

DAVID AND HIS AFFLICTIONS

Beloved of the Lord:

"Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions" wrote the Psalmist in Psalm 132:1. God said David was "a man after mine own heart" - Acts 13:22, inspite of glaring defects; but the man who pleases God in this world has afflictions. In his youth David lived in dark spiritual days in Israel, which parallel the evil spiritual times we now live in. They present a spiritual lesson for our hearts and consciences today. Consider them -

1 - THE PRIESTHOOD had crashed in miserable failure under Eli the high priest and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Read 1 Sam: Ch. 3 and 4, the sad record. The priesthood possessed the greatest responsibility in Israel, leading and teaching the nation in the knowledge of God - Mal. 2:7.

The parallel today is far greater, for the New Testament Christian Priesthood has miserably failed also. The Priesthood of all believers, Godward first; then manward second, described in 1 Pet. 2:1-10, is two-fold in its responsibility - a HOLY priesthood (v.5) and a ROYAL one in verse 9; to lead God's people first in WORSHIP and then in SERVICE. Today, WORSHIP is very little manifested and service has become magnified, Saints more occupied with the work of the Lord than the LORD HIMSELF.

2 - THE ARK OF GOD - precious symbol to God of Christ, His Beloved Son. It was the most sacred of all the holy vessels, THE GOLDEN ARK. The Ark was the center of God's thoughts in the midst of His People. In David's day it was out of its proper place and as recorded in 1 Sam. Ch 4, was captured by the Philistines, ultimately for 20 years at Kirjath-Jearim - 1 Sam. 7:2.

The parallel today - is Christ the Center of the gatherings of His people? In living reality, He is not! "In the MIDST of the assembly will I sing thy praises" - Heb. 2:12; Psa. 22:22. "Where two or three are gathered unto my name, there am I in the midst of them" - Matt. 18:20. How many saints go to worship meeting, prayer meeting or Bible Reading because He is there. Is He the CENTER of every occasion, or have worldly and human efforts been the chief attraction? Unfortunately, earthly attractions have greatly dimmed His blessed Person. We have lost our appreciation of His presence!

3 - THE SONS OF SAMUEL - Among the afflictions in David's youth, the sons of the prophet Samuel - "Walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice" - 1 Sam. 7:3. They were so unspiritual that the people cried "make us a King" etc. 1 Sam. 7:5, by refusing to be a peculiar people under God alone, God gave them Saul, "the man in the flesh", the people's choice. They wanted a "King", like the nations around them.

The parallel today is clearly seen, for God's people are seeking to pattern their testimony like professing Christendom around, instead of being a "peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9). "The local assembly is dependent on the Risen Head Who will raise up gifts to minister profitably to edification and Gospel outreach. This is the ideal and the New Testament pattern of divine simplicity". Sad to say, emphasis has turned to a "one man" ministry as the answer to our own spiritual apathy!

4 - THE CHARACTER OF SAUL - He was a physical giant - 1 Sam. 10:23 - but a spiritual dwarf. Instead of delivering Israel from their enemies, he spent his time chasing and tormenting David, hunting him as a partridge over the land. 1 Sam. 24:14; 26:20.

The parallel is seen today; so called servants of God are not delivering God's people from their dangers, when intellectual pretensions are more valued than true spiritual victories through faithful ministry that is Christ exalting and fruitful thru the Word of God, taught in the Spirit's power! David and his afflictions were real and dangerous. So today, but in greater proportion are ours, but God willing we shall see David's ultimate deliverance and victory.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

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