



The Mountain of the Lord's House

By F.T. Paterson

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa 2:2-4, KJV).

This word of the Lord which came to Isaiah and again to Mica (Mica 4:2) speaks of the culmination of the ages when the Lord will come forth in power putting down all spiritual and earthly power and authority in this world and the world to come. The Lord will come with ten thousand of His saints to set up

His kingdom which will never pass away. He will rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. All power in heaven and earth will be brought into subjection to the rule of God. "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:10-11, NIV).

This glorious truth is brought forth as Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a great golden image which represented the kingdoms which should follow Babylon even down to this present age. The kingdoms of the last days were represented by feet and toes of clay and iron. "As you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so

the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay" (Dan. 2:41-43, NIV). In Nebuchadnezzar's dream he saw a little stone cut out from the mountain. The stone grew and smote the image. The stone smote the image on the feet and destroyed all rule and authority, grinding them to powder and sweeping them out of the way by the wind of the Spirit of God "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces" (Dan 2:44-45, NIV). When the kingdom of God is established the nations will flow into it and a great era of peace will come. The nations will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and the nations will not learn war any

more. Man, in his futile search for peace, has tried many things, none of which has been successful. The first world war, 1914-1918, was declared to be the war to end all wars. The League of Nations was formed and was thought to be the vehicle that would bring peace and security to the nations. The second world war brought forth The United Nations with limited success in solving the world's problems. As long as I can remember, there has been war going on somewhere in the world. Peace will come only when the Prince of Peace reigns in the kingdom. Then almost as in a moment of time the governments will be deposed and peace will flow out as the Prince of Peace assumes control of the nations.

This will usher in an era of liberty in which the whole creation will be delivered from the bondage of change and decay. *"In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming onto their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited - yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!"* (Rom 8:18-21, Phillips). *The church will have a very important part in this deliverance. "His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Eph 3:10-11, NIV). How can this come about; with the church powerless, split and divided?

Unity in the church must prevail because there is only one body, one gospel, one faith, one baptism, one Lord (Eph 4:4-6, NIV). There needs to be a cry of repentance from the hearts of God's people. *"Yet even now, saith Jehovah, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing - grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Gather the people, sanctify the assembly, assemble the old men, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Jehovah, and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the peoples, Where is their God? Then was Jehovah jealous for his land, and had pity on his people"* (Joel 2:12-18, ASV). There is a tremendous need for a move of repentance in the church today; the scripture is plain: *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land"* (2 Chron 7:14, KJV).

We live in an age of rebellion when nothing is sacred; the profane rule and reverence for God is lacking on every hand. We are assailed on every hand by the counsel of this ungodly age. We need to keep the lines of communication open to God at all times with prayer and fervent desire rather than accepting the values of this ungodly age. God

has pronounced judgement upon the ungodly wisdom and counsel of man. *"A message came to me from the LORD: "Son of man, you live among rebels who could see the truth if they wanted to, but they don't want to. They could hear me if they would listen, but they won't listen because they are rebellious" (Ezek 12:1-2, NLT). "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools" (Rom 1:21-22, NIV).*

We do not need to look to the world for advice or instruction on how to live in our lives. God has given us His Spirit to lead and guide you into all truth" (John 16:13, NIV). We see the thinking of the world becoming more polluted, it is sad that we also see it creeping into the church. *"Don't let anyone lead you astray with empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the evil powers of this world, and not from Christ" (Col 2:8, NLT).* I do not want to belabor the issue, but it is a sad state of affairs when entertainment replaces Godly worship and philosophical ideas replace Godly preaching and unless you can hear the words, it is impossible to know whether the music is from the world or the church. *"Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners or join in with scoffers" (Ps 1:1, NLT). "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom 12:2, NIV).* Phillips translates this verse as *"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within"*. We have

available to us, by the quickening of the Holy Spirit, a mind which is able to grasp spiritual things. Though the counsel of this age assails us, the Spirit of God will guide us so that we do not have to listen to or accept the things that are contrary to the mind of Christ that dwells within us. *"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:14-16, NIV).* Our Spiritual walk is more than a once a week obligation so that we can get on God's good side. It is more than showing up once in a while because we think we are doing God a favour and more than dropping a few coins into the offering bag. It is a day by day, hour by hour relationship with the creator of all things, the God of all comfort, the Author of Eternal Salvation, The God that loved us so much that He gave His only begotten son that we might have eternal life. Let the Holy Spirit baptize our hearts with a baptism of awe and reverence. *"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by*

him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col 1:12-20, KJV). Truly He is worthy of our praise and worship, worthy of our awe and reverence and worthy of our commitment. *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe," (Heb 12:28, NIV).*

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams" (Acts 2:17, NIV). I awoke one morning at about 4 AM with a strange feeling. I could feel an awesome presence in the room with me, whether in a dream or awake I do not know, but I could sense the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It seemed that I was at the edge of the universe. I saw a curtain at the edge of the stars and I could not see beyond it. Then the curtains parted and I could see beyond the stars. It was empty and dark with wisps of white here and there throughout the empty space. I wondered at this and as in answer to my silent question I heard a voice say, "I am not finished yet".

I can understand to some degree what Paul meant when he was caught away in the Spirit and said, *"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know-God knows. And I know that this man-whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God*

knows-4 was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell" (2 Cor 12:2-4, NIV). I do not understand fully the whole meaning of this experience, but this one thing I know, that God is eternally progressive. He is not finished creating but is ever progressing. I am aware that God is constant, He is the same yesterday, today and forever, He does not change but is ever the same. His eternal purpose is unchanging and He is establishing an eternal kingdom which shall never pass away. He is calling out a people for His name, and He is bringing to birth children of God who are maturing into mature sons of God who shall bring deliverance to the whole of creation and establish the rule of God in His creation. We have a never-ending God who is ever increasing a universe that has no end. We are entering into the fullness of God's creation. It has been in God's mind from the beginning and will not change, but line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, God's eternal purpose will come into being. I lay awake for sometime and wondered what all this might mean. A word came into my mind. It was a word that I had heard of but was not fully aware of the meaning. The word was 'epiphany'. I looked it up in the dictionary, and it means a life changing spiritual experience. It certainly was that to me; an experience that I will never forget. I don't know if it means anything to you but I felt constrained to include it in this article, not that I want to appear extra spiritual but rather to minister as I have been ministered to.

On the sixth day of creation God created man out of the dust of the earth, *"Then God said, 'Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves. They will be masters over all life - the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the*

livestock, wild animals and small animals.' So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:26-27, NLT). It was God's purpose that man was created to have dominion over His creation. He had great potential but lived in innocence like the angels. He was disobedient and partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, fell from the state of grace and lived in a world cursed by sin. "So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life" (Gen 3:23-24, NIV). It almost seemed like Satan had won a battle for the control of man, but God knew that Satan would never win the war. He pronounced judgement upon the serpent "From now on, you and the woman will be enemies, and your offspring and her offspring will be enemies. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Gen 3:15, NLT). This judgement is very evident even up to this present day with Satan continually at enmity with the seed of the woman. The promise of victory is pronounced on the serpent as the seed of the woman crushes the head of the serpent, the head representing his authority and power, and he will strike the heel of mankind, the heel representing our walk upon the earth. Satan is a great hindrance in our spiritual walk, he continually puts road-blocks in our path and he assails us with temptations and tries to trip us up whenever he can. No matter what he brings against us God's promise is faithful: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that

you can stand up under it" (1 Cor 10:13, NIV).

It is clearly evident that mankind as a whole is not in the image of God for we are flesh and blood: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24, KJV). It is also evident that unregenerate man is not in the likeness of God in word or deed. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us (1 John 4:12, KJV). The nature of God does not dwell in the lives of the ungodly either. Thank God; by the grace of God, we are able to partake of the nature and likeness of God by accepting Jesus as our saviour. "Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Peter 1:2-4, NIV). Glory to God! we can be partakers of the likeness and nature of God. "This means that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!" (2 Cor 5:17, NLT). When we accept Christ as our saviour our spirit is quickened and a new life in the spirit has begun. "Beloved, we are [even here and] now God's children; it is not yet disclosed (made clear) what we shall be [hereafter], but we know that when He comes and is manifested, we shall [as God's children] resemble and be like Him, for we shall see Him just as He [really] is" (1 John 3:2, AMP).

Would to God that He would open the curtains of eternity that we might see beyond the veil of

this flesh unto the eternal realm, that we might see and understand God's eternal purpose. "It is through the Son, at the cost of his own blood, that we are redeemed, freely forgiven through that full and generous grace which has overflowed into our lives and opened our eyes to the truth. For God had allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposes in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists in Heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfilment in him. And here is the staggering thing - that in all which will one day belong to him we have been promised a share (since we were long ago destined for this by the one who achieves his purposes by his sovereign will), so that we, as the first to put our confidence in Christ, may bring praise to his glory! And you too trusted him, when you heard the message of truth, the Gospel of your salvation. And after you gave your confidence to him you were, so to speak, stamped with the promised Holy Spirit as a guarantee of purchase, until the day when God completes the redemption of what he has paid for as his own; and that will again be to the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:7-14, Phillips). Though Satan has struck us in the heel we know his time is short: "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him" (Rev 12:7-9, NIV). "Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short" (Rev 12:12,

NIV). The time of Satan's rule is then over and he is crushed under the feet of Christ. *"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you"* (Rom 16:20, *NIV*). All things are destined to be under the feet of Christ and He will bring all things in subjection to himself. At present we do not see all things under the feet of Christ: *"In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing in many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers"* (Heb 2:8-12, *NIV*). Everything that exists in Heaven and earth will be brought in subjection to Christ and He will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:25-28, *KJV*). Praise the Lord! Death will be in subjection to Christ and will be destroyed. Truly, eye hath not seen neither ear heard the glories of the kingdom of God. It is beyond the ability of our natural mind to understand, but God is revealing it

by the spirit to the church. *"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"* (Eph 3:4-5, *KJV*).

The glorious part of this is that we, as the body of Christ, will reign with Him. *"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth"* (Rev 5:10, *KJV*). I don't think this means that we just sit on a throne and play a harp, but we shall be administrators of His kingdom. In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25) Jesus told of the man who took a journey into a far country and entrusted talents into the hands of his servants. They were to invest the money and make increase of it. When he returned, he called his servants to give an accounting. To one he gave five talents and he brought an increase of five talents, to another he gave two talents and he brought an increase of two talents. To another he gave one talent and he hid it in the ground and did not make any increase. The man rewarded his servants according to their increase and gave them rulership over cities according to their faithfulness. So it is with us and so it will be with the administrators of the kingdom. We will be rulers with Christ according to our faithfulness.

We have each been given spiritual gifts or spiritual abilities. *"For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion in our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy,*

with cheerfulness" (Rom 12:4-8, *NKJV*). These spiritual abilities are given to us so that we might bring an increase to the church which is the body of Christ: *"you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 2:5-6, *NKJV*). We are temples of the Holy Ghost builded together as a holy habitation unto God through the Spirit, *"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit"* (Eph 2:19-22, *KJV*). We are growing into a dwelling place for God, we are given great and precious promises that we might be partakers of the divine nature. It is God's eternal purpose to bring forth a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, one that is holy and without blemish. It will be through the church that God's power and glory will be made known to the world and then to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm. It will be through the church that the mountain of the Lord's house will be established above all rule and authority. It is through the church, under God's direction, that the kingdom of God will be established. Even now the kingdom is being established: *"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel"* (Mark 1:14-15, *KJV*). Again Jesus said: *"The kingdom of God is within you"* (Luke 17:21). If you can believe it, the kingdom is even

now within the church waiting to be manifested to the world. We are in a spiritual battle against principalities and powers in heavenly places but we are assured of the victory. *"The horn (representing the evil powers in the heavenly realm) made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom"* (Dan 7:21-22, KJV). This beast represents the kingdoms of the last days. He defeats and crushes all other kingdoms and sets himself up as the supreme authority over all the earth. He makes war with the saints and almost wears them out. He sets out to change times and laws, moral and otherwise. It is like reading about it in the newspaper and hearing it on the news. It is a commentary on the state of affairs we see in the world today. He wreaks his vengeance upon the earth and upon the church, but as has been stated before, his time is short and the judgment of God will be poured out on him. His power will be taken away and given to the saints of the most High. *"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him"* (Dan 7:25-27, KJV). Christ will reign victorious through His body, putting down all authority and power. Death will be swallowed up in victory along with everything that is against the righteous rule of the Lord.

"Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he 'has put everything under his feet'. Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be in all" (1 Cor 15:24-28, NIV).

God is all, and in all, and the nations will be brought before Him in final judgment.

"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books" (Rev 20:11-12, NIV). The seat of God's government is established in a new heaven and a new earth as the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven. *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.' He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything*

new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true'" (Rev 21:1-5, NIV).

"THEN HE showed me the river whose waters give life, sparkling like crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb Through the middle of the roadway of the city; also, on either side of the river was tree of life with its Twelve varieties of fruit, yielding each month its fresh crop; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing and the restoration of the nations. [Gen 2:9]. There shall no longer exist there anything that is accursed (detestable, foul, offensive, impure, hateful, or horrible). But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall worship Him [pay divine honours to Him and do Him holy service]. [Zech 14:2]. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. [Ps 17:15]. And there shall be no more night; they have no need for lamplight or sunlight, for the Lord God will illuminate them and be their light, and they shall reign [as kings] forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities)" (Rev 22:1-5, AMP).

"Blessed are those who wash their robes so they can enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life. Outside the city are the dogs - the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idol worshipers, and all who love to live a lie. 'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this message for the churches. I am both the source of David and the heir to his throne. I am the bright morning star'. The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come'. Let each one who hears them say, 'Come'. Let the thirsty ones come — anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge" (Rev 22:14-17, NLT).

EVEN SO, LORD JESUS, COME.

Adversity

By Mervin Sundbo

Some synonyms for the word adversary include: distress, trouble, misery, affliction, suffering and tribulation. While there may be shades of differentiation of meaning in each of these words, it seems to me that they can be used almost interchangeably.

Adversity comes in many ways, or as we sometimes say, “in many shapes and sizes,” but one thing we all understand is that the flesh is not fond of adversity. However, it is unavoidable, especially for the child of God. We must remember “that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8: 28, NKJV). This is very likely a reference back to verse 18 where Paul says, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (NKJV). The plan of God is accomplished through the “called, chosen, and faithful” (Rev. 17: 14), according to His divine will. God knows what we need and adversity builds into our lives what nothing else can. It causes us to trust when we have nowhere to turn but to God, for He says, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you” (Heb. 13: 5, KJV). That means in the good times and the times of distress.

There are examples in nature that bear out this truth that adverse conditions can ultimately have a desirable result. Take for example, gardening. My wife Irene is a gardener and one of her specialties is growing tomatoes. The plants are started inside, either from seed or as small bedding plants and this happens long before

the tomato-growing season. They grow under pampered conditions, receiving light from electric bulbs that provide ultraviolet rays and moisture adequate for these conditions. During this time, they never experience the adversity of the outdoors such as wind, hot sun, driving rain, insects or weed competition. The plants must be introduced to these conditions gradually. They need to be “hardened off” as Irene would say. I recall one time this spring when most of the tomatoes had been transplanted into the garden and we were leaving for the weekend, there were two plants still on the deck that had not yet been placed in the garden. I asked Irene if we should plant them before we went away and her answer was, “No, they are not yet ready.” They needed more pampering before they could withstand the adversity of the elements. The point is this: those plants must all eventually face the outdoors with all of the adverse conditions that nature will throw at them because if they stay inside they will not reach their full potential in fruit production. To the gardener, tomato growing is all about fruit and under a watchful eye; she wants to give every plant the opportunity to be fruitful. While the pampering is necessary, so to is the adversity. We enjoyed an abundant harvest this fall. Why? Because God provided the beautiful sunshine and the rain (which is always better than that which comes from the tap) and the gardener had done her job. The plants were prepared to handle the elements and were able to thrive in adversity.

Some of the many scriptures on

adversity include the following:

Isaiah 48: 10, “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction” (KJV).

Isaiah 30: 20, “And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers” (NKJV). Bread and water are essential for natural life just as adversity and affliction are requisites for spiritual growth.

Psalms 119: 50, “This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life” (NKJV). Even in our affliction, we can take comfort in the promises of God and in the hope that they give to us.

Psalms 34: 19, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all” (NKJV). It is obvious from this scripture that the righteous will not escape affliction. However, regardless of the affliction, He has promised to deliver us.

2Cor. 4: 16 – 18, “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (NKJV). We cannot compare things we are going through now to the unspeakable glory that is ahead of us.

1Peter 4: 12, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery

trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (NKJV).

Acts 14: 22, "...we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (KJV).

Rom. 5: 3 – 5, "tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope" (NKJV). Billy Sunday said, "Reputation is what men think you are, but character is what God and your wife know you are."

God knows how much pampering we need and he knows that adversity will strengthen us and build into us resilience that will be a requirement of the over comers. In Ephesians 6, Paul speaks to us about putting on the whole armor of God and about standing in the midst of extreme adversity. **Be forewarned and forearmed in your spiritual conflict.** Ephesians 6: 10–18 from the Phillips translation, "In conclusion be strong – not in yourselves

but in the Lord, in the power of his boundless resource. Put on God's complete armour so that you can successfully resist all the devil's methods of attack. For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. Therefore, you must wear the whole armour of God that you may be able to resist evil in its day of power, and that even when you have fought to a standstill you may still stand your ground. Take your stand then with truth as your belt, righteousness as your breastplate, the gospel of peace firmly on your feet, salvation as your helmet and in your hand the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Above all be sure you take faith as your shield, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you. Pray at all times with every kind of spiritual prayer, keeping alert and persistent as you pray for all Christ's men and women."

Non Profit
U.S. Postage Paid
Minden, NE 68959
Permit No. 40

CALLED HOME

Sam Bankhead September 22, 2008	Bernice Hyatt November 16, 2008
Violet York November 8, 2008	Isabel Medlock (Mayes) November 16, 2008
Freda Amundson November 12, 2008	Maria Dueck November 19, 2008

DATES OF IMPORTANCE

Indiana Young People's Meeting	Dec. 27 - Dec. 31, 2008
North Battleford Young People's Meeting	Dec. 28, 2008 - Jan. 1, 2009
Big Spring Texas Camp Meeting	Feb. 6-8, 2009
North Carolina Winter Camp	Feb. 20 - 22, 2009
Feast North Battleford	April 9 -12, 2009
Camp North Battleford	July 5 - 12, 2009
Pinelow Summer Camp	Aug. 3 - 9, 2009
North Carolina Summer Camp	N/A

BOOKS AVAILABLE:

MESSAGES TO THE CHURCH

- *The writings of Herrick Holt*
BORN FROM ABOVE
- *The writings of W. Douglas Whitter*

BUILDING GOD'S HOUSE

- *The writings of Allen M. Hinchliff*

PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE:

The Present Move Of God
The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit
You Are Loved
Growing In Christ
Born From Above
Honor The Lord With Thy Substance
A Word To The Wise
Sexual Intimacy
A Testimony - M. Sundbo

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
Sharon Children's Homes and Schools
Box 878, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, S9A 2Z3

The Sharon Star is a bi-monthly paper, published and mailed out on the free-will offering plan, as a medium of information for all who are interested in the unfolding revelation of the Word of God.

Published by Sharon Children's Homes and Schools, Box 878, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, S9A 2Z3.

Sharon Star on line www.thesharonstar.org
Office (306) 445-2733.

Publications Mail Agreement 40012206