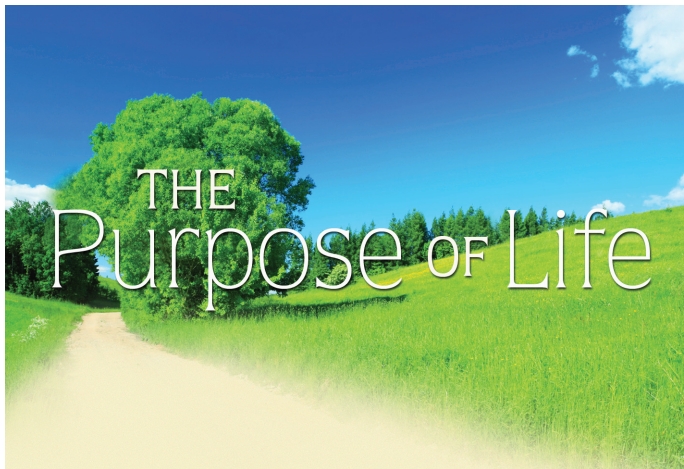

Pilgrims Journal

“They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.” (Heb 11:13–16)

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The Purpose Of Life

Why am I even here? Why was I ever born? My whole life makes no sense at all! While these statements might echo the sentiments of a frustrated high school student trying to decide a college major, they also reflect the thought processes that great minds have wrestled with through the ages. Indeed, many philosophers and great thinkers have grappled with this question, and there are volumes that stand as testament to their search for an answer to that central question: what *is* the purpose of life?

For some, it may seem like a question too difficult to answer, and thus better left unasked. **Yet one can hardly go through life without at some point confronting this truth: a life without purpose is a wasted life.** The Bible speaks of those who had “spent all their living.” Every 24 hours we spend another day of our lives—a day we cannot recover. If we are called to account for our expenditure of time and life, how would we fare? How many days, months, or years have we lost through aimless extravagance?

If life is a journey, then which way does this road lead? If someone were to start his car and head down the road with no destination, no goal in mind, we would find that odd, to say the least. And if every day that person continued to do the same mad drive to nowhere, spending money on fuel and tolls along the way, it would seem rather insane. But isn't it worse to live *life* that way?

Our generation is being taught, “In the beginning, there was nothing.” The unscientific theory of evolution points backward to an inexplicable chasm of nothingness, and gives to mankind the impossible task of finding purpose from that empty origin. Evolutionary philosophy offers us this grand scheme of life: we originated from nothingness, we advance by accident aided by chaos (chance mutations and big bangs), progressing only to greater uncertainties, as we “look forward” to an end in oblivion. If our beginning has no significance, our destiny is meaningless as well. For a generation being indoctrinated with such emptiness, no life has value: the unborn can lose their chance to live, the aged can be mercilessly killed, and the disillusioned take their own “pointless” lives.

Created With Purpose!

Thankfully, we did not accidentally explode onto the scene, but were handmade by a loving God. And the One Who created us—Who loved us before the world began, Whose thoughts towards us are precious and peaceful, Who valued our soul to be worth His own life's blood—He has, in fact, made us with purpose, with the greatest and grandest purpose that ever was.

The Apostle Paul brings out this divine intention in a beloved passage from Romans 8. Though this man of God had incomparable revelations from God, he was honest enough to tell us, that at times, he would be perplexed, not knowing what to do. Yet even in those times where “we know not what to pray for as we ought,” we are told of something we *can* know in the midst of

the unknown: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called *according to His purpose*” (Rom 8:28).

The light shining at the end of the tunnel in the midst of St. Paul’s dark times was God’s purpose for his life. He knew that any and every circumstance, including those that stemmed from the wrongs of others or himself, would all work together for good if he would walk in the light of God’s purpose for his life. Like a hundred different musical instruments, pounded and plucked, beat upon and breathed into, sound in concerted symphony as the maestro’s hand guides them according to the musical score—such are all the events in the life of one walking according to God’s purpose.

Beautiful! Wonderful to think about, but it still begs the question: what is that purpose, that objective? With what intent were we made, to what tune shall we dance and play? Who are the called according to His purpose? Those whom He did fore-know, whom He also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of His Son, to share inwardly His likeness* (Rom 8:29).

The Master Plan

Did you catch that? Our purpose in life? The reason for your existence? Simply put, it is **to be made just like Jesus**. When the Apostle Paul understood that everything in life works to this good end for those who love God, he realized the odds were stacked almost unfairly in his favor: “What can we say about all this? If God is on our side, can anyone be against us?” (Rom 8:31). No matter what the hosts of hell, the future or the

past, the heights or depths threw at him, it was all working for this one amazing divine intention: to form and mold and chisel and bend and fashion him into the very image of Christ. “Throw it all at me: I know the end of the story...I’m going to be just like Jesus!”

Not Instant Change, But While You Wait

We can appreciate Paul’s excitement—but was that all really necessary? Meaning, aren’t we all going to be changed anyway when Jesus comes? From the words of the Apostle John: “but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (1Jn 3:2). Do we need all of life’s circumstances to make us like Jesus, if all it takes is seeing Jesus at His coming?

What will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, is our bodies. They will be changed to become like the body of Jesus at the rapture (Phil 3:20-21). But your body is only made like Jesus *then*, if your character (inner man) is made like Him *now*. “**But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord**” (2Cor 3:18). There is a process of change taking place internally now from glory to glory, which also takes place as we behold Him. And what does it mean to behold or see Him now? ***To have a revelation of His character, to know Him for Who He is.***

Living Christ

Did you see Him today? To behold Him and to be changed by Him is the purpose of our lives. “**Today no matter what happens, my goal is to be like Jesus.**”

“I am the Way...the Life”: Christ is the way to heaven. And living Christ is what we are called to do in this world. This is not the calling of a select few: **this is our purpose in life.**

At times as Christians, we actually get sidetracked in the middle of serving God, and focus on “living for Christ.” Now, that may not seem like a diversion to you, unless you remember the purpose of your life. Our calling is not to live *for* Christ; we’re called to **live Christ**. “God called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me...Christ lives in me” (Gal 1:15-16; 2:20).

Lost In A Moment

It is startling, and even scary, how much we can do for God and still not really know Him in a character-changing way. A classic example from the casebook would be Moses. Even today, hardly a man of God could testify to the success of Moses’ first few months of ministry. He had preached a bold message to the hardened leader of a powerful empire without backing down or compromising; and as a result, about 2.5 million people were set free. He led those souls bravely through the Red Sea, and watched the pursuing armies disappear into the same waters by a sovereign act of God. Now, in what seemed to be the pinnacle (literally) of his ministry, he was on top of Mount Sinai on a forty day fast having direct revelations from God about the tabernacle, the priesthood, and receiving the commandments in the very handwriting of God!

And then Moses outdid himself. God was watching the people sinning at the foot of the mountain and asked Moses, “*Can you leave Me alone for a bit? It takes Me a while to get angry, and I’m thinking to destroy Israel for what they’re doing*

down there” (Ex 32:9-10). Moses launched into a beautiful intercessory prayer, pleading on behalf of the children of Israel, and immediately God changed His mind and decided not to do anything against the Israelites.

Moses could have felt like the most sanctified person of all time—he had just convinced God not to get angry! He began his descent from the mountaintop, though still on his heavenly high, and encountered Joshua who was hearing what he thought were sounds of war. Moses of course was the super spiritual guy who had just calmed God down, and showed his spirit of discernment to Joshua by correctly distinguishing the sounds.

But then...Moses saw for the first time what God had been seeing from the top of the mountain—and very unlike God, Moses needed no time for his anger to reach the boiling point! He destroyed the tablets with God’s handwriting and was still fuming after making the whole congregation drink bitter water. *All the spirituality of forty days in the mountain dissipated in one angry moment.*

Does Moses’ story have a familiar ring to it? “Been there, done that.” Have you ever been “flying high” spiritually, only to take a sudden nosedive over something ridiculously petty? Have you ever gone from hero to zero in just moments?

Show Me Your Glory

Appreciably, the story doesn’t end there, and ours doesn’t have to either. God let Moses know that the 40 day fast/mountain climb would have to be repeated, and that Moses would have to hew his own tables of stone this time. Moses heard the

exact same messages, got the same revelations he had gotten the last time—but *he* came back different! What made the difference the second time around? ***His purpose had changed.***

“And Moses said, ‘I beseech Thee, ***shew me Thy glory***’” (Exo 33:18). He had already spent forty days with the Lord, and learned the hard way that that wasn’t enough. It had dawned on Moses that God was watching all the revelry of the people all that time and God still needed time for His “wrath to wax hot”—but it had only taken one look at the people’s sin to make Moses’ blood boil! “*God, I thought I calmed You down, but when I saw what You were seeing, I couldn’t take it for one second. I beg You, show me Your glory. God, I spent over a month with You, receiving so many ‘revelations’—but I didn’t get to know You. I didn’t take any time to get to know **who You are.** Show me who You are.*”

God did reveal of His glory to Moses in response to Moses’ pleading. Part of that revelation was learning that God keeps mercy for thousands: He is ready at a moment’s notice to forgive thousands of grievances. Getting to know his merciful God made Moses more of a merciful man. Moses came down the mountain with his face beaming (literally), because his heart and nature had been changed by his revelation of God.

Your purpose in life is to be like Jesus: do you know who He is? “*Lord, show me Your glory—remind me of the goal, show me what I’m supposed to be like, Lord. Let me get to know Who You are. Please, God, show me!*”

A Glorious Church

Our calling is to be a glorious church, and sometimes we don’t realize how magnanimous that calling is. Repeatedly the Lord had said in the Old Testament, “I will not share My glory with another”: and yet John writes of New Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb, having the glory of God. As Christians, we are called to be joined to the Lord in spirit, and thus share His glory. So what then is the glory of God? The glory which Moses was shown and which later shone from his face—the glory of God is His character: Who He is. It is to that character image that we are being changed into from glory to glory.

Falling Short Of The Mark

If our calling is to become this glorious church comprised of believers that share the very character likeness of Christ, if the purpose of our lives is to see God’s glory and to be changed into that same image, then what do we call it when we don’t accomplish that purpose?

Sin. For this glorious church, sin is falling short of God’s glory, coming beneath the standard of His character. Sin is not always doing something wrong; it is also not doing something right. You might have said the right thing, but in the wrong way. That is sin. *You might be right in your argument, but wrong in your attitude...that is sin.* (Do you want to win the argument, or to win Christ? Is your goal to prove a point, or is it to be like Jesus?) “*She’s the one who did wrong!*” But did you reveal Christ in your reaction? Then you have sinned by falling short of the glory of God. The goal of our life must be Christlikeness.

Sinful Arrows

The Greek word translated as “sin” in Romans 3:23, and for much of the new testament, is the word *hamartia*. It means “to miss the mark, and so not to share the prize.” *All have missed the mark, and come short of the prize.*

This Greek word has its origins in archery: literally, this word meant “the arrow has sinned.” In event games like the ancient Olympics, crowds would hush as the archer bent his bow. There were sounds of the bowstring’s twang, the arrow’s whistle through the air, and the thwack of the arrow hitting the distant target. But the sounds that defined the archer’s success were those of the crowd. If the arrow was true to the archer’s aim, the crowds would roar their approval. But if the projectile missed its mark, the cry would be heard, “Hamartia, Hamartia—the arrow has sinned, the arrow has sinned!” The arrow was given an aim, a purpose, a direction—but did not fulfill that purpose.

For the follower of Jesus, the mark is to be like Christ, and nothing else. “I’m not as bad as her, and thank God I’m not like them!”—but they are not your goal: the goal is to be like Jesus.

One Thing Is Needful

The story is told of one archery competition, where a king wanted to select the best archer in his kingdom. The goal was fixed: it was to hit the neck of a small bird, sitting in a cage, set aloft in a distant treetop. From various parts of the king’s dominion, skilled bowmen came to demonstrate their marksmanship, and to vie for the regal reward promised. As each contestant stepped to the line, the king would whisper a question into his ear: “What do you see?” One by one, contestants

were dismissed without being given a chance to shoot, because their answers were unacceptable. “I see the bird, I see the cage, I see the tree, I see the surrounding scenery”—these all led to quick rejections by the king. Then one came forward with the answer the king wanted to hear: “O king, I only see the neck of the bird.” Permission was granted: and the arrow was true to his single vision.

Paul echoes this answer in his own life’s all-consuming passion, voiced in his letter to the Philippians: “This *one thing* I do...I press towards the mark, even the reward of the high purpose of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13-14). What is your goal? “I *just* want to be like Jesus.” There are ministries to be done, there are things to be accomplished: but my purpose is this—to be like Him.

Knowing Whom You Serve

When the Christian-hating Saul of Tarsus was struck down by the God he had thought he was serving, Saul realized he didn’t know Who God was. His first question to the One Who had smitten him was, “*Who are You, Lord?*” He wanted to know the goal from the very beginning.

Many Christians ask, “What is God’s will for my life?” which is a very good question—a very good *second* question. Saul’s second question to the Lord was, “What do You want me to do?” When you know *Whom* you serve, then knowing *how* to serve Him will be less mysterious. We have very often asked the second question, and hardly asked the first. Moses recorded every jot and tittle about the tabernacle and the law and the

priesthood, yet paid little attention to knowing the One Who was sharing all these things with him.

Every morning Jesus is waiting to show you Himself, to give you a picture of Who He is, as if to say, “*Look at Me, and then run with this vision.*” Are you living your life without a purpose? You’re a Christian. A Pentecostal. Been going to church all your life. *But do you know Whom you serve?* “Who are You, Lord? Show me Your glory!”

Seek, and Ye Shall Find

Consider Moses’ first forty days on the mountain. God knew the whole while He was giving the commandments and the pattern for the priesthood and the tabernacle, that what Moses really needed to know was Who He was. If God knew that, then why didn’t He reveal His glory to Moses the first time around and save Moses the second mountain climb? “*Ye have not, because ye ask not.*” God’s great delight is to reveal Himself to the diligent seeker: if one cares enough to seek out that glory, the Lord is well pleased to comply.

The Pursuit of God

“I’ve always wanted to see God, or have a vision, and that’s never happened to me. Does God have favorites?” How one seeks is critical. If the purpose of my life is to see the Lord and to be made like Him, then there must be an earnestness in that seeking. The Book of Psalms takes us behind the closed doors of a prayer closet, and allows us to gaze upon the passionate longings of a man for his God.

My soul pants after You, thirsts for You, like a deer for the waters. Day and night I weep, looking for my God (Psa 42:1-3). Have you ever wept when you started a day and couldn’t find God? Has it disturbed you so much that you were moved to tears? “God, how do You expect me to leave this house when I haven’t heard or felt You, how can I walk out the door of my room when I haven’t experienced You?”

To the man suffering an attack of asthma, the only thing of importance is catching his next breath. Offers of money, or fame, or position are meaningless to him: all he wants is air. That was how the psalmist sought God: *Experiencing Him is my breath, my soul is panting after the living God.* “I don’t want all these other things: get them away from me. What I want, what I **need**, is God.”

My soul longs and faints for Your courts: my heart and flesh cry out for the living God! (Psa 84:2) Yes, you have sought God—but have you loved Him, sought him, desired Him, in *this* way?

There are many things to be done for the Lord, and we should do whatever He asks; but that is not our purpose. **Our purpose is that Jesus should be seen:** in our homes, our workplaces, our world. “*Lord, why am I in this world? Why am I going through this agony, this trial? Oh, now I remember, so that You could be seen in me.*”

A Life With Purpose

I will behold Your face in righteousness: satisfaction comes from being like You (Psa 17:14-15). The men of this world are full,

are satisfied, when they and their children are taken care of. That's the men of this world—but a man of God? *“My satisfaction is when I'm like You.”* ***I am a man of God when nothing satisfies me but Jesus. Nothing satisfies me but to be like Jesus.*** This is our purpose. You're the only Jesus some people will ever see. Are they seeing Him at all when they are looking at you? A life without purpose is a wasted life. But living according to God's purpose is truly living: it's the only life that satisfies. □

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In the ancient kingdoms of the world, kings used to keep something called the “House of Rolls.” Today we call them the “House of Records,” “Department of Archives,” “Library,” etc. It was a place where collections of historical documents and records were kept for information and instruction. We read of one such place in the book of Ezra 6:1: “Then Darius the king made a decree, and *search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up ...*”

Heavenly Archive

From this we can gather that if a heathen king was so zealous and careful to maintain a “House of Archives” in his earthly kingdom, how much more the King of kings in His Heavenly Kingdom! A true child of God understands that His Lord keeps a record of his life in heaven. Job, the Old Testament saint who lived in the dispensation of Conscience, had this to say about the “Rolls” the Lord had kept in his name: “Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure... also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high” (Job 16:17-19). Job was bold in his claim because there was no injustice in his hands. His prayer also was pure before the Lord. On earth, his conscience did not accuse him of anything that would be a hindrance to his walk with the Lord. So great was his carefulness on behalf of his family, that he sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings. He did so continually, thinking

that perhaps his sons might have sinned and cursed God in their hearts (Job 1:5). Only a saint who is convinced about the “heavenly archive” would do such a thing. As we are almost at the end of our race here on earth, it is important for us to take an “inventory” of the “House of Rolls” that the Lord has kept for each one of us.

Three Witnesses

According to 1 John 5:7-8, “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” These verses sum up the life of a true Christian in this world. The Triune God and His infallible Word is involved in the work of salvation, sanctification, and transformation of our life. As such, these three keep a “roll” in our names and each one will be commended or condemned accordingly. May each of us strive lawfully during our pilgrimage so that when the Heavenly House of Rolls is opened before the Judgment Seat of Christ, we may hear Him say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

Record Of Tears

In Psalm 56:8-9 we come across another “record” which God keeps on behalf of His children: “Thou tellest my wanderings; put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.” Many do not realize that God keeps a record of the precious time that we spend in prayer before the Lord. Every tear we shed on behalf of the salvation of sinners and the sanctification and perfection of the saints is stored up in His “heavenly bottles” and written down in God’s “Book of Records.” What is the state of *this* “Roll” of ours? Are we able to say

along with Jeremiah, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” (Jer 9:1). Knowing the importance of this “record,” Epaphras, a servant of Christ, labored fervently for the saints to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God (Col 4:12). Jesus commends His Church as having “dove’s eyes,” signifying her prayer life which is well-pleasing in His sight. The voice of our sincere, heart-felt, heart-rending intercession is a great delight to our Master. He says, “O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places...let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice” (SS 2:14).

Archive Of Treasures

Archives are also storage rooms wherein treasures are laid up. Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also.” Therefore He says, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Mat 6:19-21). We are not supposed to set our affection on the things of this earth, but to seek those things which are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Setting our affections on things above, let us remind ourselves that Christ, who is our life, can appear in glory for us any moment.

Record Of The Fear Of God

The Lord keeps a record of those who fear the Lord and of their speech: “They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His

name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord” (Mal 3:16-17). The Lord Jesus is coming soon to claim them as His precious jewels.

Record Of Righteous Deeds

Furthermore, God keeps a record of our righteous deeds, even when we think they go unnoticed here on earth. Mordecai was such a forgotten faithful servant. But he did it not to please any man, but His God. We see that his faithfulness and loyalty to his earthly master was richly rewarded; he was able to save his whole race from utter annihilation. Mordecai made sure that there was no damage or harm done to the king. That righteous deed was certified in Mordecai’s name and later, he was rewarded. One night the king commanded “the book of records of the chronicles to be read,” where the righteous deed of Mordecai was recorded and he was greatly honored (Est 2:21-23; 6:1-11). This “Mordecai was next unto the king, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed” (Est 10:3). Soon, we too are going to be next unto our King of Zion and New Jerusalem on His glorious Throne! May the righteous acts of this “little man” (as his name meant) inspire us to fill our heavenly archive with righteous deeds and “good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:10).

Labor Of Love

The Lord is keeping a record of His children from all dispensations—even to the last two in the orders of resurrection. In Matthew 25:31-40, we find the righteous group (the sheep) and the unrighteous group (the goats) at the White Throne Judgment. When the Lord opened the “Roll” kept in their name for their righteous deeds they

said, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, thirsty, naked or sick? And the King shall answer, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me.'" Let us be reminded, whether big or small, any good deed done in His name will never go unrecorded in His Book of Righteous Deeds: "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation...for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb 6:9-10). As the Lord was with Cornelius, that devout man, one who feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always, the Lord will remember you too (Acts 10:1-2). The name, life and actions of the righteous will be in the everlasting record of the Lord (Psa 112:6).

God will judge the world: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame...a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Dan 7:9-10; Rev 20:11-15).

Written In The Earth

Staying close to and seeking Him, let us maintain our "archive." For the sanctified saints, their names are recorded in the Book of Life, Lamb's Book of Life, Book of Zion, etc. Unfortunately the names of many are written in the earth: "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain

of living waters" (Jer 17:13). When this earth and all that is in it pass away, their names too will pass away. But the Lord has written down our everlasting name that shall not be cut off in His House of Rolls.

Power In The Blood


To keep our record in heaven, we need to constantly examine and purge our lives from all that is displeasing in His sight. May all of us, the old as well as the young, draw near to God in full assurance of faith, trusting in the efficacy of the Blood of Jesus which is able to purge our conscience from dead works. It is written in Job 20:11, "His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust." And the book of Job goes on to say, "For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity" (14:16-17). Yes, the blood of Jesus can remove the record of these sins from our "bags." Yes, only the blood of the Lamb of God can break up the seal of this bag, if we repent and turn to Him with confession (Pro 28:13). "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declared unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all...if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"(1Jn 1:5-9).

Eternal Hope

Examine the roll and run the race to the finish line, knowing that there is a hope laid up for us in heaven. Let us flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an

high priest..." (Heb 6:18-20). The Lord has "begotten us again unto a lively hope...to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1Pet 1:3-5).

According to the Word of God, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt" (Dan 12:2). Jesus also resounds the same theme in the New Testament: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn 4:28-29). Our calling is to be in the Bridal group, of which it is written: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev 19:7-8). Let us seek to be found with that true righteousness which is by faith. "And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil 3:9).

Soon the "Heavenly House of Rolls" will be opened by the Lord Jesus, the Righteous, and He will plentifully reward the righteous. On that day, as it is promised in Daniel 12:3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." May we all endeavor to constantly keep our "Archive" up-to-date, all the while laboring relentlessly to endorse others too in God's "House of Rolls." 

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That He May Dwell Among Us



PART 1 — THE ALTAR

“And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them” (Exo 25:8). God spoke those words to Moses on Mount Sinai. God desires to dwell with His people. He dwelt with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden until sin separated them from their Creator and they had to depart from that paradise. But after God delivered Israel from their bondage in Egypt, He gave Moses a pattern of the tabernacle He wanted him to build. The Lord said He would dwell in the midst of His people.

Jesus The Tabernacle

As the dwelling place of God, the tabernacle is a picture of at least four things which are known as the dwelling place of the Lord. The first is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He was born of a virgin who had conceived by the Holy Ghost and His name was called, “Emmanuel.” John says, “And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14). In the original Greek, “dwelt” means, “tabernacled.” So, in other words, God *tabernacled* among us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Apostle Paul says, “And God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself” (2Cor 5:19).

Every Spirit Baptized Believer

Next, the tabernacle represents each individual Spirit-filled believer. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1Cor 3:16). Again, we read, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1Cor 6:19–20).

The Spirit Filled Church

Thirdly, the tabernacle is a type of the Spirit-filled church which was born on the day of Pentecost and continues unto this day. In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul writes, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens 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” (6:19–22). This church is built upon the revelation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

The Holy Jerusalem

Fourthly, the tabernacle is a shadow of the eternal heavens. John saw this when he was in the Spirit on the isle of Patmos. He wrote, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for

her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev 21:1-3).

The Outer Court

The tabernacle was surrounded by a court which was 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide. White linen hangings on pillars marked its perimeter. This separated the sanctuary from all that was outside the court. Due to its height, those who were standing outside this hanging could not see what was within the court. There was only one entrance: a gate which was 20 cubits wide. Only by entering through the gate could a person see the sanctuary. This gate represents the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (Jn 10:9).

There were restrictions about who could enter through the gate. Only a man who was a circumcised descendant of Abraham was permitted to pass through the gate into the outer court. In the New Testament times, circumcision signifies repentance, and being a child of Abraham means one who has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These two experiences are essential to become a child of God, or in other words, to be born again. And so, the parallel in the New Testament is revealed through the words of Jesus, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3),

The Altar

Repentance and faith are essential, but if there was no sacrifice, even repentance and faith would be in vain. When passing through the gate into the outer court, the first thing one would

see was the altar. It was also the largest article of furniture to be found in the tabernacle. You could not bypass it. In fact, you were required to bring a sacrifice in order to approach unto God. None could appear before Him empty handed. This sacrifice speaks of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The writer of Hebrews tells us that “we have an altar” (Heb 13:10).

Our Exceeding Joy

That altar can speak to us of God, our exceeding joy. The psalmist had that revelation of God, that when he approached the altar he was approaching God Himself: and God was his exceeding joy. “O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God” (Psa 43:3-4). In fact, the whole idea of the tabernacle resounds with great joy: God rejoicing in His people and His people rejoicing in Him. The prophets such as Zephaniah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and David understood God’s heart in this matter. Zephaniah proclaimed, “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing” (Zeph 3:17). Isaiah prophesied, “But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isa 65:18-19). Jeremiah declares that God’s people will bring sacrifices of praise to the house of the Lord (Jer 17:26). And,

of course we have to mention David, who could scarcely contain his joy, as he sings about sacrifices of shouts of joy. “For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord” (Psa 27:5-6). In the New Testament we are told plainly, “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name” (Heb 13:15). Again Paul says, “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1Thess 5:18). Again, the psalmist cries out, “Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing” (Psa 107:21-22).

Slaughtering Place

“Altar” in Hebrew, means “slaughtering place.” Jesus is the fulfillment of all the altar was intended to be. He was the pass-over lamb that was sacrificed for us. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. All this He did willingly, offering Himself as the perfect, sinless sacrifice for our sins. “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:14).

Holy Perfection

This altar was “four square.” This reminds us that perfection is provided for us through the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross

for us. God has called us to perfection in love, faith, holiness, and in the will of God. This is possible through Calvary. We read in the epistle to the Hebrews, “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb 10:14). It is the sacrifice of Christ that provides for our perfection. Concerning the literal altar that was seen before the sanctuary in the outer court, we read, “whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.” It is by placing ourselves upon the altar that God can perfect His work of sanctification in our lives so that we can be made ready as a glorious church for the coming of the Lord. We are exhorted to present our lives to God as a living sacrifice: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom 12:1-2). Concerning his ministry, Paul writes, “That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Rom 15:16). The Holy Spirit is doing the work of a priest concerning our lives to present us holy and without blemish to Christ at His appearing. May we endeavor to be that holy tabernacle where the presence of God dwells. □

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After a rain storm has passed, a band of glorious light stretches across the sky invoking wonder in even the most jaded of people. This phenomenon is known as a rainbow: an arc of light separated into parallel stripes of colour that appear when the Sun's rays are refracted and reflected by drops of mist or rain. The colors of the rainbow are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. This is the full spectrum of colours that make up the Sun's white light. Therefore, a rainbow is a multicoloured arc of light in the sky. We have seen many of these amazing multicoloured arches throughout our lives. Whether we see them from the back seat of the family car or the window seat of a airplane flying over a storm below, these beautiful bows remind us of what the Bible says about God's purpose in giving us the rainbow.

We see that God's wonderful rainbows have become identified as symbols of three basic concepts in the world of men. These are creation, promises and bridges. All these have a certain degree of connection with the rainbow of Genesis chapter nine which God used in His promise to Noah that He would never again destroy all flesh with a global flood. The devil is a twister of divine truth and throughout the world he weaves his subtle deceptions. The original

meaning has been corrupted by man in his rejection of God. Certain nations have retained the rainbow and its promise of a new start for their own people's origin. For example, American Indian legends link it to creation events and the Chinese have a legend concerning the rainbow and the creation of their first emperor Fohi. The aboriginal people of Australia go as far as to say that the rainbow is a sky serpent who gives new life to the people of the world. Furthermore, the concept that promises and gifts can flow from the heavens upon the bows of the sky is also seen. Many children have thought they could ride a rainbow as a bridge from earth to a brighter, happier place. This may account for the success of Judy Garland's song, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." Throughout human history, man in his quest to build a tower to reach heaven, has adored the rainbow as a bridge to cosmic consciousness. The rainbow has been used as a sign of a new era and a symbol of peace, love, and freedom.

The colors are produced by a phenomenon called dispersion. When white light passes through a prism, it scatters the different colors of light according to their wavelength or frequencies, showing a continuous band of colors called a spectrum. The angle of bending varies for different wavelengths of light. The colors, based on their wavelength, are arranged in the familiar order of the rainbow. The longest wavelengths of light are on the red end of the spectrum and the shortest wavelengths are on the violet end of the spectrum.

During or immediately following a rain storm, there are billions of tiny raindrops floating around in the atmosphere. When light from the sun encounters a water droplet, it penetrates the outer boundary of the droplet. As it enters, the light is bent and scattered

into a continuous band of colours. These colours are then reflected from off the back of the drop again as they pass through the front of the drop once more, thus being bent still some more.

Such is the physics of the rainbow. But what is its true meaning? Genesis 9:12–15 tells us: *“This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.”*

The covenant of the rainbow is between God and man and the animal kinds that were with Noah on the ark. That covenant is a promise that there would never again be a global flood that would destroy all flesh on the earth. The Bible nevertheless clearly states that there will be a future, global judgment, but this time by fire, not water (2Pet 3:10). It has been suggested that this promise of impending judgement can even be seen in the rainbow itself. The watery colors of the rainbow (the blue end of the spectrum) remind us of the destruction by water and the fiery colors (the red end of the spectrum) of the coming destruction by fire.

Secondly, the rainbow is a covenant of grace. When the secular world hears the account of Noah’s global flood, they often accuse God of being a monster for bringing this terrible judgment on mankind. However, the God of the Bible is a God of infinite mercy and grace. God told Noah to build an ark to save representative land

animal kinds and Noah’s family. However, this ark was much larger than needed for just these animals and his family. Just as Noah and his family had to go through the door to be saved, so others could have gone through the same door to be saved. In fact, after the ark was loaded, it stood for seven more days before God Himself shut the door—seven more days of grace. A holy God has to judge sin, but in His judgment, He also shows infinite mercy.

So next time you see a rainbow, remember that God judges sin. During the days of Noah, He judged with a global flood. But He is merciful and He made a covenant of grace with Noah and the animals that He would never again judge with a worldwide flood. The rainbow reminds us that Christ is the mediator between man and God and that those who receive the free gift of salvation are presented faultless before their Creator. Yes, we need to take the meaning of the rainbow back from out of the abuses that the world has used it for and use it instead to tell the world of the mercy and kindness of our Creator and Savior. □

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The task of finding a life partner for a young man or woman can be most challenging, as the success or failure of the mission endures over at least two lifetimes (that of the husband and wife, if not to their children also). In most cultures, as in Biblical times, the tension while choosing a mate is further intensified in the case of a firstborn son, as that union will affect the security of the accumulated wealth of the groom's family. And in the case of an only son, the alliance chosen will eventually inherit all the wealth of the family. Seen in this light, the chain of decisions that led to one particular wedding in the Bible initially seems almost absurd.

The Scenario

The father was exceedingly rich in both livestock and precious metals, so much so that he was known as a mighty prince in the region. He was an aged man when his son was born, and his wife had now passed away; so his son stood to inherit all the wealth of this powerful man. The son apparently was given no say in the matter of choosing a bride, though he was forty years old at the time. The elderly father determined that his son should not end up marrying one of the ungodly women in their current location, and therefore entrusted the entire matter of selecting a bride from their distant native land to the most senior slave in his house. The future of this man's entire estate was resting upon the decision

of a servant! Knowing the importance of his selection, the man asked his master, "What if I find the right woman, but she doesn't want to come with me?" It would be understandable for her to refuse—what girl would travel with a total stranger for about two months to marry another total stranger? The father made it clear: "If she doesn't want to obey you, you are free from the obligation to make her a bride."

This supervisor of servants now set off to accomplish this arduous task. The father had not mentioned any qualifications at all for this woman except that she should be from his family, and should be willing to obey the servant. So what were the criteria by which she should be chosen? [*Some go by ABC's: Age, Beauty, Caste, Dowry, Education, and Finance; if she has all these, then she's Good to go!*] Did this servant even know what was needed in a bride? And then there was another issue: previously this same servant stood to inherit all that the master possessed, before this son was born. Now, given the opportunity, will he deliberately try to ruin the son's future out of envy? The father had given no clear standards, the son had no say in the matter, the servant had questionable motives: so what would he decide?

The Types & Shadows

By now you know the story is that of Abraham looking for a bride for Isaac, and sending Eliezer to accomplish the task. Abraham is a type of God the Father, Isaac a type of Christ the Son, and Eliezer a type of the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Trinity, the riches in glory are beautifully shared without any trace of animosity or jealousy (Jn 16:13-15). From Abraham's family (the family of God, all the saved) a bride must be chosen by Eliezer (the Holy Spirit

comes upon a child of God with the purpose of preparing that person to become the Bride of Christ). And the Bride will share in all the wealth of the kingdom of God, being a co-heir with Christ (Rom 8:17; Heb 1:2; Rev 21:7). Those who are led by the Spirit will be guided into all truth to become these overcoming sons of God; those who are unwilling to obey cannot be made the Bride, though they have received the Holy Spirit. Very evidently, this story of the choosing of Isaac's bride was meant to teach us of the new testament time, of the plan in the mind of God in choosing a bride for Christ.

The Prerequisite

But getting back to our story, what finally was the gauge by which the bride-to-be would be measured? What prerequisites did Eliezer come up with? Well, only one. He prayed, "O God, God of my master Abraham, make things go smoothly this day; treat my master Abraham well! As I stand here by the well while the young women of the town come out to get water, let the girl to whom I say, 'Lower your jug and give me a drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and let me also water your camels'—let her be the woman you have picked out for your servant Isaac. Then I'll know that you're working graciously behind the scenes for my master" (Gen 24:12-14 MSG). How to choose the bride: **will she serve camels?** Is that how to choose the bride for a king? Wouldn't it be better to find someone who can serve people? It would definitely be easier. Camels can be very stubborn creatures; and after the long journey that Eliezer had made, they would be most unlovable, to say the least.

Labor Of Love

You must remember how the story turned out. Eliezer had hardly finished saying this prayer in his heart when Rebekah came

out with a water jug on her shoulder. The girl was stunningly beautiful, a pure virgin. She went down to the well, filled her jug, and came back up. The servant ran to meet her and said, "Please, can I have a sip of water from your jug?" She said, "Certainly, drink!" And she held the jug so that he could drink. When he had satisfied his thirst she said, "I'll get water for your camels, too, *until they've drunk their fill.*" She promptly emptied her jug into the trough and ran back to the well to fill it, *and she kept at it until she had watered all the camels* (Gen 24:15-20 MSG). Rebekah came as if right on cue, though she couldn't have heard the unspoken prayer (v.45). And then she served these camels with such zeal: running to the well, lowering her jug, raising the filled jug, running to the slobbering camels, emptying her jug—and then repeating this *about fifty times!* (A camel can drink up to 25 gallons; so 25 gallons x 10 camels = 250 gallons / 5 gallon jug [assuming Rebekah was no weaker vessel!] = 50 trips—*running!*) When Eliezer was relating this incident to her family, he said, "She *made* the camels drink" (v.46).

Loving The Unlovely

Now...how does this relate to us? The Holy Spirit has been commissioned to prepare us as a bride for Christ, and the question is, "Can we serve camels?" No doubt there are "camel-like" people in our lives: unpleasant, demanding, hard to please, stubborn. They are extremely thirsty—thirsty for the water of Calvary's love. Yet they may need someone to make them drink. They need a Rebekah, who will tirelessly serve them until they have done drinking. There were ten camels, and the number ten is often connected with trials in the Bible. Yes, the Holy Ghost, in order that we might be prepared as a bride fit for a King, has ordained

situations that will prove that the same love that was in the heart of the Bridegroom—to love us when we were yet worse than camels—is in the heart of the bride-to-be. Has Eliezer found you worthy of a wedding? Rebekah, the pure virgin, had a pure love as well.

Seeing The King

Can you see the wisdom in this standard put forth by Eliezer? Rebekah had a very long journey ahead of her to meet her prince; and that journey was by camel, of course. If on the first day, she was unwilling to cope with camels, how would she survive two months with them? In your life, there are camels, commissioned by the King. Without them, you cannot see the King—and don't forget, without a bride, they cannot see the King, either. Until Eliezer found a bride, the camels would be away from Abraham and Isaac. There are many “camels” in this world, that will never see Jesus until they meet a true Christian, with the water of *agape* love to give.

What Are You Waiting For?

“Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, *the camels* were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, **and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel**” (Gen 24:63-64). When Isaac saw the camels coming towards him, he knew the bride had been found. And Rebekah, as soon as she saw Isaac, she no longer needed the camel. Isaac is waiting for his bride, the camels are waiting to be loved—what are you waiting for? □

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Henry Nott was born in Bromsgrove, England in 1774. He, along with William Carey, were some of the first missionaries sent out by the newly formed London Missionary Society. Before the formation of this Missionary Society, England had not sent out missionaries to uncivilized countries, but after its formation, many were led to join. In September of 1796, Nott (who was 22 years of age) along with many other missionaries set sail on the *Duff* in order to bring the gospel to the South Pacific Islands. They arrived in Tahiti on March 5, 1797.

In modern days, Tahiti is known as a beautiful vacation resort with lovely beaches and scenery. The same was true during Nott's days. However, in sharp contrast to the landscape was the debase and corrupt lifestyle of the people. They were engaged with many strange and evil rituals that were based largely on superstition and ignorance. The most powerful man on the island named, Pomare, was their king.

When the missionaries arrived on the island they immediately met with Pomare who was pleased to welcome them. He was not so much concerned with their intents and desires, but was eager to gain access to the Western tools and goods that they brought with them. Pomare gave them a large house to live in and the missionaries began their quest to share the love of Christ. With the help of a translator, who was an unsaved man that lived on the island prior to the missionaries arriving, Nott conducted their first Christian service on Sunday, March 19, 1797.

Pomare was very friendly to the missionaries and would often come and visit them, but also demanded large meals and presents of goods and tools. The other natives would also demand "presents" from the missionaries which caused them to run low on supplies. When they didn't have anything to give, they would be robbed of the little they had left. Stealing was a common practice and even part of their religion. They had a god who they sacrificed to, who was known as the "protector of thieves."

Although the gospel of Jesus Christ and the love of God was a great attraction for the people of Tahiti as they would come to hear the missionaries, their minds and hearts were set in darkness and concerned about their earthly goods. They were a barbarous people who were often engaged in wars and killing. War was considered the normal state and peace a rarity. If they killed a person in revenge, they would let their body dry out in the sun, then cut a large hole in the middle and wear the body like a garment with the arms hanging in the front and the legs at the back.

Human sacrifice, especially of children, was very common. Two-thirds of all babies were killed at birth, either by the parents or others who were known as "infant-killers." Sometimes these children were thrown into the sea or a hot volcano as a sacrifice. They would even offer a sacrifice for crimes they had committed; if it was a serious one, then a human sacrifice would be offered. Drinking was also a common practice that made the natives perform devilish acts. Those that had infirmities were often buried alive so that the others would not have to care for them. The explorer Captain Cook commented the following about the Tahitians: "There is an abyss of dissolute sensuality into which these people have sunk, wholly unknown to every other

nation and which no imagination could possibly conceive.” Such was the state of the people of Tahiti when Nott arrived and they had an uphill task ahead of them.

To make matters worse, after some months the number of missionaries started to decrease. Several of them forsook the mission and married heathen women. Others decided to leave the service of the Lord and seek wealth in the business of trading at the ports. Another missionary was murdered. Many were discouraged because the work was hard and the fruit of their labor could not be seen.

Yet, Henry Nott continued to persevere in the work he knew the Lord had called him to do. In England, he was just a bricklayer, but in Tahiti his hidden gift in linguistics began to shine forth. On August 10, 1801, after much study of the native language, Nott became the first missionary to preach publicly to the people in their own language. It was a time of great rejoicing and success.

Because of the Napoleonic Wars, Nott and the missionaries went four years without new supplies and letters from England. Afterwards, for the next seven years, they only received supplies two times, and one of those instances the supplies received were all damaged by salt water. Food became scarce for the missionaries and at times they had to search through the mountains for wild fruit in order to survive. In 1803, Pomare died without coming to salvation and his son, Pomare II became king. It was estimated that over the thirty years that Pomare was king, he sacrificed two thousand people as offerings to his idols.

Violence and hardships continued on the island to the extent that another six missionaries decided to leave Tahiti by 1805. In 1808, the house the missionaries were living in was destroyed and almost everything was stolen. More missionaries left at that time and others


the following year. By 1810, Henry Nott was the only missionary left on the island of Tahiti. Yet Nott did not lose hope. He continued preaching and sharing the love of Christ. He studied the Hebrew and Greek Bible in order to translate the Word of God into the Tahitian language. He was able to eventually print and distribute the Bible for the Tahitians to read.

Nott spent a lot of time sharing the gospel with Pomare II and he eventually began to attend meetings. In July of 1813, Pomare II helped Nott build a chapel to conduct services. In that same month, Nott held a meeting for those that wanted to renounce idolatry and dedicate their lives to the living God. First 31 people responded, then some more until the number increased to 800. By November of 1815, Pomare II had destroyed all the idols and altars he knew of. Most of the abominations occurring throughout the land ceased. Many thousands would come to hear Nott preach and some of the missionaries who had left earlier now returned to the island.

On Tuesday, May 11, 1819, the Royal Mission Chapel was dedicated. It was a very large hall where three meetings could be conducted at the same time. Pomare II helped to construct it and the day after the dedication, he announced a set of Christian laws that would govern the conduct of the people. It was written by Henry Nott and would later be used by other South Pacific islands as well.

Finally on Sunday, May 16, 1819, after twenty-two years of labor, tribulations and hardships, Henry Nott baptized his first convert—none other than King Pomare II. There were around 5,000 people in attendance to view this momentous occasion. Even though many forsook the work of the Lord in Tahiti, Nott stayed faithful till the end and finally saw the fruit of all his years of service.

In the following years, hundreds took baptism and many became missionaries themselves and took the gospel of the love of Christ to the neighboring islands.

Henry Nott served the Lord for 47 years on the island of Tahiti. He only visited England twice during that time. On May 1, 1844 the Lord called him to his eternal home. 

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The Secret Of The Rose

A new minister was walking with an older, more seasoned minister in the garden one day. Feeling a bit insecure about what God had for him to do, he asked the older preacher for some advice. The older preacher walked up to a rosebush and handed him a rosebud and told him to open it carefully without tearing off any of the petals. The young preacher was baffled, and was trying to figure out what a rosebud could possibly have to do with his wanting to know the will and plan of God for his life and ministry. Nevertheless, because of his great respect for the older preacher, he proceeded to try to unfold the rose while keeping every petal intact. It wasn't long before he realized how impossible this was to do. Noticing the younger preacher's inability to unfold the rosebud without tearing it, the older preacher began to recite the following poem:

It is only a tiny rosebud,
A flower of God's design;
But I cannot unfold the petals
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
God opens this flower so easily,
But in my hands they die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,
This flower of God's design,
Then how can I have the wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust in God for leading
Each moment of my day.
I will look to God for guidance
In each step of the way.

The path that lies before me,
Only my Lord knows.
I'll trust God to unfold
the moments,
Just as He unfolds the rose.

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The \$20 Bill

A well known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, “Who would like this \$20 bill?” Hands started going up. He said, “I am going to give this \$20 to one of you, but first, let me do this.” He proceeded to crumple the bill up. He then asked, “Who still wants it?” Still the hands were up in the air. “Well,” he replied, “What if I do this?” And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. “Now who still wants it?” Still the hands went into the air. “My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20.”

Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value in God’s eyes. To Him, dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, you are still priceless. Psalm 17:8 states that God will keep us, “as the apple of His eye.” The worth of our lives comes not in what we do or who we are but by *whose* we are. We belong to Him!

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