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AANBEVOLE DOSIS

Liefde, nes waarheid, is soos suurstof. Jy kan nie daarsonder nie - jou siel sal versmoor. Hoe minder liefde in jou lewe, hoe benouder is jy. Hoe meer liefde, hoe meer ontspanne is jy, hoe meer energie is daar in jou siel en hoe mooier blink jou oë.

Anders as wat ons kultuur ons dalk geleer het, kan 'n mens nie 'n oordosis van liefde kry nie. Mense word nie 'sissies' of 'sag' van liefde nie. Mense léwe van liefde. Ek stem wel saam dat die afwesigheid van liefde 'n mens gevoelloos, ongenaakbaar, wreed en ongenadig maak. Dit is die waarheid. As jy sulke kinders wil grootmaak, is jy dus meer as welkom om hulle van liefde te ontnem. Dit sal jou ook later van die lewe ontnem.

God se instruksies in die Bybel is baie duidelik: Wees so gereeld en vurig as moontlik lief vir ander. Moet nik terughou nie. Omhels liefde en nooi dit as 'n permanente inwoner in jou hart in. Word beste vriende met liefde. Dit sal jare van vreugde tot jou lewe toevoe - selfs deur die smart wat die lewe mag opdis. God se instruksies gaan selfs verder deur te sê: 'As jy nie

liefhet nie, is jy nie deel van God nie.' Sjoe, dit slaan 'n mens tussen die oë. Inderdaad: 'As jy nie liefhet nie, is jy nie deel van God nie.' Eina! Dis nogal drasties, né?

Namate 'n mens in jou verhouding met God groei, kom jy iets verstommends agter - jou vermoë om lief te hê, vergroot! Daar is altyd plek vir nog, en in Jesus Christus is daar altyd nog voorraad. Nes ons dink ons liefde is nou uitgeput, vul die Heilige Gees die voorraad in ons lewens aan. Hoe meer, hoe beter. Daar is baie verskonings wat ons kan aanbied vir ons gebrek aan liefde, maar nie een daarvan is geldig voor God nie.

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"Betoon hartlike broederliefde teenoor mekaar; bewys eerbied teenoor mekaar en wees mekaar daarin tot voorbeeld" (Romeine 12:10).

Wie nie liefhet nie, het geen kennis van God nie, want God is liefde (1 Johannes 4:8). [VITAMIENE VIR DIE SIEL - vir liefde en vreugde, Riekert en Pippa Botha, SCM].

DEUR SMART EN PYN KOM 'N NUWE LEWE

Ongeveer 40 jaar gelede het ek iets beleef wat nou helder teruggekom het na my.

Ons was op pad terug van 'n diens naby Magaliesburg. Op 'n hoogte langs die pad het ons stilgehou om na die natuurskoon te kyk. Dit was 'n stilhouplek met bome en sementtafeltjies en sitplek en selfs 'n vullisdrom vir die rommel. Daar kon mense hulle padkos eet voordat hulle verder sou gaan.

Terwyl ek so 'n entjie wegstap van die eetplek, sien ek iets raak. Hier lê skaappootjies en afval en stukkies vel. Iemand het hier 'n lammetjie geslag en die afval sommer net hier weggegooi! Ek onthou toe die Woord in Joh. 10:10: "Die dief kom net om te steel en te slag en te verwoes. Ek het gekom, dat hulle lewe en oorvloed kan hê."

Dit is baie belangrik om die volgorde raak te sien: Die dief **steel** éers die lammetjie, dan **slag** hy hom, en dan **verwoes** hy hom. Baie mense haal hierdie teks verkeerd aan en sê **slag, steel en verwoes**. Nee, dit is **steel, slag en verwoes**. Hierdie korrekte aanhaling sluit aan by Jak. 1:13-15: "Laat niemand, as hy in versoek kom, sê: 'Ek word deur God versoek' nie. Want God kan deur die kwaad nie versoek word nie, en self versoek Hy niemand nie. Maar elkeen word versoek as hy deur sy eie begeerlikheid weggesleep en verlok word. Daarna, as die begeerlikheid ontvang het, baar dit sonde; en as die sonde tot volle ontwikkeling gekom het,

bring dit die dood voort."

Sien jy? Die orde is net soos in Joh. 10. Die versoek op sigself is nog nie sonde nie. Hoekom moet jy op hierdie stadium met skuldgevoelens rondloop? Eers wanneer jy die versoek oorpeins, die aangenaamheid daarvan begeer en ontvang, word dit sonde en dan verwoes Satan jou.

Die Nuwe vertaling lui: "*Iemand wat in versoek kom, moet nooit sê: 'Ek word deur God versoek' nie; want God kan nie verlei word nie, en self verlei Hy niemand nie. Maar 'n mens word verlei deur sy eie begeertes wat hom aanlok en saamsleep. Daarna, as die begeertes bevrug geraak het, bring dit die sonde voort; en as die sonde ryp geword het, loop dit uit op die dood.*"

Dit is dus duidelik: Die dief steel die lammetjie uit die kraal. Hy isoleer hom eers van die ander skape. Dan neem hy hom eenkant toe soos die dief op die bultjie in Magaliesburg.

En dan slag en verwoes hy hom. Wat is die antwoord op versoekinge? Jakobus sê: "Onderwerp julle dan aan God, weerstaan die duivel, en hy SAL van julle af wegvlug." Moenie toelaat dat Satan jou van God vervreem nie!

Hier kom 'n ander dimensie by. Jesus het gesê: "Dit is onvermydelik dat die struikelblokke kom, maar wee hom deur wie hulle kom" (Luk. 17:1). Die Griekse woord vir 'struikelblok' is **skandalon**. En in Hebreus is

dit **chamad** wat vertaal word met "snare" of "trap" of "covet" of "begeerte" soos Eva in die tuin die vrug "begeer" het. Of ook soos dit in Eksodus 20 opgeteken staan: "Jy mag nie jou naaste se huis begeer nie; jy mag nie jou naaste se vrou begeer nie, of sy diensknege of sy diensmaagd, of sy os of sy esel of iets wat van jou naaste is nie."



vir elke kind van God. Sy doel is om jou te verwoes of te vernietig. Maar Jesus, die goeie Herder, wil aan jou egter 'n lewe van oorvloed en geestelike seëninge toebedeel.

Op die plaas waar ek grootgeword het, het ek gesien hoe swartmense wippe stel vir patryse. Elkeoggend en aand het die patryse uitgegaan om te wei. Hulle het met die voetpaadjie, wat die beste uitgetrap het na die voertrog en waterbak, gehardloop. Die werkers het 'n plat klip gesoek en dit opgestel met mikstokke, met dunner takkies, en mieliepitte (lokaas) daaronder. Wanneer die patryse die mielies onder die wip kom oppik, trap hulle op die dunner takkies, en die swaar klip val op hulle. Sodoende het die mense vleiskos gekry!

Die Satan stel ook wippe vir ons. Maar ons verlossing en oorwinning lê egter daarin dat ons God en Sy Woord glo, dit gehoorsaam en Hom beleef. **Glo, gehoorsaam en beleef God!** Onthou: Jy kan God nie in die beskuldigdebank plaas nie. Kom dan na Hom toe, en gee jou lewe oor aan Hom!

©Dr JJ Venter

Wie Op Aarde Kan 'n Liefdesbrief Soos Hierdie Skryf?

- My liefde,
- Ek weet alles van jou af... Ps.139:1.
- Ek weet wanneer jy gaan sit en wanneer jy opstaan... Ps.139:2.
- Ek is bekend met alles wat jy doen... Ps. 139:3.
- Selfs die hare op jou kop is getel... Matt. 10:29-31.
- Want jy is gemaak na My beeld... Gen. 1:27.
- In My leef jy, beweeg jy en bestaan jy... Hand. 17:28.
- Ek het jou uitverkies... Joh.15:16.
- Ek het jou geken nog voordat jou moeder swanger was met jou... Jer. 1:5.
- Ek het jou gevorm in jou moeder se skoot... Ps. 139:13.
- Jy is mooi en wonderlikbaarlik geskep... Ps. 139:14.
- Ek help jou van jou geboortedag af... Ps. 71:6.
- Jy was nie 'n fout nie, want al jou dae is in My boek opgeskryf... Ps. 139:16.
- Ek is lief vir jou en Ek is die volle uitdrukking van liefde... 1 Joh. 4:16.
- Jy is My kind. Dit is My begeerte om My liefde aan jou te bewys... 1 Joh. 3:1.
- Jy is My kind, Ek is jou Vader, Ek wil goed wees vir jou... Matt. 7:11.
- Want Ek is die volmaakte Vader... Matt. 5:48.

- Elke goeie geskenk wat jy ontvang, kom van My af... Jak. 1:17.
- Want Ek is jou Voorsieder en Ek weet wat jy nodig het... Matt. 6:31-33.
- Ek wil vir jou 'n toekoms vol hoop gee... Jer. 29:11.
- Ek het jou lief met 'n ewige liefde... Jer. 31:3.
- My gedagtes oor jou is ontelbaar soos die sand van die see... Ps. 139:17-18.
- Ek jubel en juig oor jou... Sefanja 3:17.
- Ek sal nooit ophou om goed aan jou te doen nie... Jer. 32:40.
- Jy is My kosbare besitting... Eks. 19:5.
- Ek begeer om jou gevrestig en gelukkig te sien... Jer. 32:41.
- Ek wil jou vertel van groot en wonderlike dinge... Jer. 33:3.
- As jy My met jou hele hart soek, sal jy My vind... Deut. 4:29.
- Vind jou vreugde in My en Ek sal jou gee wat jou hart begeer... Ps. 37:4.
- Ek gee jou ook die begeerte om My tevrede te stel... Fil. 2:13.
- Ek is in staat om baie meer vir jou te doen as wat jy jou kan voorstel... Ef. 3:20.
- Ek is jou grootste Bemoediger... 2 Thess. 2:16,17.

Van jou liefdevolle Vader, GOD.

BELOFTES OM AAN VAS TE HOU

Vader, daar kom tye in my lewe, dat ek wil uitroep: Waarheen nou? My moed is gebreek, maar dan kom die beloftes in U Woord na my: "Weet dan nou, die Here jou God, Hy is God. Hy is die betroubare God wat Sy verbond in stand hou en Sy liefde betoon tot aan die huisendste geslag" (Deut. 7:9).

U verseker my: "Moenie bang wees nie, Ek verlos jou, Ek het jou by die naam geroep, jy is Myne; As jy deur water moet gaan, sal dit jou nie oorstrom nie en die vuur sal jou nie skroe nie, die vlamme sal jou nie brand nie, want Ek is die Here jou God" (Jes. 43:1,2,3).

U nooi ons: "Kom na My toe almal wat uitgeput en oorlaai is en Ek sal julle rus gee. Neem My juk op julle en leer van My, want Ek is sagmoedig en nederig van hart en julle sal rus kry vir julle gemoed. My juk is sag en My las is lig" (Matt. 11:25, 29, 30).

Here, as ek bang word en hartseer my oorval, verseker U my: "Soos Ek met Moses was, sal Ek by jou wees. Ek sal jou nie in die steek laat nie, jou nie verlaat nie" (Jos. 1:5). "Wees sterk, wees vasberade. Moenie skrik nie, moenie bang wees nie, want Ek die Here jou God is oral by jou, waar jy ook al mag gaan" (Jos. 1:9).

U verseker my verder dat U die engele opdrag sal gee om my te beskerm waar ek ook al mag gaan (Ps. 91:11). As ons las te swaar word dan nooi U ons: "Werp al jou sorge op My, want Ek sorg vir jou." Wanneer ek in nood verkeer, nooi U my om terug te keer na U, want U is 'n genadige God. U sal my nie in die steek laat nie (Deut. 4:31). Ek dank U vir U groot genade! In Jesus Naam. Amen.

[GEBEDE WAT WERK, Dr. Monty Elof, Vol. 2].

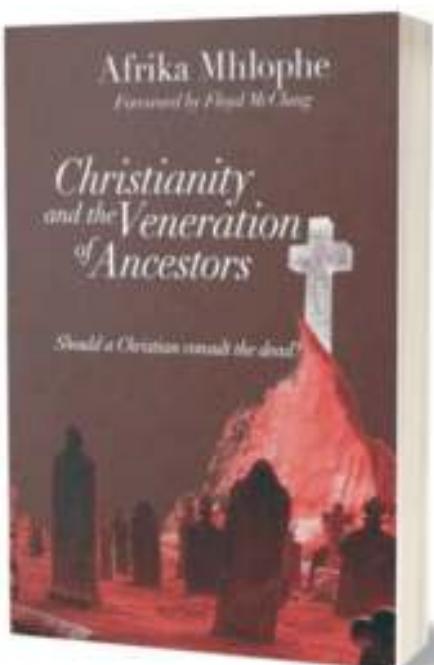
God has transmitted His very substance into every Scripture, for it is God-breathed. It will empower you by its instruction and correction, giving you the strength to take the right direction and lead you deeper into the path of godliness.

Then you will be God's servant, fully mature and perfectly prepared to fulfil any assignment God gives you (2 Tim. 3:16-17 TPT).



A GO SIAME GO BUA LE GO OBAMELA BA BA SULENG?

(Is it right to talk to and worship the dead?)



DITEMANA

Mme e re ba lo raya ba re: "Botsang badimo le baitseanape ba ba dumadumang, ba bolela tse di sa utlwaleng" lo re: "A batho ga ba na go botsa Modimo wa bone? Kampo a go ka kopiwa baswi gore ba thuse ba ba phelang? Tlhokomelang thuto le tshupo! Fa ba sa bue ka fa lefokong le, ga ba nke ba bona mahube" (Jesaya 8:19-20).

Ke fa Saule a raya batlhanka ba gagwe a re: "Mpatleleng mosadi yo o itseng go buisa baswi gore ke ye kwa go ene, ke mmotse." Batlhanka ba gagwe ba mo arababare: "Mosadi yo o buisang baswi o teng kwa Entore." Jaanong Saule a iphetola ka go apara diaparo di sele, a ya a na le banna ba le babedi, ba fitlha kwa mosading yole bosigo, mme

Saule a re: "A ko o mpolelele tsa boitseanape ka thuso ya mowa wa moswi, o ntliisetse yo ke tla mo go bolelelang."

Mme mosadi yoo a mo fetola a re: "Kana o itse se Saule o se dirileng, fa a fedisa ba ba buisang badimo le baitseanape mo lefatsheng. Ke ka ntlha ya eng, fa o tsile go ntalela gore ke tle ke bolawe." Ke fa Saule a mo ikanelka Morena a re: "Ka bophelo jwa Morena! Ga o kitla o welwa ke molato ope ka tiro e." Jaanong mosadi a botsa a re: "Ke go ntliisetse mang?"

A re: "Ntliisetse Samuele." Ya re mosadi a bona Samuele, a goa ka lentswe le legolo, a ba a raya Saule a re: "O ntsieleditseng? Kana o Saule." Kgosi ya mo raya ya re: "Se boife! Mme o bona eng?" Mosadi a araba Saule a re: "Ke bona mowa wa moswi o tswa mo lefatsheng." Saule a mmotsa a re: "Sebopego sa ona ke se se ntseng jang?"

Mosadi a re: "Monna mogolo o tlhatloga, a apere kobo." Ke fa Saule a lemoga gore ke Samuele; a ba a inamela fa fatshe ka sefatlhego a ikoba. Mme Samuele a raya Saule a re: "O ntshwentsang ka go mpitsa?" Saule a re: "Ke tlaletswe thata. Bafelesita ba tlhabana le nna, mme Modimo o ntlogetse; ga o tlhole o nkaraba le e sang ka baporofeti le e sang ka ditoro. Ke ka moo ke go biditseng gore o nkitsise se ke tshwanetseng go se dira."

Samuele a ba a re: "O mpoletsang, etswe Morena o go tlogetse, a tswa mmaba wa gago?" (1 Samuel 28:7-16).

Ya baa gona Modimo o buang mafoko a otlhe a, wa re: "Ke nna Morena Modimo wa gago yo ke go ntshitseng mo lefatsheng la Egepeto mo ntlong ya botlhanka. "O se nne le medimo epe e sele kwa ntle ga me. "O se ka wa itirela modimo wa seseto, le fa e le setshwantsho sepe sa tse di kwa godimo mo legodimong, le fa e le sa tse di mo lefatsheng, gongwe sa tse di mo metsing a a kwa tlase ga lefatshe. O se ka wa e obamela le e sang go e direla. Gonne nna Morena, Modimo wa gago, ke Modimo o o lefufa, o ke beletsang bana tshiamololo ya borraabo go ya losikeng Iwa boraro le Iwa bone Iwa bona ba ba ntlhoang. Mme ba tshika di le dikete ba ba nthatang le go tshegetsa ditaolo tsa me, ke ba direla ka bopelotlhomozi (Ekesodu 20:1-6).

DIKAKANYO

Lefoko la Modimo mo Beibeleng le a re bolelela gore re se bue mme re se obamele medimo e mengwe le go bua le ba ba suleng. Kgosi Saule o ile a dira jalo mme bophelo jwa gagwe jwa fetola mme le bogosi jwa gagwe jwa fela. Mo molaong wa Modimo re rutiwa gape gore "O se nne le medimo epe e sele kwa ntle ga me. O se ka wa itirela modimo wa seseto, le fa e le setshwantsho sepe sa tse di kwa godimo mo legodimong, le fa e le sa tse di mo lefatsheng,



Johan Zerwick
Sêle ke 083 458 3837

gongwe sa tse di mo metsing a a kwa tlase ga lefatshe. O se ka wa e obamela le e sang go e direla. Gonne nna Morena, Modimo wa gago, ke Modimo o o lefufa, o ke beletsang bana tshiamololo ya borraabo go ya losikeng Iwa boraro le Iwa bone Iwa bona ba ba ntlhoang."

THAPELO

Ntate wa rona re kopa o re thuse gore re se ye kwa badimong le kwa ba ba suleng go leka go rarabolola mathata a rona. Re kopa o re thuse go direla wena Modimo wa rona o le nosi. Re rata wena o le mongwe fela mme re obamela wena fela. Re fe kitso le tlhaloganyo gore re thuse le balosika le ditsala tsa rona gore ba se nne le medimo e mengwe kwa ntle ga Modimo wa Beibele, Modimo yo o tlhodileng legodimo le lefatshe. Re dumela mo Lefokong la gago mme re amogela Jesu go nna Mopholosi wa rona a le nosi. Itshwarele botlhe ba ba obamela lang medimo fa ba ntse ba obamela le wena. Re kopa o ba bulle matlho le dipelo gore ba bone nnete. AMEN.

Lebelela video ya ga Afrika Mhlophe: "Should A Christian Consult the Dead?"

https://youtu.be/yhknd_NEV1Y
REKA BUKA KWA:
<https://afrikam.co.za/>

LOVE LIFTED ME

It was the year 1912. Deeply moved by two portions of Scripture in Matthew 8 where Jesus calms the storm, and Matthew 14 where Jesus walked on the water, songwriter James Rowe, was inspired to pen a song about Jesus in our troubles.

Clearly seeing the parallel between the storm the disciples faced that night and those that throw human lives into turmoil to this very day, he sat down and wrote these deeply encouraging words:

*"I was sinking deep in sin,
far from the peaceful shore,
very deeply stained within,
sinking to rise no more,
but the Master of the sea,
Heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me,
now safe am I."*

*Love lifted me!
Love lifted me!
When no-one but Christ
could help
Love lifted me."*

Beloved, storms have many faces that can deeply trouble your life. This much we know well.

Jesus insisted that His disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake... He went up into the hills by Himself to pray. Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves.

About three o' clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw Him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their

fear they cried out, "It's a ghost!" But Jesus spoke to them at once, "Don't be afraid," He said, "Take courage, I am here!"

Ever the impulsive one, Peter immediately scrambles over the side of the boat to go to Jesus. What could have been a moment of great faith was marred by fear. One moment Peter was walking on the water, on his way to Jesus, in spite of the tumultuous waves. The next moment he takes his eyes off the Saviour and, "terrified he began to sink." 'Save me, Lord!' he shouted. "Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him."

And James Rowe encourages you today:

*"Soul in danger, look above,
Jesus completely saves,*

*He will lift you by His love,
out of the angry waves;
He's the Master of the sea
(and whatever storm you are
facing right now)
billows His will obey."*

Jesus knew about the storm brewing and yet He sent His disciples straight into it. Ah, Beloved, He's teaching us to trust Him better, training our faith to withstand future storms, teaching us life-saving, soul-rescuing skills.

Ever tender, as He reached for Peter, He's reaching out to you right now. Take hold of His Hand even if yours are trembling with fear. He wants to restore your peace and fortify your faith. Let Him. Fix your eyes on Jesus and pay no attention to the storm!

- Helen du Plessis, 083 332 0895.

YOUR PRAYER NEEDS TO BE BIGGER THAN YOU

"Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed Him because they saw the signs He had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with His disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward Him, He said to Philip, 'Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?' He asked this only to test him, for He already had in mind what He was going to do. Philip answered him, 'It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!' Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, 'Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?' Jesus said, 'Have the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they all had enough to eat, He said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.' So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people

saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, 'Surely this is the Prophet Who is to come into the world.' Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make Him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by Himself" (John 6:1-15).

Our prayers are often a product of our limiting life experiences. In contrast to this, God expects us to pray His size and not our size. When our prayer is bigger than us, God's answer will exceed even that big, wild, and audacious prayer.

The incident of Jesus feeding the 5 000 offers us life lessons on God-sized prayer:

■ **Every problem is an invitation for a wild, God-sized prayer:** Each of our problems can be viewed as seeds for great miracles in our lives if we choose to water them with God-sized prayers. The disciples looked at the hungry masses and panicked because of their lack of resources. But God looks at every weakness and inadequacy as an opportunity to reveal His greatest glory. Today, if you are faced with lack or inadequacy, you are God's perfect candidate for a miracle!

■ **God will wait on you to bring the problem to Him:** Jesus knew about the situation way before the apostles mentioned it to Him, but He waited for

them to bring the matter to His notice. In this incident, the disciples made three mistakes.

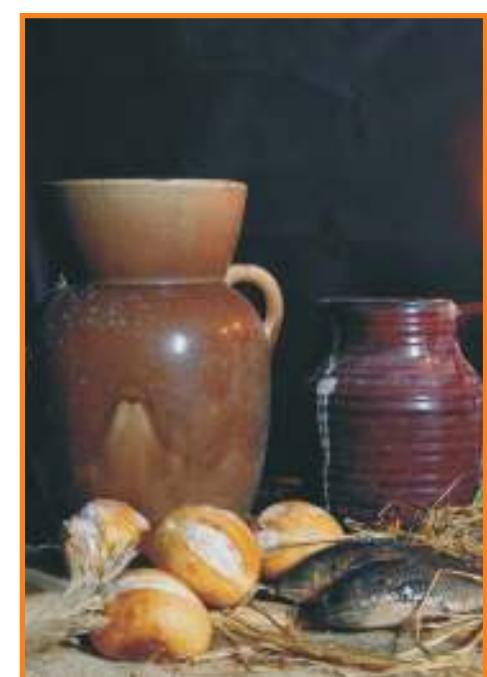
- They delayed in bringing the problem to Jesus;
- They tried to send the hungry masses away and thereby evade the problem;
- They worried about the gigantic amount of resources required to meet the need.

While they were worrying, procrastinating, and brainstorming, Jesus was patiently waiting for them to bring the problem to Him.

■ **Let not your worldly wisdom limit God:** Philip said to Jesus, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" This was Philip operating from his own experience and knowledge. Many times, when we operate in our own worldly wisdom, we focus on the impossibility of the situation and forget about God's glorious power that was manifest in the past. God loves it when we do not lean on our own understanding and trust him like a child.

■ **Give thanks in advance:** Jesus lifted the little food in His hands and offered thanks to the Father. This act of gratitude unleashed the riches of God's glory. Our gratitude has the power to open doors to miracles!

Praying God-sized prayers does



not make sense, it makes miracles! God specializes in things that are humanly impossible. If you ever use the word "impossible," listen for a laugh from heaven!

Reflection time:

1. What are the problems that you have delayed from bringing to God's notice?
2. What are those situations that you are trying to evade?
3. Write down a God-sized prayer that can change the most impossible situation in your life.

Have a little chat with God about all that you have written down.

- Wild Prayers, Reenu Kumar

The Signs of the End Times

End-time prophecy is a major doctrine in God's Word. In the Old Testament, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is mentioned 1 200 times, and in the New Testament, there are over 300 direct prophecies referring to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. **If the Bible places such an emphasis on End-time prophecy and Jesus's Second Coming, so should we.**

We live in a world that wants to know the future. Man has always had an intense desire to prophecy and look into the future. We have all kinds of clairvoyants, soothsayers, prognosticators, and astrologists who portend to tell the future. But they have made colossal mistakes. **The only Book that can accurately tell the future is the Word of God.** Second Peter 1:19 says that we "have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts". People say the Bible is up to date, but I say it is ahead of time. It fits in with tomorrow's headlines when they have not even been written yet.

One of the great chapters of prophecy is Matthew 24. The temple was a magnificent structure. The ancient historian Josephus said that the temple sat on the mountain like a mountain of snow itself. It was indescribably beautiful. But why all this attention concerning the temple? Because in Matt. 23:38 Jesus said that this temple would be destroyed. Again in Matt. 24:2, Jesus said that not one stone will be left upon another. Jesus was prophesying what the Romans under General Titus would do 40 years later. They surrounded Jerusalem with armies to starve the residents. It was an unthinkable thing at the time since the Romans were preservers of temples. Josephus wrote that

Pilate gave orders that the temple was not to be burned or destroyed. Yet, Jesus made this seemingly unreasonable prediction about the temple's destruction. That's why we need to live by revelation, not by reason.

During the warfare, someone inadvertently shot a flaming arrow into the temple and it caught fire. It burned and the timbers caved in on themselves. There were all kinds of treasures and gold inside the temple. So in succeeding years, as looters were looking for gold they pried stones apart one from another. When they were finished, not one stone was left upon another, exactly as Jesus had predicted.

In Matt. 24:1 the disciples drew Jesus's attention to the temple's splendour. Jesus replied that "not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down" (v. 2). If you were to go to Jerusalem today, you would say, "Yes, Lord, You were exactly right." One can visit the ruins of other temples and they are still there, but not this one. In Matt. 2:3 the disciples asked when the temple will be destroyed, and what shall be the time of Jesus's coming. Jesus gives them the Signs of the Times and describes what the age will be like between His First Coming and His Second Coming, what we can look for, what will happen, and what will be the convergence of these signs, so that we can know that Jesus is at the door. Let us look at some of these signs.

1. DECEPTIONS

"Jesus answered: 'Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in My Name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many'" (Matt. 24:4-5). Deceptions are one of the marks of the Last Days. We read in 1 John 4:1-3, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets



have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world."

Don't look for another Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. There are many anti-christs already in the world today. This refers to those who oppose Christ and come instead of Christ. The prefix 'anti' simultaneously refers to 'against' and 'instead of'. Has this prophecy been fulfilled and is it being fulfilled? We are told that in the past 50 years, no fewer than 1 100 significant persons have claimed to be Christ, the Saviour of the world. Jesus said that these days will be marked by deceptions and false Christs. That's why the Bible says that we should not believe every spirit. We should come to know and understand the truth that is in God's Word.

2. DIVISIONS

"You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt. 24:6-7a). People down through the centuries will never solve the problem of war. Suppose that we were living in a world where there were no more wars. Then Jesus would have been proven to be a false prophet. But we have been plagued by the spectre of war, and as we reach the end of the age, we see more wars both in number and intensity.

From World War I to this present time, there has been at least one attempt to take over some government every month (on average). Our world is in a state of

division. Terrorism is spreading, there are widespread sky-jackings, assassinations, bombings, sabotage. When we travel, we have to be bodily searched at the airports.

In Jerusalem, there are various conflicts. Read Zech. 12:2-3, "I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves." That Scripture is being fulfilled before our very eyes.

3. DISASTER

"There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains" (Matt. 24:7b-8). Our Lord Jesus looked down through the corridor of time and He knew that man, with all of his wit and wisdom, technology, and agricultural know-how, would not be able to solve the food problem. He knew that famines would spread across the world.

Did you know that today, in this so-called modern society, we are living in a time of unprecedented famine? This is for two reasons: agricultural misuse of the environment and war. Even where we have places of food storage, we cannot get the food to the needy because of all the political and social divisions. It is a compounded problem.

One well-known biologist said, "There is not the slightest hope of escaping a disastrous time of famine from this time onward. It is shockingly apparent that the battle to feed man will end in a rout (we will dismally lose the battle)." Another has said, "Planet Earth is no longer a sustainable society. With the

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The Signs of the End Times

Continued from p. 5

world population doubling twice in the past century, the world's land is being worked so hard for food that one quarter of the top-soil is turning sterile or eroding away."

This takes us to Rev. 6:6 where the Bible says that the day will come that it will take a day's wage to buy a quart of wheat. Are we seeing the potentiality of this prophecy being fulfilled? Indeed.

Jesus also said that there will be pestilences. AIDS (and COVID-19) come to mind. We don't know how to solve these. Jesus also predicted earthquakes. There has been a dramatic increase in earthquakes in these days. Seismologists have explained what is happening in terms of plate tectonics. The land masses of this earth are flowing on semi-molten material beneath. As these plates get close to one another, incredible pressure builds up underneath. When they begin to slip, an earthquake happens! The places where they join together are called faults. When the plates break loose, an earthquake occurs, but more are likely to follow. Seismologists and historians have calculated that megalithic earthquakes have increased by over 2 000% since Columbus discovered America.

Jesus says that all of these signs are the beginning of sorrows or birth pains. Mother Earth is heaving in pain. Our world is pregnant with judgment. A birth is about to come forth!

4. DEFAMATION

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of Me" (Matt. 24:9). Jesus is talking about believers. They will be defamed. This world has room for every religion except that of our Lord Jesus Christ. Persecution is going to centre on the Name of Jesus. The world does not mind religion, but it hates Jesus Who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Did you know that within the span of 12 months in World War II, it is

estimated that more Christians were tortured and slain than those who died under Rome in all of the early centuries? Again, some authorities claim that over 50 million Christians were put to death and slaughtered in Russia and other Communist countries in the past century. Christian bashing is also a favourite sport of journalists today.

5. DESERTION

"At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other" (Matt. 24:10). When this persecution begins, only true Christians will remain faithful. Those who endure to the end will be saved. But many will leave their churches because they will not be able to stand the heat. We have today many churches who are empty of people. Those who have not submitted to the Lordship of Christ will leave like rats leaving a sinking ship when persecution comes. Some churches have been filled with a gospel with no hell, no repentance, no judgment, no Lordship. They have become glorified country clubs with steeples on top. When the persecution commences, the members will leave. Many will be offended, betray one another, and hate one another.

6. DISINFORMATION

"...and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people" (Matt. 24:11). Now what is the difference between a false prophet and a false Christ? A false Christ is someone claiming religious authority and divinity, while a false prophet is someone who speaks with either religious or secular authority, a philosopher of this day. There are so many controversial, humanistic philosophies in the world today. Humanism stresses the rights of mankind. A true prophet stresses the rights of Almighty God. We are up against New Age humanism today. Our world is awash with disinformation, with many false prophets who seem and claim to speak with genuine authority.

7. DEPRAVITY

"Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold" (Matt. 24:12). When you have these false prophets who are preaching self-interest

rather than the rights of Almighty God, you are going to lose your moral anchor.

We have a generation today who no longer believe in a fixed moral standard because of these false prophets. Because of this, their moral anchor is gone, and they go down, down, down into a swirling sewer of depravity. Just read any newspaper. The Bible speaks of a cup of iniquity or lawlessness, violence. This will be a sign of the last days.

8. DECLARATION

But here is a positive sign: the Gospel will be preached around all of the world! "...but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:13-14). There will be faithful ones who will believe right until the end of the age. They will be saved! You are not saved because you endure - you endure because you are saved.

All tribes will hear the Gospel.

This is a special sign at the very end, the *coup de grace* (death blow to end all suffering). This was impossible in all other ages, but it has come to pass in our age. Think about radio, television, crusades, print media, and the internet. All of the world has heard the Gospel. Not every person, but all nations and tribal groups around the world. Notice what our Lord is saying: *and then shall the end come*.

What does all of this mean? First, we can trust the Word of God. Second, Jesus Christ is coming. The end of the age is coming. We need to bring people to Christ. Third, believers ought to daily grow in holiness and expectation.

If you are not saved, today is the day to call upon Jesus! The Bible says clearly that you should believe in Christ and you will be saved. 'Believe' is not just intellectual, it means to trust Him and serve Him. Come to Him today!

- Adrian Rodgers, Love Worth Finding

Die Dou van Kalmte

Die lewe word dikwels teen 'n koorsagtige pas aangepak. Ons lewe in 'n wêreld wat persoonlike prestasie en sukses op elke gebied beklemtoon, van gesondheid en verhoudings tot besigheid en lewenstandaarde. 'n Vinnige blik na die rakke van boekwinkels sal jou probeer oortuig dat jy enigiets kan doen en enigiets kan wees wat jy wil, as jy maar net hard genoeg wil probeer. Sodoende strewe mense al hoe meer daarna om suksesvol te wees, maar ervaar bykans nooit dat hulle werklik suksesvol is nie. En hierdie strewe na persoonlike sukses vloeï ook oor in ons geestelike lewe. Die goeie nuus is dat ons, as Christene, ons kan losmaak van alle strewe en liewer vir God vra om ons deur Christus met Sy vrede te vul en om orde te bring uit die ongeordende kolk waarin die moderne lewe ons dompel. Ons kan berus in die voltooide werk van Christus op Golgota, in die wete dat ons niks meer kan doen om gered te word en om God se liefde te geniet nie.

Ons weet dat ons Christelike lewenswandel een van voortdurende groei na volwassenheid is, maar selfs hierin het ons God se Teenwoordigheid deur Sy Heilige Gees om ons te help en te lei, want Hy lei ons op die regte pad wanneer ons onself aan Hom oorgee. Daarom kan ons ons angstige strewe laat vaar en toelaat dat Sy vrede ons besorgde gemoed stilmaak.

Gebed, oorgawe en berusting kan ons help om vrede te midde van chaos te vind en kalmte te midde van inspanning. Namate Hy orde in ons lewe bewerkstellig en vrede in ons harte bring, word ons lewens 'n getuienis van Sy vrede en skoonheid aan dié rondom ons wat steeds vasgevang is in die web van beangsde bedrywigheide wat die wêrelد vir hulle span.

- Gebede en Oordenkings, Lynette Douglas, Christian Art Gifts, 2003

WHEN GOD SAYS "NO"

"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:1-3).

While discussing prayer, it is imperative to explore the subject of unanswered prayers. Many of us have that one point of contention with God or that one complaint against God regarding some prayers not being answered. Why do prayers not get answered? The Bible gives us a few reasons in this context:

■ **Examine your motives:**
James 4:1-3 NIV says, "When you

ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." What is the motive behind our requests? When we seek God's Hand from a place of greed or lust, He does not grant us our requests. Sometimes, our requests are driven by wanting to compete or be better than someone else. Often, we idolize some things to a point that we prioritize them beyond our relationship with God.

■ **God's timing may be different:**
Genesis 30 starts with Rachel being angry and resentful about not being able to conceive and have children. She did some things in haste in her frustration. She failed to recognize that God's timing is different from hers. By the end of the same chapter, we see this: "Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and enabled her to conceive. She

became pregnant and gave birth to a son and said, 'God has taken away my disgrace.'" If God is not answering your prayers, you need to wait. God's delays are not always denials.

■ **Your unanswered prayer is a blessing in disguise:**

Garth Brooks wrote this lovely song in 1990 that said "some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers." Usually, we are upset and disappointed when our prayers aren't answered. But God in His wisdom answers some of our requests with a "no." However, beneath every "no" is His protection and providence. We should always bear in mind that He is working with our best interests in mind.

In this context, Jesus outlines two scenarios:

- When we pray for something that

will bring God glory, our requests are immediately approved.

- When we ask God for something that will make us a blessing to others, He is pleased by our request and promises to grant it to us. We are called not to be a consumer but a contributor.

May we recognize God's purpose, protection, and providence behind every unanswered prayer!

Reflection time:

1. Make a list of all your prayer requests.
2. Write beside each of your requests the reason why you are asking God to grant you this request.
3. Examine if your requests would glorify God or would serve to be a blessing to others.

- Wild Prayers, Reenu Kumar

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE

"Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10, NIV).

Be the Best You Can Be
It's easy for us to go into the "proving mode" - trying to outperform someone else, feeling inferior because you're not like that person. The only result will be wearing you out and taking your joy. You're trying to prove something that you don't have to prove.

You've entered a race that you're not competing in. Walk in your anointing. You already have God's approval; you just need to walk in it!

When God made you, He threw away the mould. He stepped back and said, "Look, another masterpiece." You don't have to keep up with other people. If you're getting your value out of how you measure up to your peers, you're going to live in this "proving mode" of working harder, trying to impress, and that's a never-ending cycle. Get off that treadmill! You don't have to be more

popular than your friend, more athletic than your brother, or more successful than your cousin. That's not your race. You're not competing with them; you're competing with yourself. Be the best you that you can be!

A Prayer for Today

Father, thank You that I can come to You for all the approval and love that I need to live securely. Thank You that You call me a masterpiece and that I have no reason to prove my worth to anyone. I'm going to be the best I can be by Your grace. In Jesus's

Name, Amen.

- Sent in by Pastor Danny Strydom, 079 407 1979.

**When you pray - God listens.
When you listen - God talks.
When you believe - God works.**

WHO DO YOU TRUST?

Who do you trust? Maybe it's a dream you're holding onto, or a promise you've been given. Maybe you're waiting on a person to change, or a situation to shift. Maybe you're waiting for a prayer to be answered, hope to arrive, joy to replace sorrow, or clarity and hope to replace confusion and chaos. It can be difficult in the midst of pain, loss, and suffering to patiently cling to the One Who promises to come through for us.

Isaiah was a prophet to the leaders of Judah during a time of

national corruption and spiritual destitution. He foretold of his people being dragged away into exile because they were trusting in idols, political rulers, and other momentary things.

But Isaiah also reminded the people that God was sovereign, God would bring them out of exile, and God would one day send a Saviour to rescue them forever.

Isaiah didn't live to see all his prophecies fulfilled - but he held onto the hope that he prophesied about, and his words to the

people of Israel can continue to encourage us today...

Trust in the Lord even when circumstances don't make sense. Trust in the Lord even when you're suffering. Trust in the Lord even when your heart is breaking. Come what may, trust in the Lord!

Seasons may shift, situations may change, people may abandon, desert, or betray you - but the One who remains constant throughout history is the God over history.

The Lord is unchanging and immovable. Nothing can stand against Him or overcome Him!

Jesus knows what it's like to suffer because He suffered for us. And He has promised to fight for us, to never leave us, make a way for us, love us, protect us, and remain faithful to us.

Since God is our salvation, we can trust Him and not be afraid. So come what may, let's choose today to trust in the Lord!

- Selected

LIEFDE IS LANKMOEDIG EN GEDULDIG

John Wesley was geseënd met 'n baie geduldige moeder, Susanna. By geleentheid het Wesley se vader opgemerk: "Ek verbaas my vir jou geduld! Dis die twintigste keer dat jy daardie kind oor dieselfde saak aanspreek!" Waarop Susanna Wesley met liefde na die kind gekyk en geantwoord het: "Sou ek net negentien keer gepraat het, sou al my opvoedingsarbeid verlore gewees het."

Begeer ons hierdie besondere lewenskwaliteit, nl. "geduld", is die meeste van ons seker soos die persoon wat gebid het: "Heer, ek vra geduld van U, maar ek wil dit nou dadelik hê!"

Sou 'n mens verklarende woerdeboeke gebruik, sou jy "geduld" kon omskryf as die

vermoë om veel te verdra, om tydens verdrukkinge moed te hou, die vermoë om aan te hou wag sonder om te kla; lydsaadheid, verdraagsaamheid, volharding; om met noeste vlyt voort te gaan en enige provokasie en negatiewe situasie te verduur sonder om kwaad of moede-loos te word.

Die Griekse woord vir "geduld" is *makrothumeo* en dit beteken letterlik om l-á-n-kmoedig te wees, geduldig te verdra. Hierdie begrip skyn oudmodies te wees in ons hedendaagse lewe. Ons is almal geneig om kort van draad te wees, ongeduldig en kortaf met mekaar.

Ongeduld is 'n kenmerk van die tyd waarin ons leef. Trek jy nie vinnig genoeg weg wan-neer die verkeerslig na groen

oorslaan nie, kan jy verseker wees van 'n getoetery agter jou. Verder floreer ons op kitskos, kitsdiête en kits-oplossings.

Hegte, waardevolle en bly-wende menseverhoudings kom egter nie op so 'n kits-manier tot stand nie. Liefde, daarenteen, is geduldig en gee nie om om baie tyd te spandeer om 'n geliefde gelukkig te maak nie.

Die Bybel stel dit baie duidelik dat ons geduld nodig het in ons lewenstoerusting. In Heb. 10:36 lees ons: "Volharding (geduld) is wat julle nodig het om die wil van God te doen en te ontvang wat Hy beloof het." Laat ons die Heilige Gees vra om hierdie vrug in ons lewe te bewerkstellig!

- Geen Groter Liefde, Robert Strand, VG Uitgewers, Springs

Al Die Lof Aanbidding En Ere

Ons is 'n oomblik;
U is vir altyd,
God van die eeu,
God voor die tyd.

Ons is 'n asem;
U is vir ewig -
U wat ons liefhet,
altyd getrou.

Heilig, heilig,
Heer God, Almagtig!
Waardig is die Lam
wat regeer!
Al die lof,
aanbidding en ere
Kom U toe, o Heer,
Kom U toe, o Heer!

Ons is gebroke;
U die Geneesheer,
Jesus, Verlosser,
Redder en Vriend.

Ons vra die vrae,
U is die Antwoord;
Ons die verdwaaldes
U is die Weg!

Vertaal: Jan De Wet

KRUMMELS...

'n Brood val uit 'n bewegende broodwa en rol 'n entjie verder. 'n Stukkie van die brood breek af en bly in die straat lê. Drie mossies peil af op die stukkie wat afgebreek het. 'n Hewige bakleivery breek los. En dit kwetter en skree dat jy hulle waar kan hoor.

Na 'n vreeslike vlerkgeklap, kry een die oorhand en begin die krummels gretig oppik, terwyl die ander twee met luide protes in 'n boom gaan sit. En met die lawaai voortgaan.

Nie een van hulle het die groot brood 'n entjie verder raak gesien nie. Hulle was te besig om oor die krummels te baklei!

Ons maak dikwels rusie oor klein dingetjies in die lewe en ignoreer dit wat eintlik belangrik is. Ons baklei oor die krummels van wie maak huis skoon, en wie moet kook, maar die

heel brood van die seën om 'n huis te hê, dit sien ons nie raak nie.

Ons baklei oor die krummels van wie moet die motor was en wie moet die petrol gaan ingooi, maar die heel brood van seënninge omdat ek 'n motor besit, dit sien ek nie raak nie.

Ons kwetter oor die krummels van die mense by die werk wat dit en dat doen, maar die heel brood van seënninge dat ek wel 'n werk het, en die gesondheid om dit te kan doen, dit sien ons nie raak nie.

Oor die nietighede word ons vir mekaar so kwaad dat kosbare verhoudings verbreek word.

Partykeer moet ons so bietjie terugstaan en ons lewe vanuit 'n ander hoek bekyk. Ons moet besef dat die meeste van ons

gekwetter en baklei is oor dinge wat eintlik net oor my eie behoeftes gaan.

Sodra iemand aan die dinge wat vir my belangrik is, wil vat; sodra die dinge wat vir my lekker is, in die spervuur kom, wil ek bokhandskoene aantrek en dit met alles in my beskerm. Ek is bereid om die ander een teë te staan en gou op my perdjie te klim.

Tog is dit baie keer die krummels van die lewe waaroer ons baklei. Daar is soveel meer as net wat vir ons lekker en belangrik is. **Daar is 'n brood vol genade en seën en 'n beter lewe wat op ons wag.**

Daarom dat ons tog soms moet terugstaan om die volle prentjie te kry om te sien waar is krummels en waar is die werklike seën. Dan kan ons raaksien dat dit nie die moete



werd is om te baklei oor dit wat net vir ons lekker is nie, al is dit menslik. **Kom ons soek die brood**, waar die werklike lekker is, waar daar oorgenoeg is vir almal en ons nie hoef te baklei vir'n krummeltjie nie.

- Oorgeneem

WANNEER DIE ROOI LIGTE VAN DIE LEWE FLIKKER

Ons ken almal verkeersligte en weet groen beteken dat jy kan ry, rooi dat jy moet stop en oranje... dat jy bitter vinnig moet ry? Dit lyk nogal of baie mense dit glo! Kom ons wees eerlik: Wie van ons het nog nie oor 'n rooi verkeerslig gery nie? As jy gelukkig is, was jou enigste gevolg 'n slegte boete. Maar ons weet almal watter verskriklike gevolge dit kan hê wanneer rooi verkeersligte geïgnoreer word.

Ook in ons lewens is daar "verkeersligte" wat vir ons sê ons kan voortgaan of ons moet versigtig wees. Nie almal van ons neem egter die verkeersligte van die lewe ernstig op nie. Veral nie as die lige rooi geword het nie.

Die profete van ouds het die volk herhaaldelik probeer waarsku dat die ligte vir hulle lankal rooi is. So het Jeremia probeer waarsku dat mense se "goedkoop, nikswerd gode" hulle nêrens sal bring nie en dat hulle veel versigtiger voor God moet lewe.

Hy het gewys op die kwaad wat gedy, hul vals vertroue op die tempel, die bedrog wat gepleeg word, die dwarse geestelike leiers, hul hoogmoed en veel meer. Die volk het hierdie waarskuwings geïgnoreer en die res is geskiedenis.

Soms wonder ek of ons eerlik kan sê dat ons die rooi ligte in ons eie lewe raaksien. Dit geld vir ons

werk: wanneer ons onbeheerde drang na nog meer sukses ons baas word. Dit geld ook vir ons finansies: wanneer ons skuld ons lewe begin beheer. Dit geld vir ons gesondheid: wanneer ons roekeloos begin leef. In ons huwelik: wanneer almal om ons die krake begin raaksien, maar ons self weier om dit te erken. Dit geld vir ons kinders: wanneer hul afwykende gedrag al ernstiger word, maar ons ons kop in die grond druk. Ook geld dit vir ons geloofslewe: wanneer maande se droogte sy tol begin eis, maar ons dink dat dit nie regtig 'n effek op ons lewe sal hê nie. En les bes geld dit vir ons eie land: wanneer ons net eenvoudig so gewoond geword het aan die verkeerde dat

ons gemaklik daarmee begin saamleef.

Hierdie is maar enkele voorbeelde.

Orson Welles het op 'n keer gesê 'n storie se einde en of dit gelukkig of ongelukkig is, word bepaal deur waar jy die storie stop. Miskien moet ons almal leer om maar te stop wanneer die lig oranje word!

'N BELOFTE VAN HOOP: Leer my hoe U wil hê ek moet lewe. Op U vestig ek al my hoop (Psalm 25:5, Die Boodskap).

[HOOP vir 'n TYD SOOS HIERDIE, Braam Hanekom, CUM, 2015].

DIE MIDDELTREK

Ons ken almal die versoeking om halfpad tou op te goo. By die wegspring is daar gewoonlik groot geesdrif en baie gewilliges om jou aan te moedig. As die eindpaal eers in sig is, is dit ook nie so moeilik om jou laaste bietjie krag in te span nie.

Maar in die middeltrek - daar lê die moeilikheid. Die gloed van die wegspring-geesdrif het afgekoel, en die helderheid van die doelwit verdof. Hierdie middeltrek is die moeilikste. Dis hier waar baie verongelukte ondernemings en onuitgevoerde voornemens lê. Moedeloosheid, wat so algemeen by die mens is, laat hom lus voel om tou op te goo.

Dit was in Nehemia se tyd al so. By al die moeilikhede waarmee hy te doen gekry het toe hy die mure van Jerusalem herstel het, moes hy steeds teen hierdie gevaar waak. Sy werksliede het telkens gedreig om hom in die steek te laat omdat dit nie vir hulle gelyk het of hulle ooit met dié groot onderneming sou klaarkry nie. "Ons kan aan die muur nie bou nie," het hulle gesê, "ons krag beswyk. Die puinhoop is te groot."

In die dagboek van die seevaarder Columbus is daar één sinnetjie wat meer dikwels as enige ander voorkom: "Vandag het ons voortgevaar." Nie "Vandag het ons land gesien" nie. Om voort te vaar sonder om land te

sien, is die toets vir volharding.

Dis op elke gebied van die lewe so. Dis so met die skilder wanneer hy aan sy skildery werk; met die predikant wat sy preek voorberei; met die maatskaplike hervormer in sy stryd teen eeuwels; die sendeling in sy arbeid op die voorposte. Dis die aanhou wat tel.

Dis in die middeltrek dat die hart dwing om in die skoene te sak. Dit geld ook die middelbare van die mens se lewe. Dis in dié tydperk, wanneer die gebou van die lewe nog halfklaar is, dat die mens die meeste las van neerslagtigheid het. Sy lewe begin eenselwig en doelloos lyk - hy raak moedeloos.

Maar die neerslagtigheid, die moedeloosheid kan oorwin word. Hy kan 'n nuwe wêreld ontdek as hy net doelbewus voortvaar.

Laat ons onthou dat God in Sy Woord aan ons sê: "Ek is die begin en die einde, die Alfa en die Oméga." **Hy gaan met ons regdeur van A tot Z en sal ons by die middeltrek nie in die steek laat nie.** Hy is nie net 'n God wat troon op die berge van verheerliking nie, maar 'n God van liefde wat naby ons is, ook in die valleie van eentonigheid, roetine en teleurstellings.

[In handdruk in die herfs, Dr HJ Piek, NG Kerk-Uitgewers].

WAT MAAK GEBED SO ANDERS?

Jy hoef nooit 'n afspraak te maak nie. Die lyn is nooit beset nie. Daar is nooit te veel ander besoekers nie.

Die Hoorder is nooit te besig nie. Hy is nooit uithuisig nie. Hy stuur jou nooit weg nie. Hy val jou nooit in die rede nie. Hy luister nooit met 'n halwe oor nie. Hy vergeet nooit jou versoek nie.

Hy is nooit raadop nie. Hy word nooit moeg nie. Hy is nooit in 'n slegte bui nie. Hy ag niks onbelangrik nie. Hy vra nooit vergoeding nie. **Maar Hy wag op ons...**

- Oorgeneem



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The Gift We Offer in Worship

One of the most difficult experiences in life has to be losing a child. Even though I've never had to walk through that valley, the thought that something tragic might befall one of my boys is almost more than I can handle. I just can't let my mind wander that way or I'd never let them leave the house or ride their bikes.

When I read the account of God telling Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, I wince.

"Please take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom I know you dearly love, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him up to Me as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will show you" (Genesis 22:2 TPT).

Not only did God tell Abraham his precious son was going to die, He also commanded Abraham to be his executioner! I can't fathom the emotions Abraham must have processed as he considered all that Yahweh was asking him to do. I find it absolutely remarkable that, in the end, Abraham trusted God to the point that he was willing to give Him his son.

In the natural, the command God gave to Abraham didn't make much sense. Abraham knew the pagans sacrificed their children to the demon gods, but Yahweh was supposed to be different. Besides that, Isaac was the long-awaited miracle child God had promised him. How could the Lord take him away now? Plus, God had said Abraham would become the father of a great nation, but with Isaac gone, how could that come to pass?

Like I said, Abraham's trust is almost beyond belief. You see, he didn't trust the facts. He didn't

follow the logic trail. He didn't know how it would all work out, only that it would. **He had faith in God and His goodness.** Millenia later, the Holy Spirit would let the author of Hebrews in on a little secret. Abraham actually did have a bit of a prophetic imagination when it came to the sacrifice of Isaac:

"Abraham's faith made it logical to him that God could raise Isaac from the dead" (Hebrews 11:19 TPT).

In other words, Abraham knew God's heart to be that good. He was on the lookout for a miracle, a divine action that would break everything he understood about how this world works. The one absolute in the equation for Abraham was not the sharpness of his blade or the heat of the flames, but the goodness of the God he served.

Even with that kind of faith, Abraham was still faced with the reality that he was meant to plunge a knife deep into his beautiful son. It paralyzes me to even contemplate having to do such a thing. And yet, as Abraham left with Isaac to find the spot God would reveal to him, he turned to his servants and said, *"Stay here with the donkey... Isaac and I will go up and worship; then we will return to you"* (Genesis 22:5 TPT).

We talk a lot about worship in the Church today. Mostly, we mean singing songs on Sunday morning. But Abraham lived out the biblical definition of worship. **Abraham was willing to lay down anything and everything before the Lord.** Nothing was too precious, and nothing was off-limits. He was completely surrendered. Sacrificing Isaac in obedience to God was his act of

worship.

And it wasn't just **his** act of worship. Isaac was not a kid at this point. He was a teenager or perhaps a young man, old enough to carry the wood for the altar. If he had wanted to overpower his centenarian father, he could have done so. Abraham was right when he said, *"Isaac and I will go up and worship"* (v. 5, emphasis added). Before it was all over, Isaac would need to submit to his father and to the Lord, allowing himself to be bound and placed on the altar, laying down his life in accordance with God's strange decree.

A lot of people think God has moved past this sort of thing. They believe that He would never ask Christians to sacrifice what they love or lay down their own lives. After all, even with Abraham and Isaac, the Lord stayed Abraham's hand before the deed was done. But Jesus' own teachings show us nothing has changed. Not really, anyway.

Each one of us is Abraham when we read these words from our Lord: *"Whoever loves father or mother or son or daughter more than Me is not fit to be My disciple"* (Matthew 10:37 TPT).

But we are all Isaac when we read, *"And whoever comes to Me must follow in My steps and be willing to share My cross and experience it as his own, or he is not worthy of Me"* (v. 38). Like Isaac before us, we are to carry on our backs the wood that will be used for our own execution.

Worship, then, is our offering to God. Yes, we give God our whole lives - our time, our energy, our work, and our leisure. Yes, we give Him everything we hold dear

- our spouse, our children, our family, our friends. But when we praise, our bodies, our hearts, and our minds should be given completely over to Him as well.

Think about David for a minute. When the ark was being brought into Jerusalem, *"David was dancing before the Lord with all his might"* (2 Samuel 6:14 NIV), so much so that it horrified his wife (see v. 16). Yet David was not dancing for her or for anyone else - not even for his own enjoyment - he was giving himself over to God in an act of pure worship. In fact, he lost himself in the dance.

"David said to Michal, 'It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord's people Israel - I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes'" (2 Samuel 6:21-22 NIV).

So, the next time you worship with song, push from your mind everyone and everything except the Lord. Give yourself wholly and completely over to the God who loves you. Like Abraham, surrender all that you love on the altar to Yahweh. Like Isaac, lay yourself down in obedience; present yourself as a living sacrifice to Him (see Romans 12:1). And like David, be undignified as you praise the King!

Remember: He is your Audience of one.

<https://www.thepassiontransformation.com/the-gift-we-offer-in-worship/>

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Jer. 20:11

★★★ **B&B**  *Uit die Hand*

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