 pounds and all the symptoms of diabetes went away. Having reached 235 lbs., and feeling much better, I eased up, and simply maintained that weight. Yahweh was patient, and I remained at that weight for the about the next nine years.

Yahweh's desire, however, was not to deliver me from diabetes, but rather to bring me to the place where I was ruling over every appetite of the flesh. Paul describes this battle in the following words:

Galatians 5:24-25

Now those who belong to Christ Yahshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

During these years I had continued to know in my heart that there was an area of my life in which I had not fulfilled Yahweh's desire for me. I was often convicted that I needed to lose weight, and I understood that 165 lbs. was the goal He had set for me. My desire to gain victory in this area was not greater than my desire to indulge the flesh, so no progress was made. At times, however, I would pray that the Father would help me to become motivated that I might arise in the spirit man and begin to rule over the flesh. I prayed this just before I became diabetic, and the Father answered my prayers. He gave me the motivation I needed. About nine years later He once more assisted me. This time He used a heart attack as the instrument of His chastisement.

After experiencing the heart attack about 4 years ago, I lost another 50 pounds, getting down to 185. This represented a further flesh cutting in my life. For one brief moment, about a year and a half ago, I got down below 165 when I was led to go on a 40 day liquid only fast. But in the ensuing months I put back on 20 pounds. The Father made known to me that certain promises He had given to me in my life were contingent upon my obedience in this area. I needed to get down to 165 lbs., and remain there.

Much anxiety arose in my mind when I thought of having to explain to the Jail nursing staff why I did not want to be put on any medication for high blood pressure, or to receive other heart medications. To me, seeking to persuade those employed in the medical profession that it is not always God's desire for His people to use their services appeared to be a losing proposition. I began to dread having to go to see the nurse to have my blood pressure checked. I knew it had been elevated before going into the jail, but not severely. The anxiety I began to experience in thinking about seeing the nurse, and facing the pressure to take pharmaceuticals, exacerbated the problem.

The first time I went to see the nurse, my blood pressure was 170/80. This was much higher than normal for me, and I knew that anxiety was a contributor. I thought that would be the end of it, however, until the nurse told me she wanted me to return the next day to have my BP checked again. This led to even more stress. All that evening and next morning, my mind kept brooding upon having to have my blood pressure checked. I knew it was not the Father's will that I take any of their pharmaceutical offerings, and I felt sure they would spurn my reasons for this decision.

When I appeared the next day, I could tell my blood pressure was much higher than normal. I could feel my pulse beating in my temples. Satan was attacking me with great fervor, trying to find some entry to cast down my faith in God, knowing that once he found a beachhead he would be able to chip away at every other stand of obedience I had taken at the instruction of the Father. The nurse took my BP on May 26 and it was 180/98.

The nurse expressed much concern, and she said that she wanted to prescribe for me some blood pressure medication. A short time later she appeared with some Clonidine. In short form, I explained to her that I did not desire to take the medication, telling her that I believed God was using my health issues as a goad to get me to obey Him by ruling over my appetite for food and losing weight. Remarkably, she was not upset, confessing that she too was a Christian. Nonetheless, she still urged me to take the pill. I declined, and the next day when they called me in again to have my BP checked I asked if I might sign a waiver saying that I refused medical treatment, as having my BP checked daily was causing me stress in an already difficult environment. They permitted me to do so. Immediately I felt better, and could tell that my blood pressure had dropped significantly.

Satan was not through with his attacks, however. A couple of days later I received a letter from a family member who has consistently manifested an adversarial and critical spirit toward the walk Yahweh has set me upon since 1999. This family member wrote under the guise of being concerned for me, but in the short letter urged me to abandon the path of faith and obedience God had set me on. She also wrote that if I did not give into the demands of the court that I could very well have the bus/RV, that I had recently put so much work into, sold on the courthouse steps and the money given to my wife. The person writing me shared that the judge had given the sheriff's department authority to seek out any assets and sell them to satisfy the alimony award he had granted my wife.

Satan once more sought to urge me to act out of fear, and a desire for self preservation. Satan suggested to my mind that I ought to take the bus and hide it somewhere on a friend's property, but I knew such a carnal solution was not the Father's will. I was reminded of the threats that Nehemiah faced as he was tasked by God to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 6:10-13

And when I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night." But I said, "Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered his prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me.

All these attacks occurred during my first week in jail. Rather than be driven by fear, I began confessing to the Father out loud as I prayed in my cell (my cell mate was elsewhere) that God was faithful, and I would trust Him. I confessed that my life was in Yahweh's hands, and I was looking to Him as my defender, and as a shield about me. I entreated Him to confound every scheme of the enemy, and to rebuke the adversary of my soul who comes

only to kill, to steal and destroy. I reminded the Father that I had laid my life in His hands, that I had not turned to man to seek deliverance, nor resorted to fleshly tactics, but that in all things I wanted to honor Him with my faith.

These were very precious times of prayer, and I sensed the presence and pleasure of the Father as I endured patiently so many things in jail. Rather than my faith growing weaker, it increased. Considering my own utter helplessness to deliver myself from my adversaries, I leaned all the more confidently upon my heavenly Father. Yahweh sent me strong comfort, and I was truly encouraged in my spirit. My soul was like a weaned child within me. It had been quieted, and the raging storms silenced. The God of peace was walking upon the waters.

I write these words today sitting in the bus Yahweh gave to me. I still have full access to my checking and PayPal accounts. I cannot tell you why this is so in a physical sense, for I have heard nothing further from my wife, her lawyer, or the legal system. Neither do I boast in these things, for God has not promised that He would deliver us from all such loss. Many have been the saints who have forfeited all worldly possessions in order to remain obedient to Christ.

Hebrews 10:32-34

But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

I am persuaded that perfect peace comes from entrusting one's life wholly into the Father's hands. When we take up human means to defend ourselves, our soul becomes stirred up. The striving of the human nature to deliver itself from loss or suffering drives out the peace that surpasses all understanding that comes from the presence of the Father. One Scripture I was frequently encouraged by in these past days is the following:

Psalms 118:9

It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to trust in princes.

I am committed to trusting God who created me, who has purchased me for His pleasure. I have often been tried in the fire, and I remain trusting Him to this day. It is not my strength that has preserved me, for I am a weak man. Yahweh has supported me. He has carried me through the fire and the flood. He will carry many more of His sons and daughters through similar things in the days ahead.

People of God, the Spirit of Christ is testifying that the days we are entering will require patience and longsuffering. It is appointed unto the saints to suffer many things. This suffering is not intended for their destruction, but rather to promote conformity to the image of Christ, and to give them opportunity to glorify the Father by their faith.

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Philippians 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake...

The Father becomes exceedingly precious to the saint who suffers for obedience to Christ. At such times we learn how great is His comfort, and His care for us. He gives us songs in the night, and turns our thoughts away from the passing things of this world to seek those things above.

Yahweh desires that your faith should be both abundant and pure. In His love He will guide you through many trials. There is a place of peace to be found in the midst of the storms of life. Yahweh is a refuge. Let all His saints trust in Him.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.