



Lights and Perfection, Inc.

Go and make disciples!

E-votional 88

Cloud and Fire

Numbers 9:15-23 (ESV),

On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at evening it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning. So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night. And whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, after that the people of Israel set out, and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of Israel camped. At the command of the LORD the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the LORD they camped. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. Even when the cloud continued over the tabernacle many days, the people of Israel kept the charge of the LORD and did not set out. Sometimes the cloud was a few days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of the LORD they remained in camp; then according to the command of the LORD they set out. And sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning. And when the cloud lifted in the morning, they set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they set out. Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, abiding there, the people of Israel remained in camp and did not set out, but when it lifted they set out. At the command of the LORD they camped, and at the command of the LORD they set out. They kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by Moses.

The Word of God is such a treasure house of spiritual wisdom and knowledge. I get so excited about the process of seeking and finding when it comes to Bible study and the practical application thereof.

For this specific treasure out of the storehouse of God's Word, we have a great story of how the Lord led the Israelites by a cloud by day and the appearance of fire by night. Real spiritual parallel is found in these verses of Scripture for both new believers as well as the more mature.

The parallel here of the cloud is that of the Holy Spirit, yes, but more than that in

some ways. What do I mean you say? Well, let me begin by first sharing that there is a level of maturity in one that understands the weighty Presence of God through the Holy Spirit. The message here for the new believer is to hunger for this manifest Presence of God in your life by the Holy Spirit. This weighty Presence and glory of God through the Holy Spirit is tangible in one's spirit and needs to be sought after. We do not want to be like some who are satisfied with a little touch here and there. We are encouraging new believers to strive for the manifest and weighty Presence of God and not just a feeling or a sensation, but a tangible experience with God where He is as real in your heart as there is a sun and a moon and stars in the heavens.

The reason being brothers and sisters is that much like the cloud that the Lord used for the Israelites living in the wilderness to lead them, so it is with us and the manifest Presence of God in our lives. You see when a believer is sold out to God and relinquishes total control of their lives to Christ, they will no longer be satisfied to be led by their own plans and desires but by God alone and wherever He may lead. Furthermore, when we can tangibly know God by His manifest Presence and are led by Him in this way, we can further know that we will be led into the plans that He alone has. One thing to mention about the plans that He alone has is that we may never get the full picture of where He is leading us for God does not fully disclose every stop along the way. He expects us to trust in Him with all of our hearts and to lean not on our own understanding, for He alone will direct our paths.

Something further about following the cloud of God's manifest Presence is mentioned in verse 22,

Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, abiding there, the people of Israel remained in camp and did not set out, but when it lifted they set out.

There it is, whether it was two days, a month, or longer that the cloud rested in one destination, there the people of Israel were to stay. How many of you are like me and when we have been in one place for too long we begin to get antsy? I know, nobody right, Lol.

Well, I firmly believe that the Israelites must have felt the same. You see this was during the 40 years that they wandered in the wilderness on their journey to the promised land. So the Lord delivered them from Egypt, which spiritually speaking for us today is a type or a parallel to sin and how Christ delivers us from the power of sin and death. The wilderness experience is where God proves and tests the Israelites to humble them and train them for the inheritance of the promised land as in Deuteronomy 8:1-10. Likewise, after we were delivered by the body and blood of Jesus from our sins we are led by the Spirit into many

tests, trials, and tribulations, much like Jesus just after being baptized in Matthew 4:1-11. The purpose is the same so that we too might be ready for our eternal inheritance and promised land.

The idea of the cloud as found in our chosen verse being the vehicle for which the Lord led them from one destination to another is important for us to understand and grasp. The main point in this is that the Scriptures interchange the leading by the cloud as being the command of the Lord. This is interesting because it shows that God is not always audible or in other words verbal with those whom He leads. This just might be for the more mature in the faith. You see, I bring this nonverbal way of being led by God because sometimes, and as I have been learning more and more lately, the Lord simply leads us in the way of the cloud. Again this cloud is the tangible and weighty Presence of God whereas we may not get a verbal confirmation while being led by Him. It may just be a heavy and holy hand upon your heart guiding you from one spiritual destination to another as by the Spirit of the Lord. I picture the Israelites in the wilderness just getting ready to rest when all of a sudden they see the cloud of God's glory over the Tabernacle of Moses begin to lift, they immediately see this and begin to pack up their tents to prepare to move on. Hallelujah! We know never when God may move us, we have only to be still and sense His cloud being to move within us. He moves us from one degree of glory to another as by His Spirit.

Praise You, Lord, when You move we will move, where You stay we will stay!

Also, for the mature, never be satisfied with where you are at in the Lord, but hunger for more. Only a word of caution to the wise will be to not let that hunger turn to complacency nor let it turn to being a malcontent. I have experienced a season of both and speak as one trained by the proving of the Lord's fire. It can be that while we are hungering for a change in the Lord that we become bitter with a lack of contentment with the process of His plan. Again, we only move when the cloud of His glory moves.

And again an encouragement to new believers. Hunger that you may one day feel the tangible witness of the Holy Spirit and the cloud of God's glory guide you from glory to glory. There is no other place to be than in the place of God and His glory by His Spirit. Assuredly I say that true freedom in this Christian walk is where the Presence of God has full authority and where we are safe in His plans alone. All blessing and honor and glory and power forever to our God!

Both new and mature believers we can come together and encourage each other to strive after the glory and power of God's abiding cloud so that we may be brought safely into all that God has for us, in Jesus name. We love you all dearly in the Lord!

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In Christ's Love,
Chris and Jeanne
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