

Zacharias Tanee Fomum

[Knowing GOD]

the Greatest
Need of
the Hour



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PREFACE

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This book is the tenth in a series titled, “Practical Helps For The Overcomers.”
The books in the series that have already been written are :

[The Use Of Time](#)

[Retreats For Spiritual Progress](#)

[Personal Spiritual Revival](#)

[Daily Dynamic Encounters With God](#)

[The School Of Truth](#)

[How To Succeed In The Christian Life](#)

[The Christian And Money](#)

[Deliverance From The Sin Of Laziness](#)

[The Art Of Working Hard](#)

[Knowing God - The Greatest Need Of The Hour](#)

[Revelation: A Must](#)

[True Repentance](#)

[Restitution - An Important Message For The Overcomers](#)

[You Can Receive A Pure Heart Today](#)

[You Can Lead Someone To The Lord Jesus Today](#)

[You Can Receive The Baptism Into The Holy Spirit Now](#)

[The Dignity Of Manual Labour](#)

[You Have A Talent!](#)

[The Making Of Disciples](#)

[The Secret Of Spiritual Fruitfulness](#)

[Are You Still A Disciple Of The Lord Jesus?](#)

[The Overcomer As A Servant Of Man](#)

“Moses said to the Lord, See, thou sayest to me, Bring up this people; but thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know you by name, and you have also found favour in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favour in thy sight. Consider too that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. And he said to him, If thy presence will not go with me, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favour in thy sight, I and thy people? Is it not in thy going with us, so that we are distinct, I and thy people, from all other people that are upon the face of the earth? And the Lord said to Moses, This very thing that you have spoken I will do; for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name. Moses said, I pray thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you my name, The Lord and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy” (Exodus 33:12-19).

MOSES KNEW GOD

The Apostle Paul testified,

“I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And I did so in Jerusalem; I not only shut up many of the saints in prison, by authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme; and in raging fury against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. Thus I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven brighter than the sun, shining round me and those who journeyed with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the goads. And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles - to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26:9-18).

Paul started thus with a personal knowledge of the Lord. After many fresh encounters with the Lord, he said,

“That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Philippians 3:10-11).

Paul knew the Lord and yearned more and more to know Him. His service for the Lord sprang out of his settled and growing knowledge of the Lord.

There are many believers today who worship “the unknown God”. There are

many who have never sought Him until He was revealed to them. There are many who do not know Him. There are many for whom sin is a wonderful attraction because they have never beheld the all-glorious face of the eternal Father nor heard His sweet voice. Their faith is more or less a theory. God seems absent or at best, withdrawn.

DO YOU KNOW GOD?

When did you personally encounter Him? When was your last encounter with Him?

The greatest need of the hour is for saints who know God. This book is about knowing God. We consider that the greatest need of the hour is for believers to know their God and render to Him service that is an outflow of this knowledge and intimacy with Him. It is a book for you!

Yaounde, 18th November 1990.

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THE GREATEST NEED OF THE HOUR - 1

The greatest need of the hour is the emergence in the Church of the First Born, of men and women who know God.

The Need To Know God

“Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place, the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down within the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, Samuel! Samuel! and he said, Here I am, and ran to Eli, and said, Here I am, for you called me. But he said, I did not call; lie down again. So he went and lay down. And the Lord called again, Samuel! And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said ‘Here I am, for you called me. But he said, I did not call, my son; lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here I am, for you called me. Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, Speak, Lord, for your servant hears. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And the Lord came and stood forth, calling as at other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for your servant hears. Then the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel, at which the two ears of every one

that hears it will tingle. On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. And I tell him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever.

Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, Samuel, my son, And he said, Here I am. And Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you. So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him. And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and he let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel" (1 Samuel 3:1-21).

The Spiritual Beginning Of Samuel

We know the story of Samuel's beginnings. We know that he was received from the Lord by barren Hannah, in answer to violent praying and fasting. We also know that Hannah gave Samuel to the Lord and consecrated him to serve the Lord for as long as he lived. Hannah said to the High Priest Eli,

"Oh, my lord! As you live my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me my petition which I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:26-28).

Samuel was lent to the Lord for as long as he lived. He was lent to the Lord to be His exclusive property. Samuel was thus consecrated entirely to the Lord from the very beginning. It was all settled. Samuel was to serve the Lord all his life. He was never to go to the hill country of Ephraim, the home of his parents, to visit them. They could come to him but he could not go to them. His separation unto the Lord was complete.

Samuel stayed in the temple. He continued to grow.

Samuel did not only stay in the temple. The Bible says,

“And the boy ministered to the Lord, in the presence of Eli the priest” (1 Samuel 2:11).

“Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli” (1 Samuel 3:1).

Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli,

“And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision” (1 Samuel 3:1).

Eli was the High Priest. His sons Phinehas and Hophni were priests. They maintained the religious worship system. Animals were sacrificed. Vows were made and fulfilled. People came from far and near Shiloh to sacrifice and pray. The routine was carried out continuously but the word of the Lord was rare and

there was no frequent vision.

Could anything be more tragic? There was abundance of routine but the voice of the Lord was rare, and vision was rare.

Abundance Of Routine ; Rarity Of God's Voice And Vision

It begins to strike me that we could have the abundance of many things and yet there be rarity of the Lord's voice and vision from the Lord! It begins to strike me that there could be abundance of :

Meetings for prayer,

Bible reading,

Teaching meetings,

Worship meetings

Evangelistic meetings,

all coupled with the rarity of the Word of the Lord and the rarity of vision from the Lord.

Why was vision rare? Why was the word rare? These were rare because of a number of reasons. First of all, Eli who was the High Priest, who entered into the Holy of Holies and was supposed to lead the people into a real knowledge of God had stopped walking with God. He no longer heard God. He no longer

spoke to God in reality. Secondly, his sons who were priests were caught up with greed and immorality instead of being caught up with the pursuit of the Lord, the pursuit of holiness and the pursuit of interest-free service. Thirdly, Eli was indulgent with his sinning sons and did not discipline them and restrain them. He let them continue in sin unpunished. Fourthly, Eli was beginning to lose physical sight and spiritual sight too. Lastly, vision was rare because Samuel who was consecrated and upright and was involved in the service of the Lord, did not yet know the Lord he was serving.

We also place great emphasis on deliverance from sin. This too is good and has its place. However, Samuel was delivered from sin, yet he did not yet know the Lord. He was different from the sons of Eli. They lived in sin. He lived in holiness. However, they did not know the Lord and he did not yet know the Lord. This makes it obvious that separation from the world and deliverance from sin, though important in the life of a believer, must not be mistaken for a knowledge of the Lord. Samuel was serving the Lord from a position that was without sin, from a position of full surrender, yet he lacked a personal knowledge of the Lord.

We have seen what Samuel did and also seen that he lacked one thing. The question is, “What was lacking in Samuel’s spiritual experience?” The answer is obvious. Samuel lacked a revelation of the Lord. Samuel achieved that which he could achieve

separation from sin,

separation from self,

separation from the world,

separation from worldly things,

separation unto the Lord.

However, Samuel could not do that which he could not do, i.e. - reveal the Lord to himself.

A man can separate himself from sin and he must separate himself from sin; a man can separate himself from self and he ought to separate himself from self; a man can separate himself from worldly things and he ought to separate himself from these, a man can separate himself from the world and he ought to do that at once; a man can separate himself unto the Lord and he ought to do that at once. However, no man can reveal the Lord to himself. The Lord Jesus praised the Father saying,

“I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes, yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Matthew 11:25-27).

Yes, spiritual things can be divided into two groups. There are the things that man can do and which he must do. There are also the things that man cannot do regardless of how hard he works, and which unless God does, will remain undone. That which only God can do, lies principally in the domain of revelation. The Bible says that the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to Samuel. God had not yet revealed His word to him. God had not yet revealed Himself to him. Without this personal revelation of God to Samuel, Samuel could never know Him. Without this personal revelation of the Lord by the Lord to an individual, that individual can not know Him personally.

Permit me to ask you a personal question, “Are you in the position where Samuel was? Are you separated from sin, the world, the things of the world, and

so on, and separated unto the Lord but you do not yet know the Lord?” Is it true of you that God has not yet been revealed to you? Do you see that your condition is abnormal - a servant of the Lord who does not know Him? Maybe you know about Him. Maybe you have a mental and theoretical grasp of the truth about the Lord. Maybe you have memorized them and are even using them, but one fundamental thing is lacking - the knowledge of the Lord!

The Knowledge Of The Lord Is Indispensable

It is quite possible to be born again but not know the Lord. It is quite possible to receive the salvation of God, yet lack this knowledge of God that we are writing about. My fear is that most born again people do not yet know the Lord. They are born again but they are like Samuel was, the Word of the Lord has not yet been revealed to them; the Lord has not yet revealed Himself to them.

Let this not surprise you. A child can be truly born into a family and be healthy, feed, talk and carry out the functions of life without knowing his father. The father may even be very near and may attend to the child: care for him, provide for him and comfort him. The child may receive these things and truly enjoy them without knowing the father. The child may continue in this condition for days, months and even years, without knowing the father. If this child is to know the father, there must come a day when the father is revealed to him and from that day on, he will know his father.

There is an incident in the New Testament that can throw light on the thing on our heart. The Bible says,

“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the work of

God might be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day, night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar said, Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, It is he, others said, No, but he is like him. He said I am the man. They said to him, Then how were your eyes opened? He answered, The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash; so I went and washed and received my sight.' They said to him, Where is he? He said, I do not know... Jesus heard that they had cast him out and having found him he said, Do you believe in the Son of man? He answered, And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him; You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you. He said, Lord, I believe;' and he worshipped him" (John 9:1-38).

This blind man received his sight through the ministry of the Lord Jesus. He was prepared to testify about what had happened. He even knew the name of the One who had opened his eyes. However, he did not know the Lord Jesus. Subsequent contact led to the revelation of Jesus to him. He then believed in Him and worshipped.

Without this subsequent encounter with the Lord Jesus, the man would have gone away, enjoyed the privilege of seeing and suffering persecution for the Lord Jesus by being thrown out of the synagogue, yet not knowing the Lord Jesus.

I wonder how many believers are in the condition of that man, soon after he had received his sight. They "see" the work of the Cross and have believed in the Lord Jesus unto eternal life. They are witnessing to others about the Lord's power to save and even suffering persecution for Him, but He has not yet been revealed to them. The consequence of this lack is that something is lacking in their praise, something is lacking in their worship, something is lacking in their

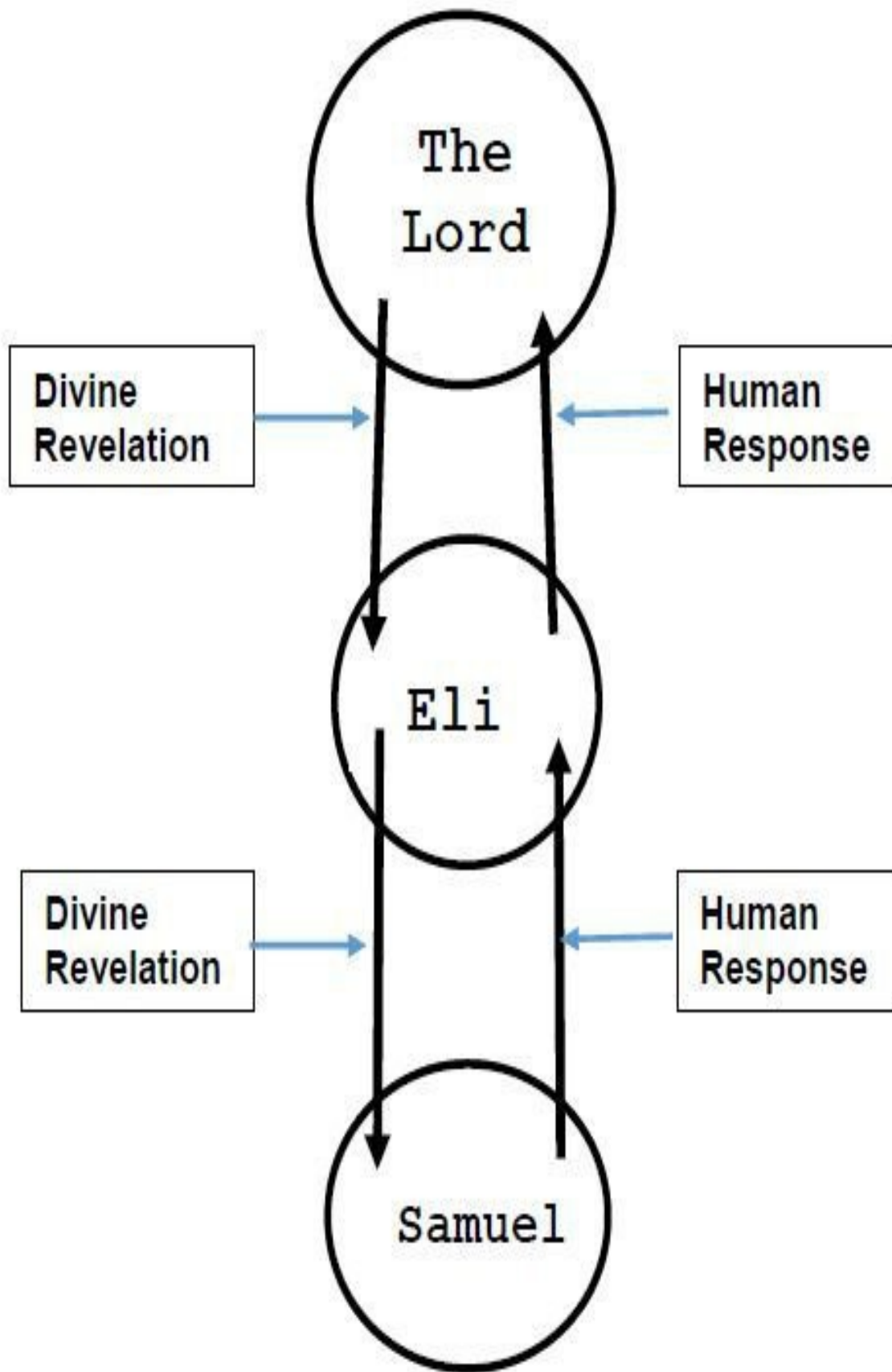
song, something is lacking in their service, something is lacking in their witness and something is lacking in their gifts and in their giving.

Samuel, Serving The Lord Without Knowing Him.

Although Samuel was right with God and was faithful, he did not yet know the Lord. The Bible says,

“Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli” (1 Samuel 3:1).

Samuel was ministering under a man who had lost intimate communion with the Lord. Had Eli not lost communion with God, Samuel could still have known God while ministering under him. We can illustrate what would have taken place as follows:



Unfortunately the communion between Eli and the Lord was broken. Consequently, Samuel who was ministering under him had no access to the vision nor the Word of the Lord.

Samuel was in a sense serving the God he did not know - serving the unknown God! Can you imagine it? He was consecrated; he was set apart unto the Lord from the very beginning; he was totally handed over to God in an exclusive sense - from the word go! His whole future was to be buried in the affairs of God. He was separated from his parents; he was separated from the world; he was separated unto God. He was sleeping near the ark of the covenant of God. All these things were true but he did not know the Lord and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

Samuel was entirely consecrated and that was good! We tend to stress on the need for entire consecration to the Lord. This is not bad. It has its place. However, Samuel was consecrated yet he did not know the Lord. The knowledge of God did not come automatically with consecration. We also place great emphasis on separation from the world, separation from the family. Yes, these have their place. The only problem is that separation from the world or from worldly things and the like, does not lead automatically to a knowledge of the Lord.

Faithful Without Revelation

We know that in the service of the Lord, He attaches great importance to faithfulness. The apostle Paul teaches saying,

“Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy (faithful)” (1

Corinthians 4:2).

The Lord Jesus said,

“He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he who is dishonest in very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?” (Luke 16:10-12).

Although faithfulness is important, it is possible for a man to be faithfully serving the Lord without knowing the Lord he is serving. Samuel was like that. He was faithful in being in the temple. He slept right in the temple. His sleeping place was as near as possible to the physical symbol of God’s presence. The Bible says,

“And Samuel was lying down within the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.” (1 Samuel 3:3)

Samuel faithfully slept in that position from the day he was weaned and brought to the Lord. He must have had specific duties which he carried out morning, afternoon and evening, as a part of his service of the Lord. All these things were carried out very faithfully and they were carried out for the Lord, yet the person who carried them out did not yet know the Lord and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

It is, therefore, possible for people to meet

every Sunday to worship,
every Tuesday for Bible Teaching,
every Wednesday for intercession,
every Thursday for a night of prayer,
every Friday for special singing,
every Saturday for an evangelistic meeting,

and go on for many

weeks,

months, and

years,

without any special knowledge of the Lord or any special visitation of the Lord. They can carry out these things from one generation to another without failing even once, even though the people carrying them out do not yet know the Lord and even though the Word of the Lord has yet been revealed to them.

There is such an example in the Bible to serve for our instruction. The Word of the Lord says,

“In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zacharias in

the fourth day of the ninth month which is Chislev. Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to entreat the favour of the Lord, and to ask the priest of the house of the Lord of hosts and the prophets, "Should I mourn and fast in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?" Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me: "Say to all the people of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years was it for me that you fasted? And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves?" (Zechariah 7:1-6).

These people faithfully fasted throughout the fifth and the seventh month for seventy years and yet the Lord was not in it. A man can serve the Lord for seventy years, with much sacrifice, without that the Lord has been revealed to him. He may faithfully serve the Lord whom he does not know for a life time. So faithfulness in service is not enough. THERE MUST BE REVELATION. Samuel needed revelation. Do you not need it?

A Sacrifice On The Altar Without The Flame?

God must reveal Himself to man if man is to know Him. God will reveal Himself to those who separate themselves from all sin, and who have also separated themselves from the love of the world and the love of the things of the world and then are consecrated to Him.

However, it must be known that separation from self, separation from sin, separation from the love of the world, separation from the love of the things of the world and consecration unto Him, are only preparatory. These things although good and necessary, do not constitute the knowledge of the Lord. There are some who try to serve the Lord on the basis of their separation from self. There are others who try to serve Him on the basis of their separation from sin. There are others who try to serve Him on the basis that they have separated

themselves from the love of the world and the love of the things of the world. There are others who try to serve Him on the basis of their consecration to Him. The problem is that none of these people can find real fulfilment in serving Him. Why can they not be fulfilled?

They cannot be fulfilled because they have made the means become the end.

Separation from

self,

sin,

the love of the world,

the love of the things of the world,

and consecration,

were meant to pave the way to knowing God. They were not meant to substitute for a knowledge of Him!

Are you separated from self? If you are, that is good, but it is not enough! Are you separated from sin? If you are, that is good, but it is not enough! Are you separated from the love of the world? If you are, that is good, but it is not enough! Are you separated from loving the things that are in the world? If you are, that is good, but it is not enough! Are you entirely consecrated to the Lord? If you are, that is indeed good, but it is not enough! Why not? It is because the knowledge of the Lord comes after a man has been through the above things. The person who wants to know the Lord must separate himself from self, sin, the

love of the world, the love of the things of the world and be consecrated to the Lord. Then he must go beyond these things and know the Lord. If he would not separate himself from these things and be consecrated to the Lord, he will never know Him. If he only separates himself from these things and is consecrated to the Lord, he nevertheless does not know the Lord. The person who would find fulfilment in the Lord must have a post-consecration knowledge of the Lord!

Consecration unto the Lord can be likened to the sacrifice on the altar. For a sacrifice to be laid on the altar, the person involved has to :-

decide that he wants to sacrifice to the Lord.

decide what he wants to sacrifice to the Lord

purchase what he wants to sacrifice to the Lord.

ensure that what he has purchased is acceptable to the Lord.

bind the sacrifice and kill it and place it on the altar.

The sacrifice on the altar is equivalent to consecration. Before this takes place the various separations from sin, self and the world have taken place.

When a sacrifice is on the altar, two pathways are open for it: the fire of the Lord can come upon the sacrifice and consume it or the sacrifice can remain on the altar unconsumed. The sacrifice that is consumed has been accepted by the Lord. The one that is unconsumed has been rejected by Him. Placing a sacrifice on the altar is not enough. If it has not been placed on the altar, it cannot be consumed. If it is placed on the altar and there is no flame there, it cannot also be consumed.

The problem with the Church in our day is that many serve the Lord because they have put an end to the self-life; others serve the Lord because they have been delivered from sin; others serve the Lord because, having received a revelation of the fact that the world and all in it has no future, they have been set free from the love of the world and the love of the things of the world. Still, others serve the Lord because they have laid their all on the altar of sacrifice and have not taken it back. However, there is a short supply of people who serve the Lord, because having placed their all on the altar, they have waited and called upon the Lord and have not moved to serving Him until the fire of the Lord has come down upon their sacrifice and consumed it. Many are serving the Lord without knowing the flame of the Lord upon their sacrifice. They are serving the Lord without a knowledge of the Lord. They are serving the Lord on the basis of consecration!

The Mount Carmel Experience

We will try to illustrate what we are anxious to communicate with what happened to Elijah on Mount Carmel. The Bible says,

“Then Elijah said to all the people, Come near to me, and all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been thrown down; Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying, ”Israel shall be your name; and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood. And he said: Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time. And he said: Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time. And the water ran about the altar and filled the trench also with water. And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word. Answer me, O Lord,

answer me, that these people may know that thou, O Lord, art God and that thou hast turned their hearts back. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said: The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God” (1 Kings 18:30-39).

Can you imagine what would have happened if Elijah had laid the sacrifice on the altar and then went away joyfully saying, “I have actually laid the sacrifice on the altar?” It would have been a tragic mess and the Lord would not have been glorified at all. Can you imagine what would have happened had he called upon the Lord earnestly and persistently and there was no answer by fire from above? It would have been tragic. He would have been at the same level as the prophets of Baal and worse, for there would have been the Lord who would not answer and Baal who could not answer.

It was absolutely indispensable for the glory of the Lord that the fire fell. It was also absolutely indispensable for Elijah that the fire fell, for without it, he would have had no authority over the prophets of Baal. When the fire fell, it devoured the sacrifice and this set him apart. Praise the Lord.

The Fire Of The Lord Fell

We have said that there is a marked difference between those who serve the Lord because they have laid their all on the altar and those who serve Him because having laid their all on the altar, they have however gone ahead to seek and know Him so that their service springs not only from consecration but from a knowledge of Him.

We want to make it clear that this knowledge of the Lord is not something that

anyone can manipulate. It is not some weird experience that a person can induce. It is not something born of imagination or day-dreaming or wishing. It is something that God does and which only He can do.

Elijah made sure that there would be no fire that came from natural sources. He ensured that if God did not act, his failure would be obvious. He, therefore, poured twelve jars of water on the sacrifice and the altar in such a way that

“the water ran round about the altar, and filled the trench also with water” (1 Kings 18:35).

In this way, he eliminated the possibility of any natural or coincidental fire from being manifested. He was more or less saying, “If the Lord will not send down His fire, I want no fire at all.”

If we are to know the Lord, we will have to be brought to the point where we are willing to say, “I want a true knowledge of God. I reject all that my own efforts can produce. I reject all that the manipulations of man can produce. I will not accept anything that resembles the knowledge of the Lord. I must know the Lord, I must have the Lord or nothing.”

When Elijah eliminated every possibility of natural or man-made or accidental fires, he called upon the Lord to answer him. He did not place the sacrifice on the altar, eliminate every possible source of accidental or man-made fire and then go away saying, “I leave it to the Lord. He will send the fire when He wants. I have done my part. I will be busy with other things now.” He stayed there by the altar and called upon the Lord. He prayed,

“O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that thou, O Lord, art God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back” (1 Kings 18:36-37).

When a man has laid his all on the altar, he must do one more thing. He must pray. He must call upon the Lord. He must cry to the Lord. He must take no rest and give God no rest until He has acted in response. Do you notice Elijah’s words of supplication? They are:

O Lord!

O Lord God of Abraham!

O Lord God of Isaac!

O Lord God of Israel!

Answer me O Lord!

Answer me!

Motivation

It is critically important that people know God and that they serve Him out of that knowledge. A question needs however to be raised. It is this “Why must a person seek to know God?” He must seek to know God not because the knowledge of God will make him feel good and confirm his faith. He must seek to know God for the glory of God. It could be that the Lord will allow us to enjoy some personal benefits from knowing Him but the primary purpose for wanting to know Him must be His glory and not ours. If we want to know Him

for some personal reasons that are rooted in self-worship, we shall find that our search may be in vain. The Lord may allow our sacrifice to remain on the altar with no flame from heaven to consume it, if our motives are impure - if they are rooted in self-glory.

For Elijah, the primary reason for wanting the Lord to answer by fire was so that this people may know that

‘thou, O Lord, art God, and that thou has turned their hearts back.’

He wanted the people to know that the Lord is God. He wanted the Lord glorified. That was his primary reason.

If we seek to know the Lord for His own honour and glory, we shall be blessed. He will reveal Himself to us. He will cause His fire to fall on our sacrifice and then the praise,

“The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God,”

shall flow to Him. He will be exalted and we will be edified!

Amen.

The Need For Leadership That Knows God

The Bible says this about the period in which Samuel lived a consecrated and faithful life, yet did not know the Lord.

“At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place” (1 Samuel 3:2).

Eli had dim sight! Eli could no longer see!! His physical vision was dim and his spiritual vision was even dimmer!!! Someone had to receive revelation so that others might receive revelation. The main person who could have received revelation had dim sight. He had dim physical sight and dim spiritual sight. Eli had a problem and that problem affected everyone.

When spiritual leadership walks with God, receiving revelation from the Lord and causing that revelation to be translated into life and into spiritual walk, then those who are under that leadership will also be open to and receive revelation. In whatever domain a leader is blocked, the people under him will be blocked. Similarly, the people under a leadership that sees will in turn see.

The question is, “Are you a leader who can no longer see?” If that is the case, you are a blind leader leading the blind! Another question is “Are you following blind leadership? If you are, then you and that leadership will soon fall into a ditch.”

My prayer for myself and for you is that we shall labour and come into a position that compels God to bless us. In that position, we shall receive revelation and make it possible for others to do same. Glory be to the Lord!

Although Eli's eyesight had begun to grow dim, he was not yet completely blind. The Bible says that

"The lamp of God had not yet gone out" (1 Samuel 3:3).

We thank the Lord that Eli was there even though he was functioning sub-normally. We thank the Lord that even though there were attempts made by the sin of the sons of Eli and the indulgence of their father, the lamp that could have gone out had not yet gone out. Why had it not yet gone out? It was because God was preserving it. He was waiting for someone to rise up, catch a glimmer of light from the light that was failing and ensure continuity in the future.

God is so wonderful that He never leaves His people without a witness. The witness may not be as rigorous and firm as it should be, and its light may not be as bright as it should be, but it is always there so that those who want to be lighted would be lighted.

There must be someone in your town, city or nation who has the light of the Lord for today, even though it may be imperfect. Get in touch with him and humble yourself before him. God will use him to lead you into the greater and brighter light that He intends you to be. However, if you neglect that person or despise him, you may find yourself continuing in darkness for a long time.

We shall see in the next chapter that although Eli was in not too good a spiritual condition, God used the remaining light that he possessed to help Samuel to know God and to become an instrument in the hands of God. Praise the Lord!

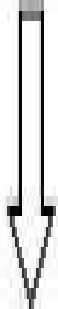
God's Self Revelation To Samuel

We thank the Lord that He did not allow Samuel to continue endlessly in the condition of serving the Lord without knowing Him. The period of His not knowing the Lord came to an end. The Bible says,

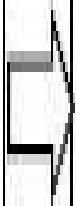
“Samuel was lying down within the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, ‘Samuel, Samuel!’ and he said, ‘Here I am!’” (1 Samuel 3:3-4).

God called, “Samuel, Samuel!” We have a calling God! We have a speaking God. He is a God who reveals Himself. The Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a God who speaks and a God who reveals Himself. He is not like an idol that has a mouth but cannot speak. Our God has spoken and spoken and spoken! Our God is speaking and speaking and speaking. The only problem is that most of His children are not listening. Too many of us are hearing too many other voices; too many of us are caught up with too many other things, so that although our God is speaking and speaking and speaking, there are no listening and listening and listening people. The result is that there are no hearing and hearing and hearing people. The consequence of this is that there are no people who know God.

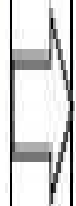
God
Speaks



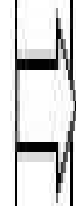
Man
Listens



The listening
man hears



The hearing
man
understands



The
understanding
man knows
God

For a man to hear, he has to listen. For him to listen, it may become necessary for him to withdraw from all else and concentrate on waiting and listening. Many people cannot listen to God. They are in the wrong places. They are in places where other voices are loud and absorbing. They are in places where they are compelled to be tuned to the

radio,

television,

football,

and all other distractions. Because of these distractions, they cannot hear.

They may not hear because of inner distractions:

the love of money,

the love of fame,

the love of the world,

the love of the things of the world,

and a thousand other inner distractions.

Samuel was in the right place. He was in the temple. He was where the ark was.

He was where other noises were forbidden. It was night when distractions were few. He was consecrated. He was waiting. He was yearning. He had no other interests outside of the Lord. He had no other interests in addition to the Lord. His heart was single towards the Lord. His heart was single towards the service of the Lord. There was a desire to know the Lord. The desire had been there since he first came into the service of the Lord.

Samuel was listening. Consequently, when the Lord called, he heard. “Samuel, Samuel”, came forth the voice of the Lord. Samuel heard at once. Was he not asleep? He was not. He was yearning and he was waiting. He was absorbed by His service. It occupied him in the day and at night he meditated on this God whom he served, whom he did not know and whom he longed to know.

When Samuel heard the voice of the Lord he immediately thought he was hearing Eli. He thought he was hearing Eli because he was inwardly tuned to Eli. After all, his was the only voice of authority that he was used to hearing within the temple. Yes, Samuel was tuned to Eli. He was tuned to the horizontal. He was not tuned to the vertical.

In our day, many believers are so tuned to the economic news, so tuned to what man has to say and offer that they cannot hear what God has to say. They tune to the radio, buy newspapers, tune to television networks and ask many a passing person, “What is in the news?” However, they are not tuned to the Lord and that is why they miss Him.

Because Samuel was tuned and adjusted to Eli, he ran to him and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” He was sure that Eli had called him. He was sure but he was wrong. The fact that we sometimes think that we are sure about something does not necessarily make it right. We may be like Samuel saying “You called me,” even though the person addressed did not call us.

Eli was honest to acknowledge and confess that he had not called for Samuel. He said to him,

“I did not call, lie down again.”

Samuel was obedient. He did not argue. He was surrendered. He was consecrated. Surrendered and consecrated people do not argue. They yield. Samuel went and lay down.

The Lord called again, “Samuel”. Again Samuel arose and went to Eli, and again he felt sure that Eli had called for him for he said,

“Here I am, for you called me.”

Samuel was mistaken a second time. He was told,

“I did not call, my son, lie down again.”

Why could Samuel not discern the voice of the Lord? This was because he did not know the Lord, and the Word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him!

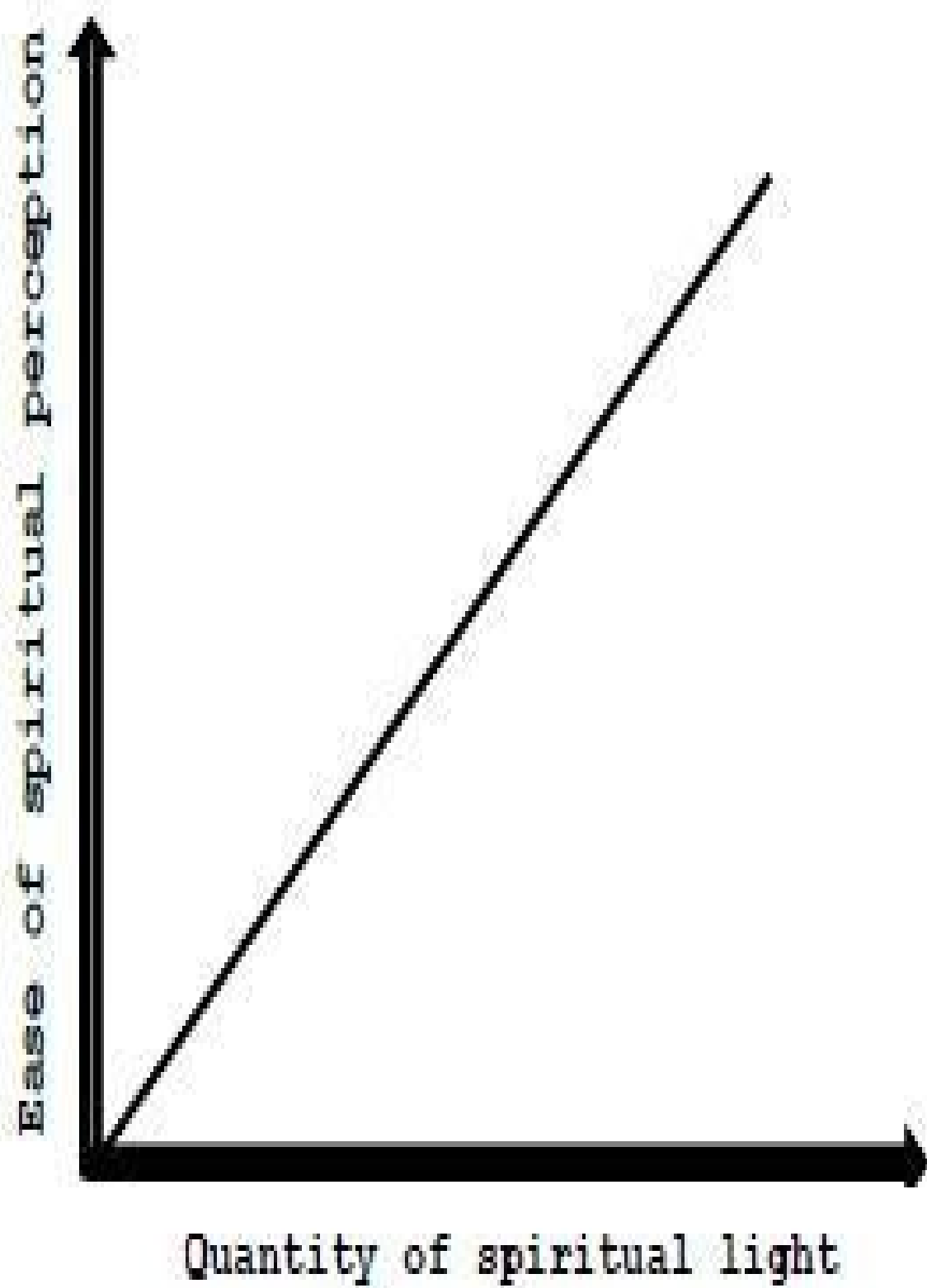
Spiritual discernment is possible for people who know the Lord, people who have heard His voice and discerned it before. Such people, then, can discern His voice when they hear it in the future, because they can discern the voice of the present in comparison with the voice of the past and come to the conclusion that

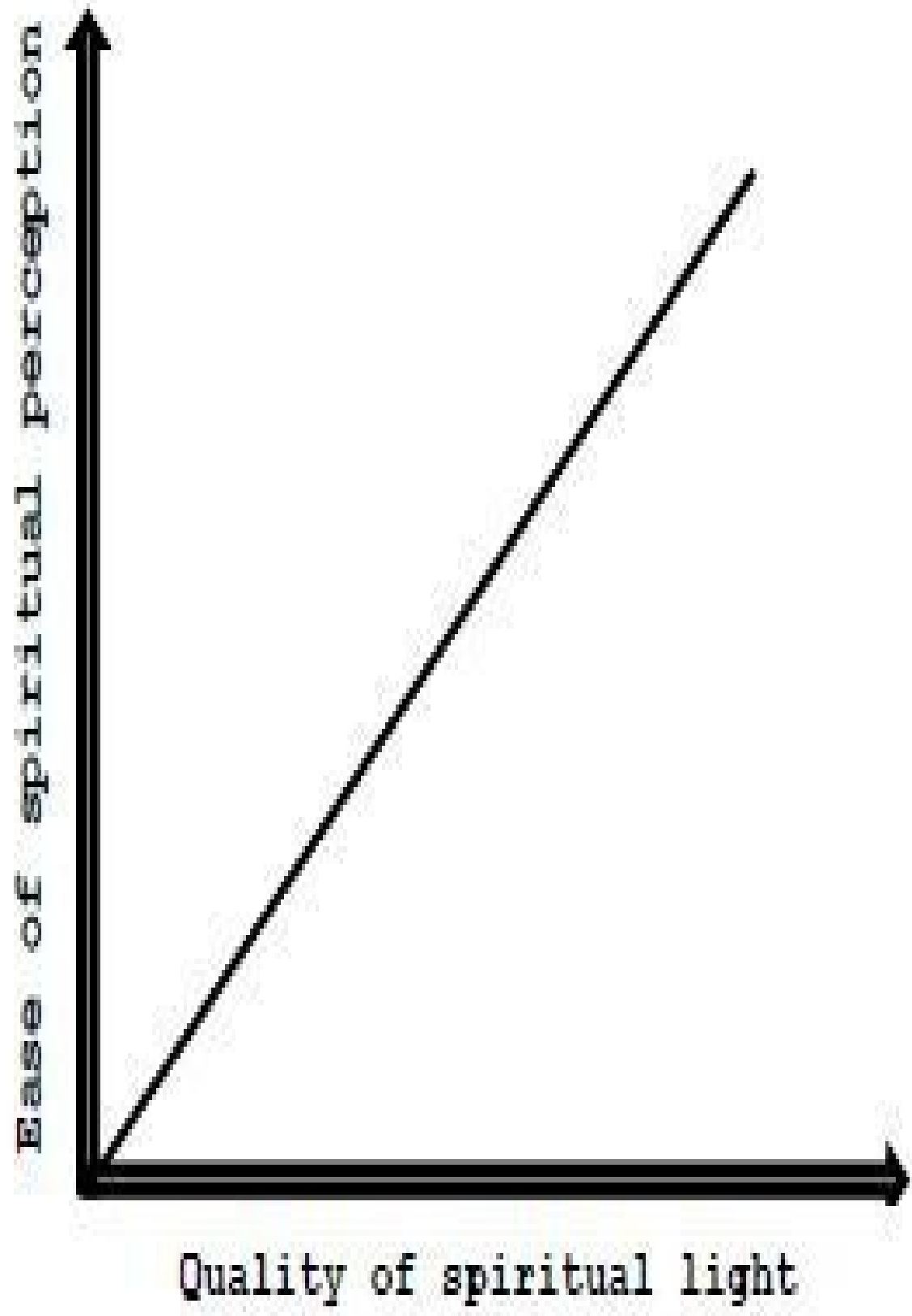
it is from the same Person.

We have a wonderful God. We have a good God. He is so merciful and so patient! How unlike us is He! He did not become impatient with Samuel and decide that because he was so slow in discerning, He would not call again. He called the third time and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said to him,

“Here I am, for you called me.”

After Samuel had gone to Eli three times, then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Yes, Eli perceived. His eyes were dim but he was not blind. He had traces of spiritual sight left and that is why he could perceive that the Lord was calling the boy. Had he full spiritual sight he would have discerned from the first time that Samuel spoke to him. Were he completely without spiritual sight he would never have discerned that the Lord was calling Samuel, even if the Lord had continued to call one hundred times. The blind cannot see God until God opens their eyes. The spiritually blind cannot perceive until God opens their spiritual eyes to perceive. The ease of spiritual perception is directly proportional to the quantity and quality of spiritual light that a person has. We can present it graphically as follows:-





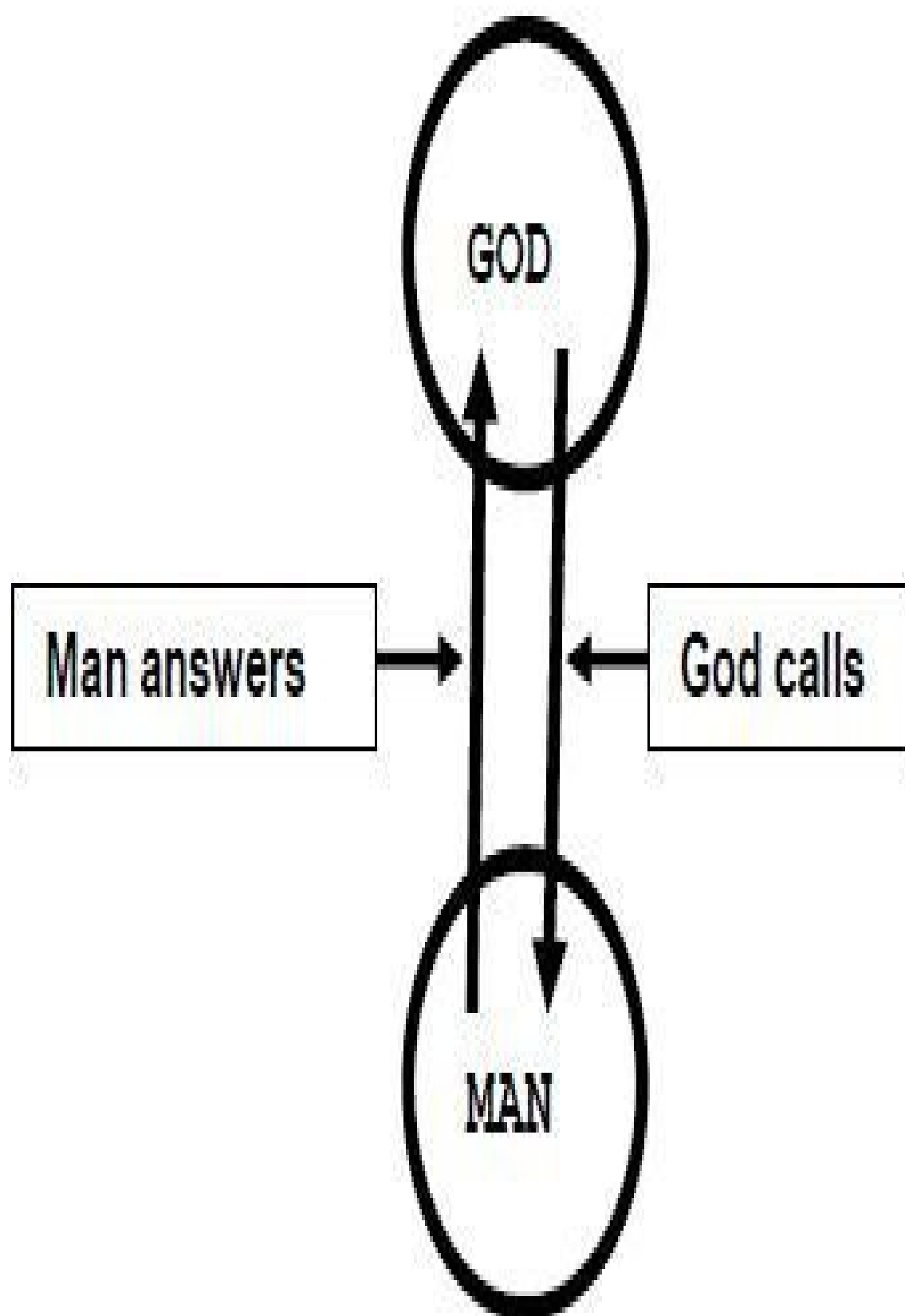
The Lord longs for people who will perceive at His first call that He is calling. Many of God's children are so confused about His voice. They guess in this direction and guess in that direction. However, the Father desires that His children would know Him and be so rightly related to Him that they would discern His voice the first time He calls.

When Eli perceived that God was calling the boy Samuel, Eli instructed him,

“Go, lie down and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears’” (1 Samuel 3:9).

God is so loving. He does continue to call until there is an answer.

Because the Lord yearns not only to hand instructions over to man, but to enter into communion with him, He calls and continues to call until man responds.



WHEN GOD CALLS AND MAN ANSWERS, GOD CAN THEN SPEAK.

As we have said, there is a scarcity of the knowledge of God amongst God's children in our day. Let us insist that this shortage is not owing to an unwillingness on God's part to make Himself known. God has been calling and calling. He is always calling but He will not go beyond the calling until there has been response from man.

Samuel did not know the Lord. He also did not know how to answer when God called. Eli served the vital role of not only telling him that the Lord was calling him but he also instructed him on how to answer when God called. Eli had experienced that which Samuel needed and Eli helped Samuel. Eli had dim sight but he did not have a jealous heart. He did not say, "How is it that it is to Samuel that the Lord now wants to speak? Am I not the high priest?" He was interested in the purposes of God. He was not wrapped up in self-worship. There is need on the spiritual horizons of our time, of men and women of maturity in the knowledge of the Lord who will help the young to make progress. We need in our day, men and women who are interested in the Lord moving and speaking, regardless of the instrumentality that He chooses to use. Are you willing to pray that the Lord would do an unparalleled work in saving the lost and in building up the saints even though He were to use the ministry of someone else for this? Would you still be glad to pray that He does it even though He may do it through the ministry of someone whom you do not consider very spiritual and who in addition, despises and speaks evil of you? Unless you are prepared to put in your all so that God may work on behalf of the lost and the saints, regardless of who gets the credit from man, regardless of the fact that no human being may ever know the contribution you made, you are an idolater. You are worshipping the idol called "self". Repent and be cleansed from your idolatry. Invest your life in helping others hear God's voice, know His will and do His bidding, regardless of who gets the glory from man, and your heavenly Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Samuel Responded

When Eli educated Samuel on how to answer God, Samuel went back to the place where he lay. All was now set. The glorious moment had come. The Bible says,

“And the Lord came and stood forth calling as at other times, ”Samuel! Samuel!” ‘And Samuel responded as he was told, “Speak, for your servant hears,” Then the Lord said to Samuel, “Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel, at which the two ears of every one that hears it will tingle. On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. And I tell him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God and he did not restrain them. Therefore, I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever,” (1 Samuel 3:10-14).

The Lord came and stood forth! Yes the Lord came and the Lord stood forth and the Lord called and Samuel answered, and the Lord spoke! It was a moment of transformation for Samuel. It was a brief moment but Samuel heard the Lord and knew the Lord’s presence. He heard both the voice and knew also the presence, for the Lord came down, stood forth and spoke.

Samuel was no longer the same. He now had a message from the Lord which came to him directly. He knew the Lord’s presence not by self-deceived imagination, not by psychological conditioning or by other methods of manipulation that deceive, but by the actual coming down of the Lord. He knew what was on God’s heart. He knew what God was going to do. He knew the future by the revelation of God.

Samuel was not excited. He did not run around to tell people. “I have met the

Lord.” The presence of the Lord did not excite his emotions. It created deep awe! It left a sense of self-loathing! He also now possessed a knowledge of the future which was not comforting, for the judgment of the Lord was coming upon his spiritual leader and his household.

Samuel now knew God. But he also became a partaker of the Lord’s burden!

Those who would seek the Lord must seek Him not for what they will get out of it but because of what the Lord will get out of it. There is no room for seeking the Lord so that He may be found for human pleasure. He must be sought so that when found, He would receive the honour, praise and adoration that comes from a knowledge of Him. He must be sought by people who want to know Him, know what is on His heart and co-operate with Him to ensure that what is on His heart is done.

Samuel received the revelation of what God was going to do. From that moment he became a man with a burden - the burden of the Lord!

No one can meet the Lord and go back and live as before. Every real encounter with God will leave very permanent marks on a person. There is a sense in which all encounters with God are disturbing. For one thing, a man might have done his own thing before he met the Lord. After meeting Him, he must abandon his own thing and be pre-occupied with God’s thing or be totally miserable. Let us look at what happened when Isaiah met the Lord. The Bible says,

“In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim, each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the threshold

shook at the voice of him who called and the house was filled with smoke. And I said, Woe is me! For I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts! Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said, "Behold this has touched your lips, your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then, I said "Here I am! Send me. And he said, Go and say to this people: 'Hear and hear, but do not understand..." (Isaiah 6:1-10).

Do not seek to know the Lord, to have Him revealed to you, to have His Word come to you, unless you are prepared to let God have all the glory, your sins to be exposed, confessed and forsaken, and for you to answer, "Here I am, send me!. Then you may be made the messenger of an unpopular message!

Yes, the one who seeks the Lord will confront God's holiness and God's glory and an exposure of his sin. There is a crying,

"Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips,"

that will come forth from the lips of him who has met the Lord. This is so because, in His presence, all that was apparently holy is shown for what indeed it is. The truth is that, none can come unto His immediate presence and not cry out for mercy. Yes, there is also the burning coal from the altar needing placement on all tongues that repent, in order to sanctify them and make them fit to say,

"Here I am, send me!"

So, encountering the Lord, having a revelation of the Lord, will always lead to consequence for the one to whom the Lord reveals Himself. Those whose hearts are not ready for exposure and commissioning to an unpopular task, should not bother to seek Him. Revelations are always consequential.

A Once For All Thing ?

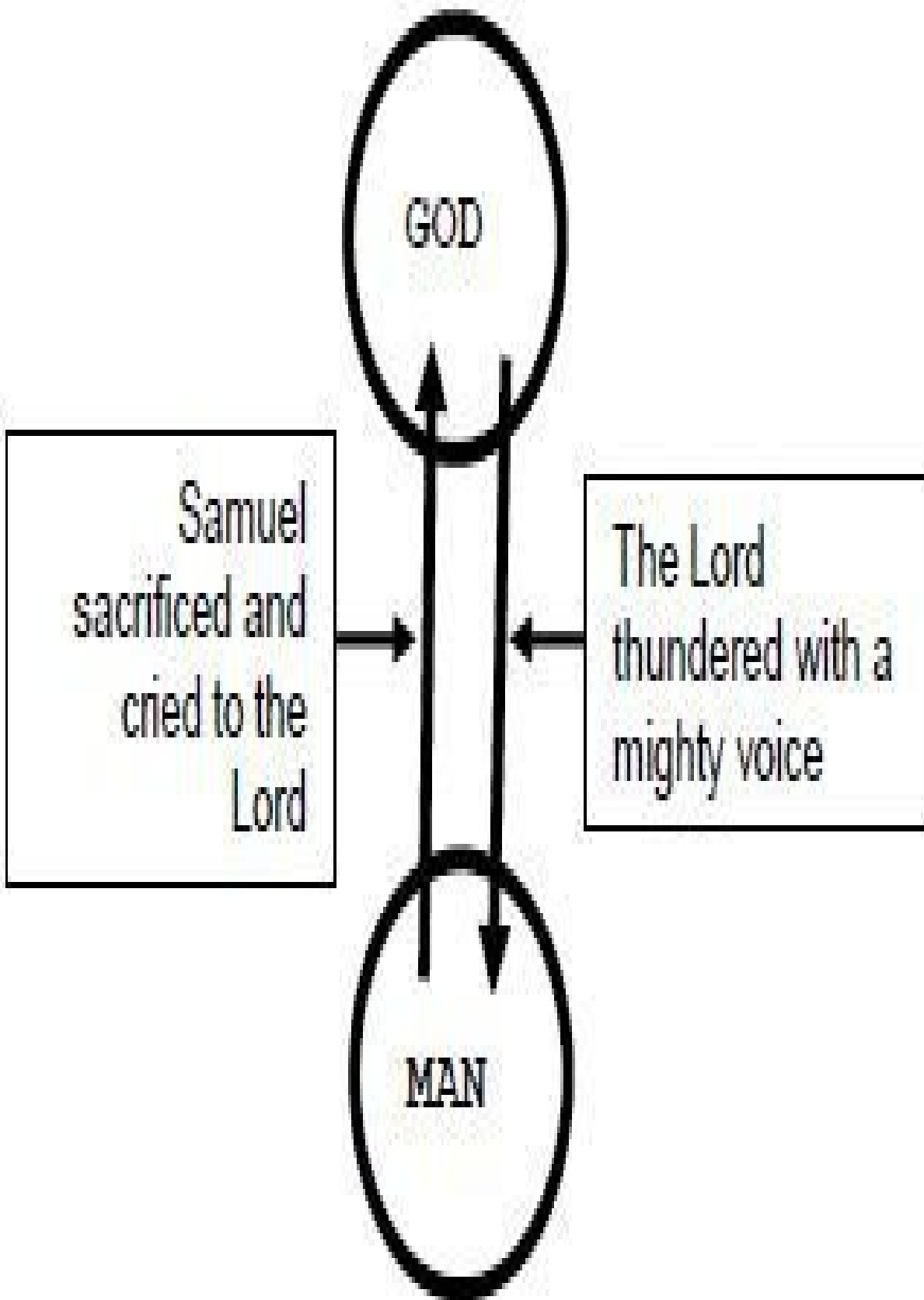
Is one to seek to have a revelation of the Lord that is a once for all event? The Bible says of Samuel that,

“And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord” (1 Samuel 3:19-21).

The Lord seeks to reveal Himself to His children. He seeks to reveal Himself continuously to His own. He is not anxious to let us behold His glory only once. The initial revelation to Samuel was only the beginning of a life-long walk with God during which Samuel encountered the Lord frequently and grew to know Him increasingly. The Bible says,

“And the people of Israel said to Samuel, ”Do not cease to cry to the Lord our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines. So Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord, and Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him. As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel; but the Lord thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion and they were routed before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and smote them, as far as below Bethcar”

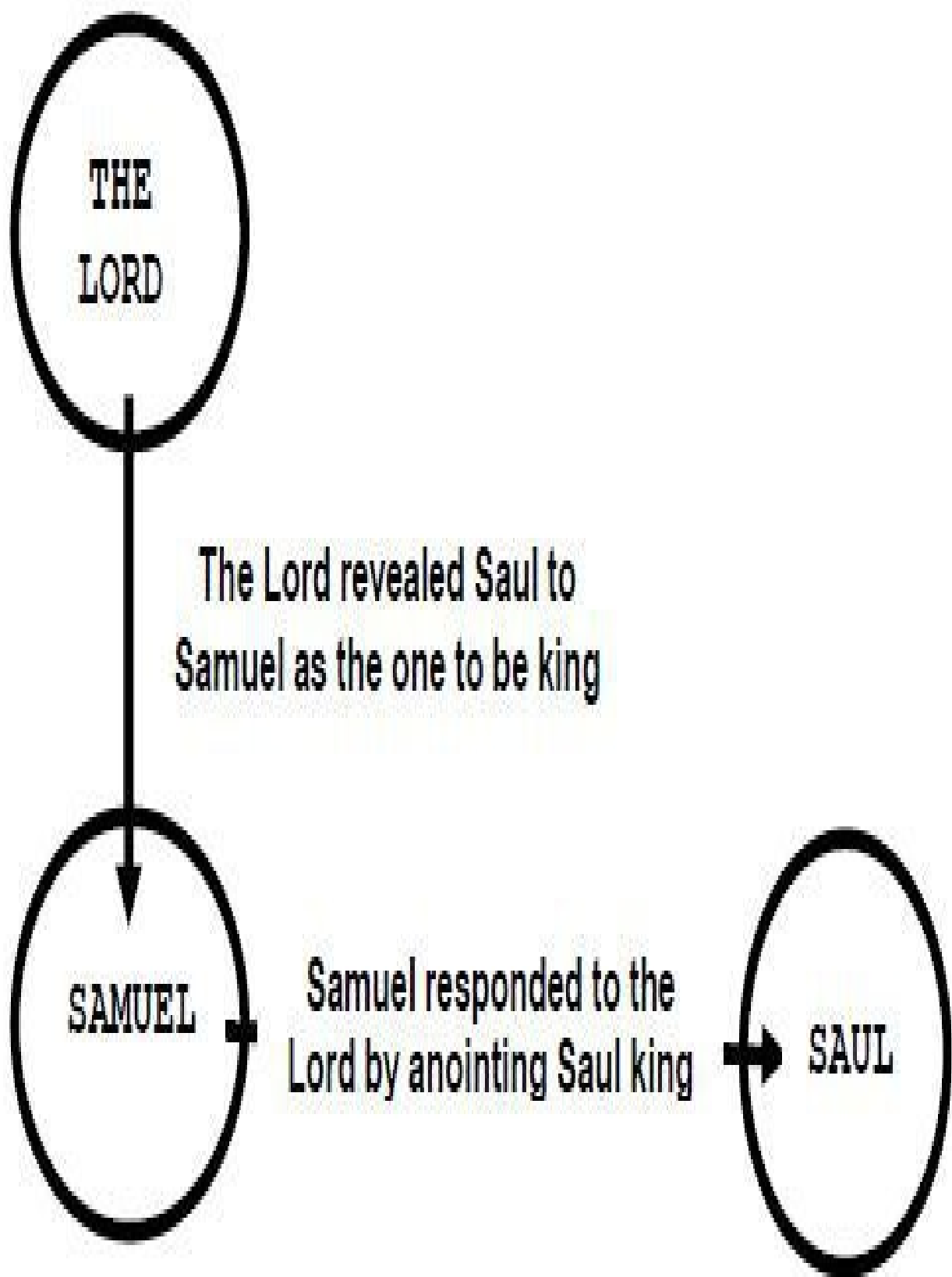
(1 Samuel 7:8-11).



The Bible again says,

“Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed to Samuel: ”Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel... When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him, “Here is the man of whom I spoke to you! He it is who shall rule over my people.” (1 Samuel 9:15-17).

“Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, ”Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their enemies round about” (1 Samuel 10:1).



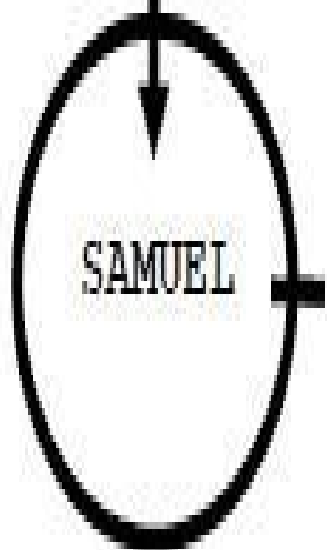
The Bible again says,

“The Lord said to Samuel,” How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons” (1 Samuel 16:1).

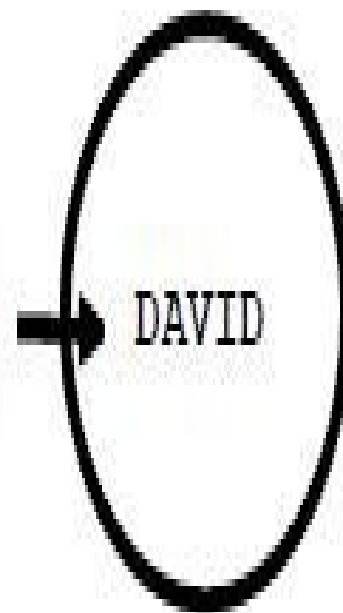
“Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward” (1 Samuel 16:13).



The Lord revealed David to Samuel
and commanded him to anoint him



Samuel obeyed the Lord
and anointed David king



So we see clearly that there was the initial revelation of the Lord to Samuel and that that initial revelation was followed by subsequent revelations. Samuel walked in the way of the Lord. He continued to seek the Lord: to listen to Him, hear His voice and obey Him. This led to communion - increasing communion and unbroken communion between the Lord and Samuel. Praise the Lord.

You, too, go seek the Lord. Let Him reveal Himself to you. Then continue to seek Him and He will continue to reveal Himself to you. Obey Him in everything and communion will be established between Him and you. Continue to obey Him in all things and your communion with Him will be deepened and established. Then in unceasing communion with Him you will know Him more intimately, obey Him more accurately and serve Him more perfectly. Praise the Lord! Amen.

THE GREATEST NEED OF THE HOUR - 2

All that anyone may do for God is of no consequence if it is not done as an overflow of the knowledge of God.

Attempting To Serve God's People Without A Knowledge Of God

“Now a man from the house of Levi went and took to wife a daughter of Levi. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could hide him no longer she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch, and she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds at the river's brink. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river and her maidens walked beside the river, she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to fetch it. When she opened it she saw the child and lo the babe was crying. She took pity on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews' children.” Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, “Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, ‘Go’ So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her ‘Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.’ So the woman took the child and nursed him. And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son, and she named him Moses, for she said, “Because I drew him out of the water.”

“One day when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on

their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together, and he said to the man that did the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow?" He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

"But Moses fled from Pharaoh, and stayed in the land of Midian and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. The shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock. When they came to their father Reuel, he said, 'How is it that you have come so soon today?' They said, "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and even drew water for us and watered the flock.' He said to his daughters, 'And where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.' And Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. She bore a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."

In the course of those many days the king of Egypt died. And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage, and cried out for help and their cry under bondage came up to God. And God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the people of Israel and God knew their condition.

Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian; and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, 'I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.' When the Lord saw that he turned aside

to see, God called him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses’, And he said, “Here am I,’ Then he said, ‘Do not come near, put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ And he said, ”I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God” (Exodus 2:1-3:6).

Worldly Education Cannot Contribute To The Knowledge Or Service Of The Lord

Moses grew up in the palace of Egypt. He had the opportunity to receive the best education that could be offered by Egypt. If there were Egyptian universities, Moses must have been to the best of them. If there was postgraduate training, then Moses must have had it. If it were in the language of today, Moses could easily have been called, Dr Moses. The Bible says of him,

“And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds” (Acts 7:22).

Yes, Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He thought that this worldly knowledge could help him to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. When he had grown up, Moses went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He decided to do something about it. He used his worldly education to decide that the elimination of the Egyptian would solve the problem. He at once killed him and hid the body in the sand. He thought he had solved the problem and no one would know. The next day he found that there was another problem. This time the problem was between two Hebrews. How was he to solve it? It was obvious that he could not apply the method of killing! He decided to use the technique of appealing to reason. He found out who of the two Hebrews was offending the other and appealed to him, asking “Why do you strike your fellow?” He thought that that gentle approach would cause the man to come to reason but it did not.

The man replied,

“Who made you a prince and a judge over us?”

Moses was obviously disturbed by this turn of events. He had felt in himself that he was their deliverer. He was applying himself to the task and then came this rejection! It was a question that was difficult to answer for no one had made him a prince or judge over them! It is true that God had it in mind to make him a prince and judge over them. It is also true that Moses felt an inward sense of destiny, for all who are chosen by God for special tasks carry within them, a sense of destiny, for many years, before the call of God on them is verbalized.

Moses was even more disturbed by the next question that was asked him by the Hebrew who asked the previous one,

“Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?”

Moses had thought that no one was present besides himself and the Egyptian whom he wanted to kill and the Hebrew whom he wanted to avenge. He had felt pretty certain that the Hebrew would not expose him. He had possibly looked to the left, and then to the right, to the front and then to the back and seeing no one, he had felt that all would be hidden. He then killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand and thought that all was hidden and sealed forever!

All Was Not Hidden! All Is Not Hidden!!

Moses, by applying worldly knowledge, must have looked in the directions from which he thought any man who might see what he was doing would be visible. Left, right, front and back are the directions of man. They are the directions known to human knowledge, known to a worldly education. Moses thought all was all right but all was not all right. As it was proven afterwards, someone saw them. Some human being saw them together and saw him killing the Egyptian and hiding his body in the sand.

The sins of man are often known to other men even when much is done to cover them up. Be assured that some human being knows about the sins you are committing in hiding. Be fully assured that your sin has been seen by some human being or will soon be made known to someone. It is really very difficult to hide anything from all the people for all the time. Worldly education may deceive you that because you burnt up all the evidence, no one will ever know. Worldly education may deceive you into thinking that because the door was locked and the lights were put out no one saw you. The truth is that you were seen or you will be seen by some human being. Do not be deceived by the fact that no one has come up to you to tell you that he knows what you did in hiding or what you are doing in hiding. Had Moses not challenged the Hebrew who was doing wrong to his fellow Hebrew, he would not have known that his murder of the Egyptian was known. The fact that no one has pointed an accusing finger at you does not necessarily mean that no one knows what you have done. Some know about it but they have decided not to speak out yet! I want to assure you that what you consider hidden from man is not that hidden! Someone knows about it.

However, the fact that man knows about it is not all. Moses looked forward and backward. Then he looked to the left and to the right and because he saw no one he felt free to kill the Egyptian. Moses, unfortunately, did not look up. God was seeing all that Moses was doing. God sees all that each and everyone is doing twenty-four hours each day, sixty minutes each hour, and sixty seconds each minute. Nothing is hidden from Him and nothing can be hidden from Him. The Psalmist knew this and wrote as follows:

“O Lord, thou has searched me and known me!

Thou knowest when I sit down and when I rise up;

thou discernest my thoughts from afar.

Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,

and art acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue,

lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou dost beset me behind and before,

and layest thy hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

it is high, I cannot attain it.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?

Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend to heaven, thou art there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!

If I take the wings of the morning

and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

even there thy hand shall lead me,

and thy right hand shall uphold me.

If I say, "Let only darkness cover me,

and the light about me be night,"

even the darkness is not dark to thee,

the night is bright as the day,

for darkness is as light with thee.”

(Psalm 139:1-12).

The problem with worldly knowledge is that it is limited to that which is rational - that is, that which can be analysed and understood by the human mind. Worldly wisdom does not know that there is a higher level of knowledge - that which is super-rational and comes by the revelation of God. Moses did not know God and he sincerely applied himself to help solve a problem of the people of God, without divine intervention. He appealed to worldly knowledge derived from a worldly education. It failed hopelessly. The Bible says,

“Then Moses was afraid and thought, ‘Surely the thing is known.’ When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian and he sat down by a well” (Exodus 2:14-15).

Moses became a fugitive from justice!

Moses abandoned the task of delivering the Hebrews from the bondage of Egypt.

Moses failed in accomplishing the task before him even though he applied himself sincerely to it.

Sincerity did not make up for Moses’ lack of the knowledge of God.

Zeal did not cover up the fact that he was a self-appointed deliverer.

Worldly education prepared a man to flee from a battle that needed spiritual education and not worldly education.

What Are You Counting On?

Moses attempted to serve the people of God and to serve the purpose of God by trusting in his worldly education and knowledge. He failed utterly. All who count on their worldly education, however good it may be, will fail. There is no substitute for a knowledge of God derived from an initial encounter with God and continuing encounters with Him.

Maybe you are counting on your Advanced Level to help you serve the Lord!

Maybe, you are counting on your Bachelor's Degree.

Maybe, you are counting on your Master's Degree.

Maybe, you are counting on your Doctorate Degree

Maybe, you are counting on your Bible School Diploma.

Maybe, you are counting on your ordination certificate,

Maybe, you are counting on your rank as director or any such thing.

Listen, all such things will not contribute to the knowledge of the Lord. They will also not contribute to the service of the Lord. In fact, these things may even stand in the way of a man's knowledge and service of the Lord. They may cause him to think that he has what it takes to know and serve the Lord. They may cause him to relax in the search to know God, and thus count on that which

cannot help him either to know God or to serve Him. The person who has neither a certificate, diploma, nor an exalted human position, is most likely to seek God because his need of Him is more obvious than that of the person who is deceived into thinking that his worldly education has given him what worldly education can never give a man - the power to know God and to serve Him!

Worldly Might Cannot Contribute To The Knowledge Or Service Of The Lord.

The Bible says of Moses during his human exaltation in Egypt that,

“And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds” (Acts 7:22).

Moses was mighty in his words!

Moses was mighty in his deeds!

There are people who are only mighty in their words and there are others who are only mighty in their deeds. As for Moses, he was mighty both in his words and in his deeds. For the worldly service of man, Moses was aptly qualified to serve man at any level. He needed to have been asked, “Moses, what are your credentials?” He would have enumerated them:

I was the most eloquent at the competition of.....

I said the following and it happened just as I had said...

Pharaoh sought my counsel on this and that other issue and my suggestions were taken fully into account before the final decision were taken.

I led the army in this conflict and the success was obvious.

I did this other thing and that other one and the successes were incontestable.

And so on.

When Moses set out to kill the Egyptian and to try to settle the dispute between the two Hebrews, he was obviously counting on his past abilities and on his past accomplishments. None of these helped him.

I am reminded of another future leader who had much that was praise-worthy before man, on which he could have counted. He himself said,

“Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and smote him and delivered it out of his mouth; and if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and killed him. Your servant has killed both lions and bears” (1 Samuel 17:34-36).

David had so much worldly success before the Holy Spirit came upon him!

That, worldly might cannot help anyone to know the Lord, is made evident by the fact that Moses was so mighty and so accomplished but did not know God at all. When he finally met God, it was not because his might contributed anything to it. After he met the Lord, he found that he was not able to do spiritual work. The following incidents will illustrate what we are saying:-

1) When Moses met the Lord, he was told by the Lord,

“Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people the sons of Israel, out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:10).

But Moses said to God,

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11).

Moses considered himself a nobody when it came to God-ordained service.

2) The Lord assured him and encouraged him to go. Moses did not rush to go. He could not rush. The Bible says that Moses said to God,

“If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, What is his name?’ What shall I say to them?” (Exodus 3:13).

The Moses who was mighty in his words and in his deeds was no longer knowledgeable. The questions that were raised were spiritual. All his knowledge in Egypt was worldly. His worldly knowledge could not provide answers for spiritual questions. Worldly knowledge cannot help anyone to possess spiritual knowledge!

3) The Lord sent Moses to Pharaoh and assured him of the success of his mission. Had it been the Moses of old he would not have needed any such assurances. However, something had happened to Moses and he knew that the worldly knowledge that he possessed could not help him. The Bible says,

“Then Moses answered, ‘But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you” (Exodus 4:1).

Moses could not trust the people to believe him. He had met God and known the fact that his worldly might was of no consequence in spiritual service. He did not believe himself, whereas in the past, he would have expected the people to believe him because of his might.

I am often amazed, amused, shocked and infuriated by the way speakers are introduced at some Christian meetings. Every worldly tag is exaggerated and placed on the man and then he is expected to function under the anointing of God. Many have not learnt the lesson that although worldly titles and qualifications can swell a man’s ego and draw carnal men to hear him, only the power of the Holy Spirit can do a spiritual work through a man and often, the Holy Spirit does a deep work only through people in whose lives He has done the greater work of putting the self-life to an end!

In the battle against Goliath, a battle that was purely spiritual, David counted solely on the Lord and said,

“The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of bear, will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine” (1 Samuel 17:37).

In counting upon the Lord, he put aside worldly weapons. The Bible says,

“Then Saul clothed David with his armour, he put a helmet of bronze on his head, and clothed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword over his armour and he tried in vain to go for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, ‘I cannot go with these; for I am not used to them.’ And David put them off. Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in his shepherd’s bag or wallet, his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine” (1 Samuel 17:38-40).

We know that while Moses was in Egypt, he was mighty in his words and in his deeds. After Moses met God and was commissioned by God, he said to the Lord,

“Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either heretofore or since thou hast spoken to thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.” Then the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak” (Exodus 4:10-12).

Moses was mighty in his words before he met the Lord. After he met the Lord, his own assessment was,

“I am not eloquent either heretofore or since thou has spoken to thy servant.”

What had happened? The reality is that when Moses met the Lord, he found that a worldly power of speech was of no consequence in the service of the Lord. He

found that he could not bring that which was received by natural birth and worldly training into the service of the Lord who is Spirit and who must be worshipped and served in the spirit. He thus put away all that was the natural power of speech so completely that he was indeed no longer eloquent. He also saw how useless natural power of speech was to spiritual service, that he counted all that he had before as no power to speak. That is why he could say that he was not eloquent either before the Lord called him or after the Lord called him.

Worldly eloquence is of no consequence before the Lord and of no consequence in His service. The same goes for worldly position, attainments and all the like. When people meet the Lord and have their eyes opened to what matters in the knowledge and service of the Lord, they will do what the Apostle Paul did! What did he do? Let us read it in his own words,

“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ” (Philippians 3:7-8).

Greatness!

There is a world of difference between the natural man (unsaved, unconverted); the carnal man, (saved, converted, but living partly for the glory of God and partly for the glory of self) and the spiritual man (saved; converted and living solely for the glory of God).

NATURAL MAN	CARNAL BELIEVER	SPIRITUAL MAN
He does not receive the things of God. He cannot receive the things of God. (Romans 8:7-8).	Though converted, sometimes lives like ordinary men knowing strife, jealousy, division and the like. Lives for the glory of God and for the glory self. His motives are double - for God and for self.	Has co-operated with the Holy Spirit so that through the working of the Cross and the Holy Spirit, the self-life has been brought to an end so that he lives solely for the glory of God. His motives are pure - for God alone.

Moses was a spiritual man. God said to him,

“Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:10).

God further said to him,

“I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that I have sent you; when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain” (Exodus 3:12).

Then the Lord said to Moses,

“Say this to the people of Israel, ”I AM has sent me to you” (Exodus 3:14).

The Lord, again said to Moses,

“Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ’I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt; and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey’ And they will hearken to your voice” Exodus 3:16-18).

The Lord further said to Moses,

“What is that in your hand?’ He said, ”A rod” And he said, ‘Cast it on the ground.’ So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent and Moses fled from it. But the Lord said to Moses. ‘Put out your hand, and take it by the tail’ - so he put out his hand and caught it, and it become a rod in his hand - “that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.’ Again, the Lord said to him, ‘Put your hand into your bosom.’ And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.’ Then God said, ‘Put your hand back into your bosom.’ So he put his hand back into his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh. ‘If they will not believe you,’ God said, ‘or heed the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. If they will not believe even these two signs or heed your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water which you shall take from the Nile will become blood upon the dry ground” (Exodus 4:2-9).

The Lord was saying to Moses,

“I am sending you to go and do a great work for me. The people will believe you. You will become a mighty spiritual leader. You will perform miracles! I show you now full proof that the miracles will happen. Go. I am coming with you. Success is guaranteed.”

Then Moses said,

“Oh, my Lord, send, I pray, some other person” (Exodus 4:13).

If the Lord said to you,

“I am sending you to China. You shall gather the spiritual leaders there and tell them that I have sent you to them. I have already told them. They will believe you. You shall hold an evangelistic crusade in Peking and one million people will be truly converted and transferred from the kingdom of darkness unto the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and the converts shall abide in the Lord. You shall perform very many miracles: the blind shall see, the lame shall walk, the deaf shall hear and the dead shall be raised. I shall do all this through you. These events shall become world news and make permanent history. Here now, I give you power to perform four miracles to convince you that all the rest of the things which I am promising to you will take place. Please go for me.”

What would you do?

Would you say what Moses said,

“Oh, my Lord, send, I pray, some other person?”

Would you say,

“Oh, my Lord, send, I pray, some other person and Lord, do all that You have promised to do through him and Lord do even more than You have promised to do. Let it happen through him, O Lord, as You have said?”

If you are convinced from your very heart that you would say that to God, then you are truly spiritual. If you cannot say that, then you are still interested in your own glory. You are still carnal and there are many things that God cannot yet do through you because you are motivated by both the glory of God and the glory of self. You are a carnal believer!

Moses had made progress! He had become a spiritual man indeed. Glory be to God. Go and become like him!

The Glory Of God

Elijah was asked by the Lord to call the prophets of Baal to what became known as the “Contest on Mount Carmel”. He did. The prophets of Baal were given an opportunity to call upon Baal to send fire upon the sacrifice that they had laid upon the altar. They cried out to him but nothing happened. Elijah the prophet of the Most High God, then took over. He called the people to himself, repaired the altar of the Lord, made a trench about the altar, put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. He then ordered that four jars filled with water be poured out on the burnt offering and on the wood. This was repeated thrice, and the water ran about the altar. He also filled the trench with water.

Then he withdrew to pray. His first prayer was,

“O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word” (1 Kings 18:36).

There were three specific requests made by the prophet:

The first one was: “Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel.”

The second one was: “Let it be known this day that I am thy servant.”

The third one was, “Let it be known this day that I have done all these things at thy word.”

The first request was for the glory of God. The second one was for the glory of Elijah and the third was for the glory of Elijah. So, at a critical moment Elijah’s prayer was 33.33% for the glory of God and 66.67% for his glory! He was a prophet. He was serving the Lord but the self was there also! He wanted the glory of God but he also wanted the glory of Elijah. Those who serve the Lord for their own glory do Him harm. They are idolaters. Those who serve Him for His glory and their own glory are also idolaters. O that most servants of the Lord who recognize this would cry out to God, saying, “Lord, have mercy on me, idolater that I am!”

Elijah was normally a spiritual man. His heart only slipped in a moment of weakness. Immediately after he offered the above prayer his heart must have smote him for he immediately prayed a corrective prayer. He prayed saying,

“Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that thou, O Lord art God and that thou hast turned their hearts back.”

In this second prayer, the first request is that the people may know that

“Thou, O Lord, art God;”

This was like the first request of the first prayer. The second request on the other hand, was different. The request was that,

“These people may know that thou hast turned their hearts back to thyself.”

This time the first request was for the glory of God and the second request was for the glory of God. There was no desire that God should act so that it might be known that Elijah was God’s servant and that His servant had done those things in obedience to His Word.

Because Elijah was totally sold out for the glory of God, the Lord answered the prayer beyond measure. There was a five-fold answer by the Lord. The Bible says,

“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench” (1 Kings 18:38).

The fire of the Lord first consumed the offering, then, it consumed

the wood,

the stones,

the dust,

and licked up the water.

When God finds people who seek His glory and His glory alone, He does not only do what they have asked of Him but also many other things that are for His glory. It is understood that fire should burn the sacrifice and the wood. This would have been a miracle that was great enough, for the prophets of Baal could not produce it. This was fire that came upon and burnt an offering and wood that were dripping wet with water. However, the burning of the stones and dust and the licking up of the water were additional wonders!

Why were these additional wonders possible? We suggest two reasons: They were possible because the fire that fell was not the fire of man or simply some heavenly fire. It was the fire of the Lord. When the fire of the Lord falls, it always does what no other fire can do. The other reason is that the fire of the Lord fell in response to the prayer of a man who wanted all the glory for the Lord and nothing for himself. When God finds such a heart, there is no limit to what He is prepared to do, and to what He does!

When the fire of the Lord fell, the Bible says,

“And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, ”The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God.”

Do you echo those words,

“The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God?”

Do you want all the people to see your life and cry out,

“The Lord, he is God, the Lord, he is God?”

Do you want all the people to see everything you do, and cry out,

“The Lord, he is God, the Lord, he is God?”

If that is your heart’s desire, the Lord will use you in a most unparalleled way, for He wants instruments through whom to work, so that all the glory would come to Him.

Elijah Was Forgotten

When the fire of the Lord fell, the people, in fact, all the people forgot Elijah. They were all caught up with the One whose fire had fallen. When the Lord does a most notable miracle, eyes turn from the human instrument completely and the gaze is entirely on the Lord. When small things happen, they provide room for the glory of God and the glory of man. If your spiritual life and ministry has drawn attention to the Lord and to yourself then your accomplishments are yet very small. In fact, nothing truly praise-worthy has yet happened in you or through you. Walk with God and some day it will happen. When it happens, people will forget you and worship the Lord and Him alone.

The Glory Of The Servant Of The Lord.

Elijah wanted the glory of the Lord and the glory of the servant of the Lord. The Lord did not respond to that. This was a situation in which the Lord wanted all the glory for Himself and He waited for Elijah to come to the place where he too wanted all the glory for the Lord. He got there and then the Lord acted.

Normally speaking, no servant of the Lord should seek honour and glory for himself. He should seek honour and glory for the Master alone. He cannot seek both the glory of the Master and his own glory. Should he attempt to seek the Master's glory and his own, at some point there will be a conflict of interests and he would abandon the Master's glory in order to pursue his own. The servant must resolutely commit himself to the glory of his Master and forget his own glory. He can trust the Master to do all that He (the Master) thinks fit for him.

Every servant of the Lord Jesus must forget his honour and glory and seek the honour of the Lord. The Lord Jesus has His ways and His timing for exalting His servants. He should be allowed to handle the matter His own way and at His own time. In fact, there is no use reminding Him about it because it is something about which He cannot forget and therefore needs no reminder.

The wise servant may, however, plead with the Lord to hide all the glory due to him from man in time, so that it would be revealed on that day at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his recommendation from God” (1 Corinthians 4:5).

The glory of the real servant should lie in the glorification of the Master. The true servant ought to exult with gladness when his Master is exalted. He ought to

work for the glorification of his Master; he ought to labour towards it and he ought to put everything into it, and when the hour of the glorification of the Master comes, he ought to know and rejoice in the fact that the hour for which he had dreamt, worked and lived for, has come.

John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord. He worked faithfully at this, seeking the glory of the Lord and the glory of the Lord alone. The Bible says,

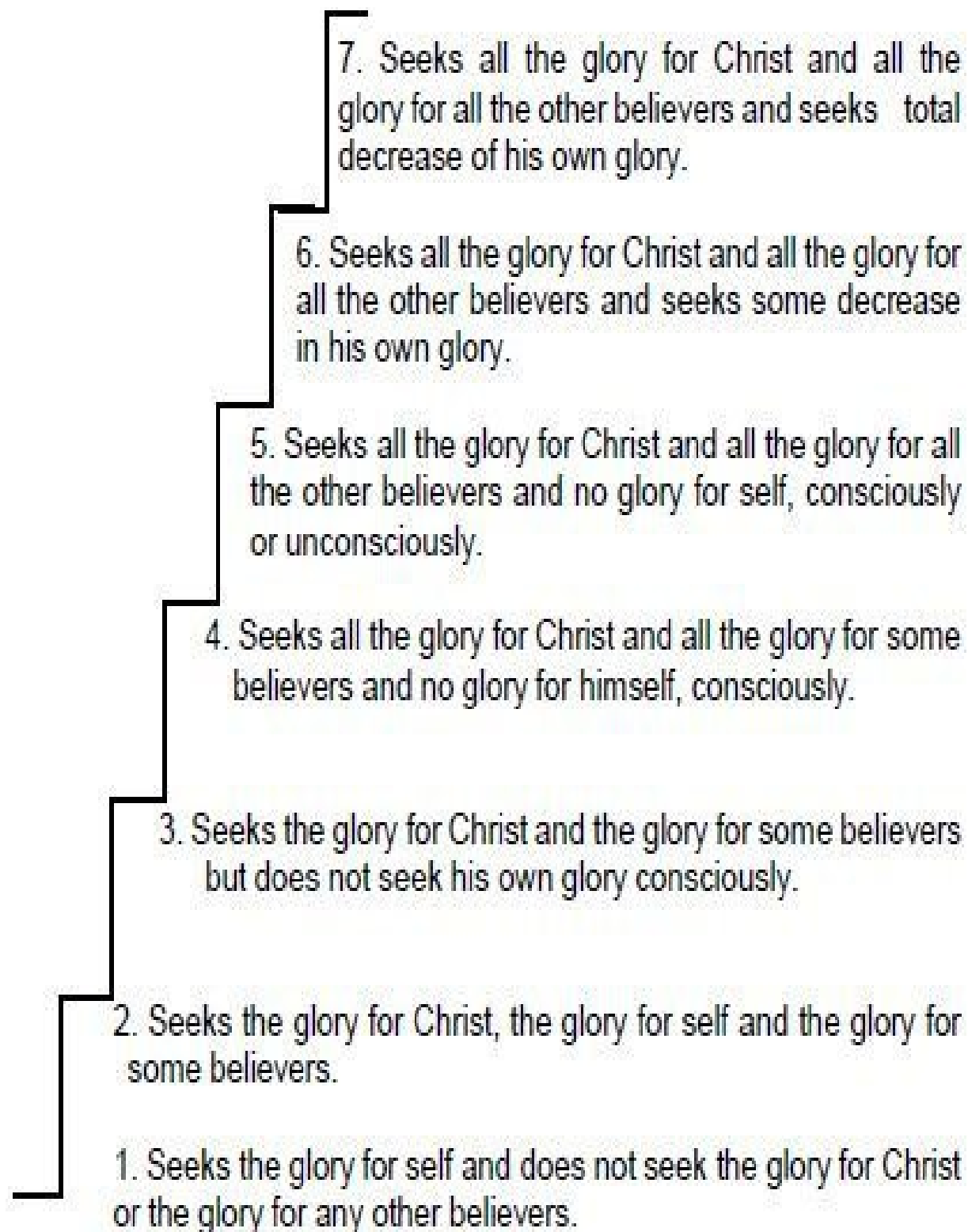
“Now a discussion arose between John’s disciples and a Jew over purifying. And they came to John, and said to him, ”Rabbi, he who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you bore witness, here he is, baptizing and all are going to him.’ John answered, ‘No one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said I am not the Christ but I have been sent before him. He who has the bride is the bridegroom, the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice; therefore this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:25-30).

These words of John,

“Therefore this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease”

are deep and searching. This joy of John is wonderful. It is not only the joy of John. It is also the joy of the Lord. The one who rejoices to the full because all who followed him are now turning from following him to following the Lord, has made spiritual progress. The one whose joy is full when he sees those who once followed him now turn and follow another servant of the Lord who will lead them into spiritual wealth that he knows nothing about or is not able to lead them into, has made progress. The one who deliberately labours so that the Lord

Jesus would increase, is a good servant of the Lord. The one who labours so that the Lord Jesus and other believers would increase, is a better servant of the Lord. The one who deliberately labours so that the Lord Jesus and all the other children of God would increase while he decreases, is the greatest servant of the Lord. Such know the full joy of the Lord. Their hearts are profoundly at rest. Their reward in heaven is fully guaranteed.



LEVELS OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS.

■

THE UNIVERSITY OF GOD

■

Apart from the devil, a man has only one other enemy.

That enemy is his own self.

When self comes in, God's work ceases and man's work begins, and continues.

The servant of the Lord must fear lest God's work should cease and his own should start and continue.

All that a man does for God before he has put an end to the self-life is of little consequence before God.

All service done for self-glory is an absolute waste of time.

The primary lesson taught in the university of God is "Deliverance from the self-life."

The University Of Satan

The principal lesson taught in the university of Satan is self-exaltation.

Pride is the exaltation of Satan. Pride is the exaltation of Self.

Every proud person says, “I identify fully with the devil!”

Every act of pride is saying: “The devil and I are co-workers.”

Every act of pride is a confession. “I am a wrestler against the Kingdom of God and His Christ. I am a wrestler against the kingdom of humility.”

Every act of pride is saying: “Thy kingdom come, O Satan.”

Every postponement of repentance is pride, and pride is saying, “Satan, take the sceptre and reign.”

None can behold the glory of the King of glory and behold his personal glory at the same time.

All glory that is not, “Glory be to God,” is self-glory and self-glory is the same as glory be to Satan.

In the university of Satan, the humble of heart make little progress.

In the university of Satan, every student aims at having everyone else revolve around him.

In the university of Satan, students would rather die than ask for forgiveness.

In the university of Satan, all is oriented towards surpassing in pride.

In the university of Satan, everything is done out of jealousy.

The greatest and most popular course in the university of Satan is independence from God and from all other people.

The University Of God - 1

God, the Eternal Father runs the university of God. The first part of the course is that which is taught in the Department of “Emptying of Self.” This is the most important department from which God cannot spare any would-be graduates. Moses was admitted into the university of God and enrolled in the Department of “Emptying of Self.” In order that this might take place and that Moses might follow his lessons well and make rapid progress, God took things into His own hands. The one lesson that Moses needed to learn in the University of God was freedom from the self-life. One crucial manifestation of the self-life is independence - God got Moses to work on that.

Moses was found sitting by a well. In sitting, he was more or less saying, “I have come to the end of myself.” When a man comes to the end of his own

plans,

schemes,

manoeuvres

arrangements...

he has reached a place where God can begin to teach him, for those who are full and carried away with their own plans, have no time to listen to God.

Moses was next found to be homeless. He was at the well and even after he had helped the daughters of the priest of Midian, he remained at the well, homeless. He had come a long way from the palace of Pharaoh in Egypt where his word was almost law and where he was served and attended to lavishly. Now, he was

hungry and homeless and had no one to command.

Moses had to wait to be invited to a home and to hospitality. He was totally at the mercy of others. The priest of Midian invited him home, not just to a meal but to a home.

Men want to make their own choices, if not in everything, at least about the key issues of life, especially about whom to love and marry. Moses did not have such freedom. The Bible says that Moses was content to dwell with the priest of Midian and

“he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah and she bore him a son.”

When Moses entered the university of God, he was full of himself. He was sure of himself and he was sure of what he wanted to do, when he wanted to do it, how he wanted to do it, with whom he wanted to do it, and for how long he wanted to do it. These are manifestations of the self-life.

It is interesting to know that while Moses was in Egypt, he was actively enrolled as a student in the university of Satan. In the university of Satan, people grow in the self-life and in its manifestations. One question is asked over and over in the university of Satan. The question is,

“How can I grow in the manifestation of the self-life?”

The question is often put in other words,

“How can I be fully possessed by the ”I”?

How can I get everyone else in all the university to worship me? How can I get everyone else to

seek me,

worship me,

adore me,

desire me,

admire me,

attend to me,

follow me,

obey me,

obey only me,

serve only me,

seek only me?

Remember that the father of the self-life once said

“I will ascend to heaven, above the stars of God,

I will set my throne on high,

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north;

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,

I will make myself like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:13-14).

When the devil said, “I will make myself like the Most High,” that was only an intermediate step in the development of his pride. His ultimate goal was to be greater than the Most High, to become “The Most High.” We can represent the thinking of Satan as follows:



The ultimate position he desired:
I will make myself the “Most High”

The first position he sought:
“I will make myself like the Most High.”

The position God gave him.

He made the earth tremble; he shook kingdoms (Isaiah 14:16).

“You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering... On the day that you were created they were prepared. With an anointed guardian cherub I placed you, you were on the holy mountain of God, in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you” (Ezekiel 28:12-15).

The Devil’s Plan Of Development.

Does your personal plan of development resemble his?

Do you wish to be the most beautiful girl in the environment? That is just the beginning. It will grow and stretch until you desire to be the most beautiful girl on Planet Earth.

Do you wish to be the most intelligent boy in your class? That is just the beginning. That ambition will stretch and someday you may want to be the most intelligent man on earth. Do you want to be the greatest

apostle,

prophet,

evangelist,

pastor,
teacher,
miracle worker,
preacher,
healer,
writer,
man of prayer,
man of fasting,
man of sacrificial giving,
man of discipline,
man of courage and boldness,
man of character of your assembly, city, nation, continent, planet, generation?

Do you find in your ambition a resemblance to Satan? You do not only want to be any of these. You want to outclass every other person or you want to be the very best, just as the devil initially wanted to be like the Most High so that from that position, he might aim at, and become the “Most High.”

A servant wants to serve. He always wants to serve. He also wants to improve his service, not in comparison to others but in order to please his Master. The desire to outclass others is not of the Lord. It is the spirit of the wicked one.

It does not matter the exalted position to which God has lifted a person. If his heart is not right with God, if he has not put on humility, he will seek a more

exalted position for self-glory. The office worker wants to be the chief clerk and then:

the chief of service,

the deputy director,

the director,

the secretary general,

the vice-minister,

the minister,

the Head of State,

the richest or the most influential person in the continent,

the richest person in the world...

With each rise and each desire for the next position is strife, restlessness and lack of contentment. Is that the pathway along which you have trod? Is that the pathway along which you are treading? Do you not see that you are pursuing the glory and the worship of self? Do you not see that it will end in disaster?

The self-life is at enmity with

the Christ-life

the life of victory,

the way of the cross,

the life of holiness,
the life of service,
the peace of God,
the life of faith,
the life of suffering,
the joy of the Lord.

As a person grows in the self-life, he decreases in

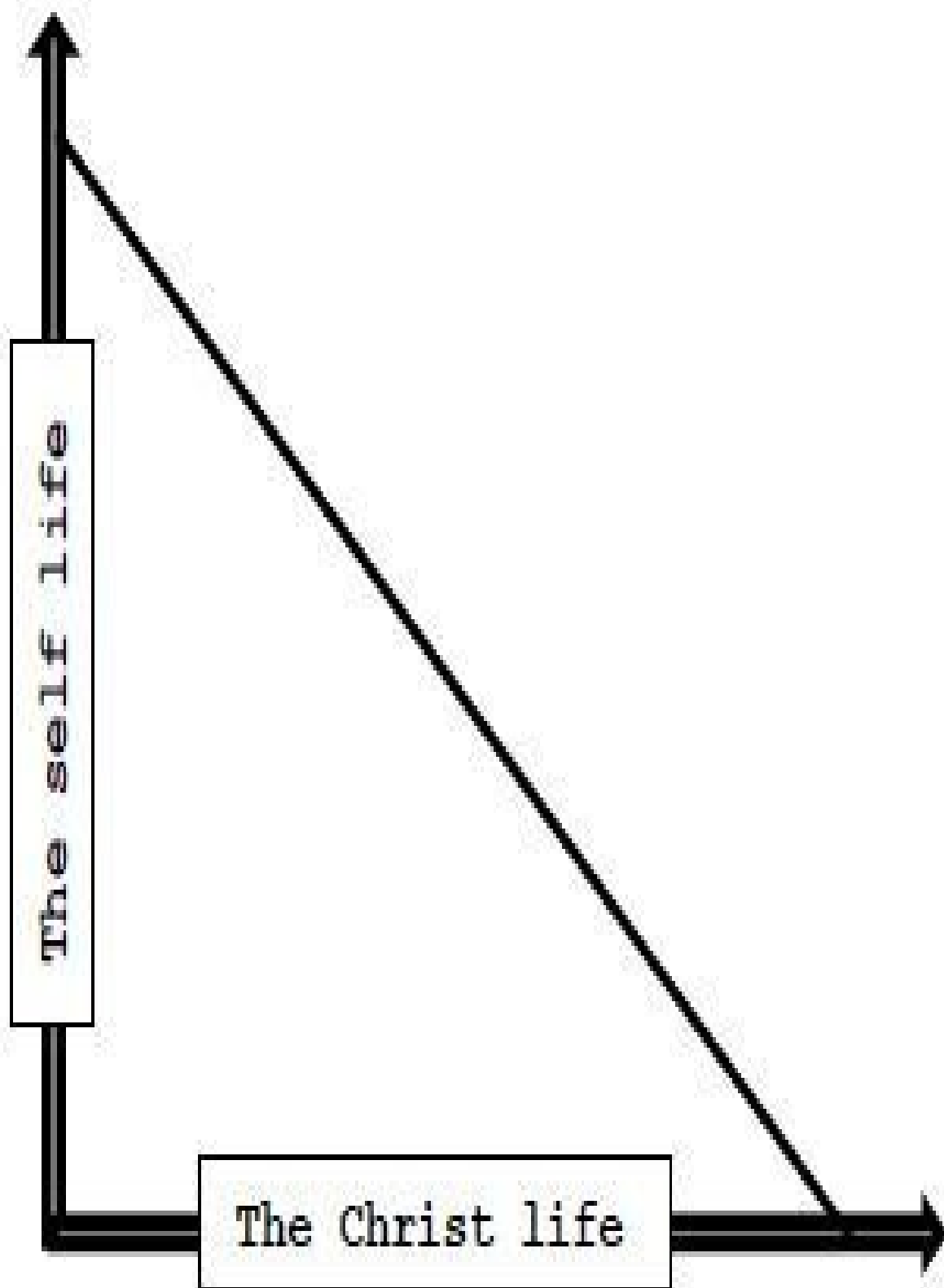
the Christ-life,
the life of victory,
the way of the cross,
the life of holiness,
the life of service,
the peace of God,
the life of faith,
the life of suffering,
the joy of the Lord.

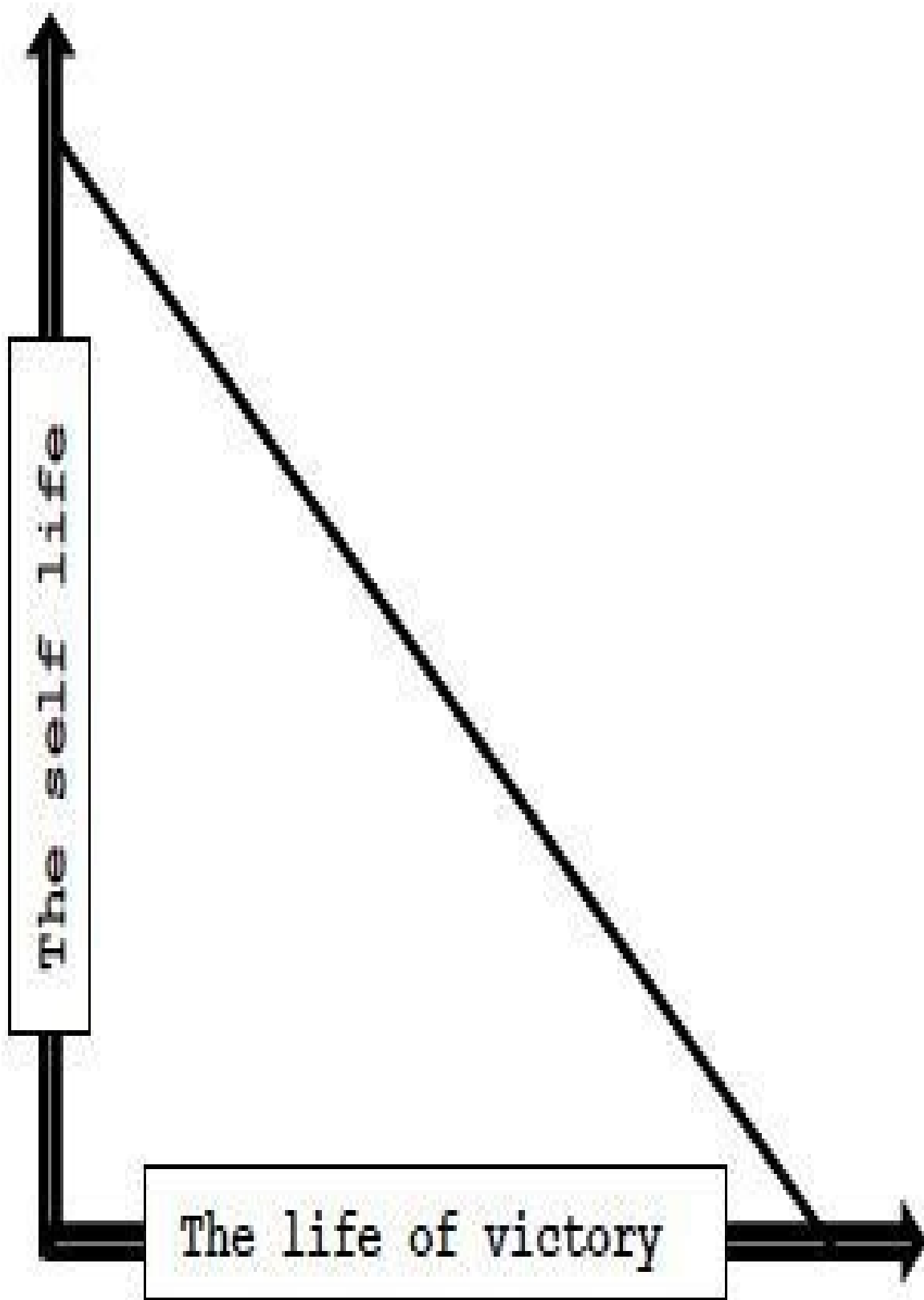
The self-life has such diversities of manifestations that only those who walk by the Spirit can truly discern them. They could be manifested in the desire to be the only person one

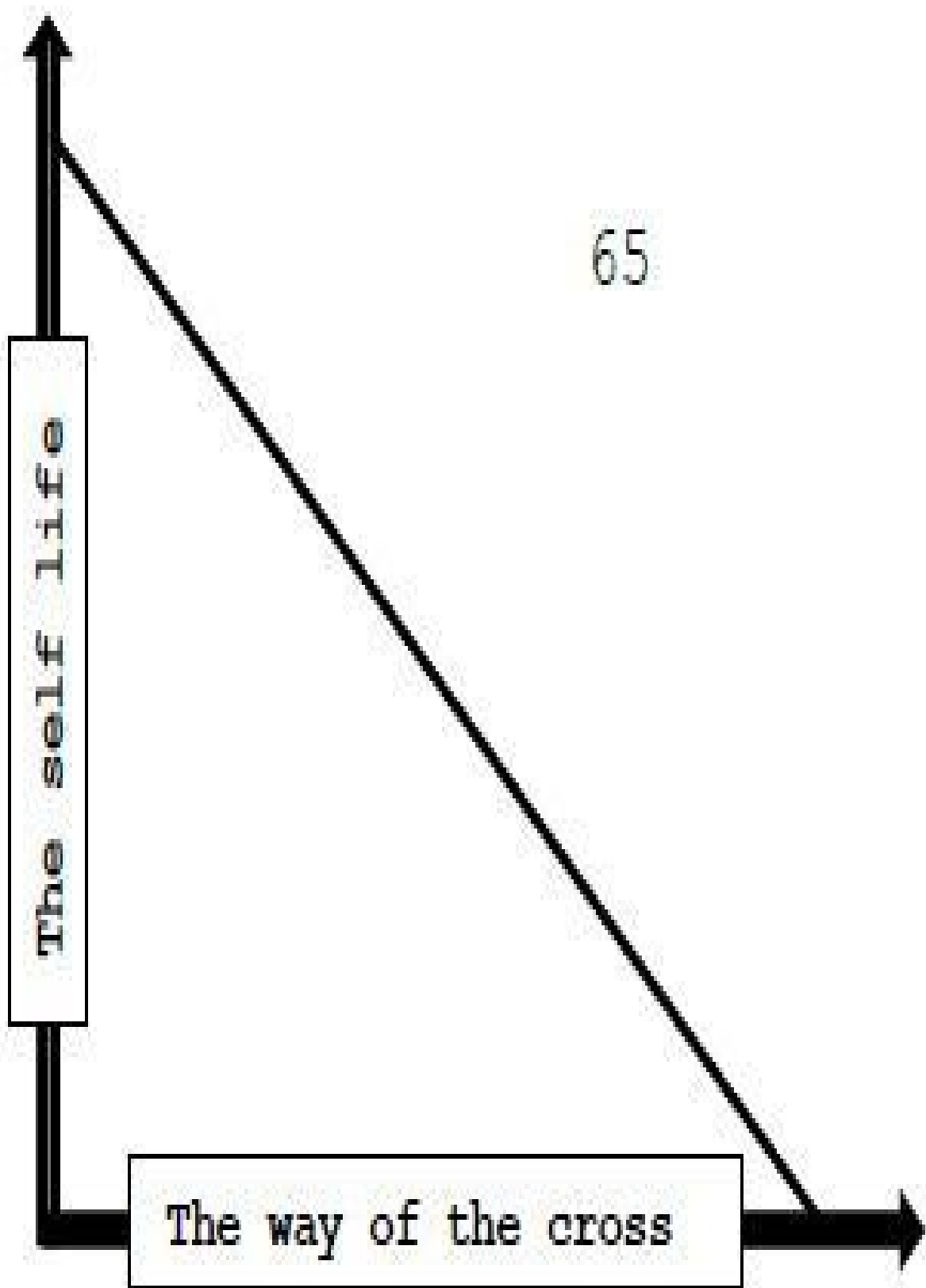
loves,
consults,
receives gifts from,
writes special letters to,
shares one's most intimate thoughts with,
and so on.

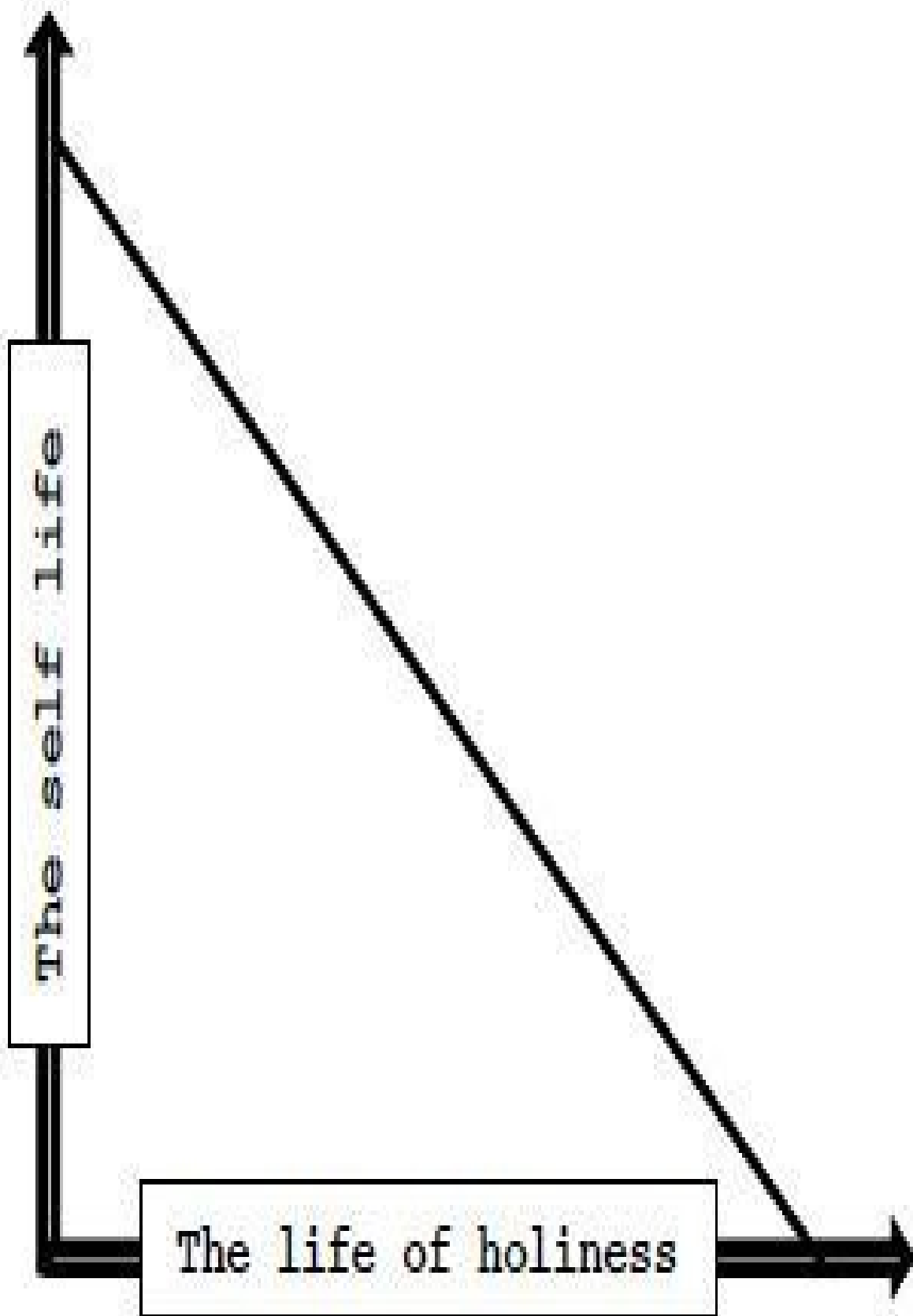
The Self Life

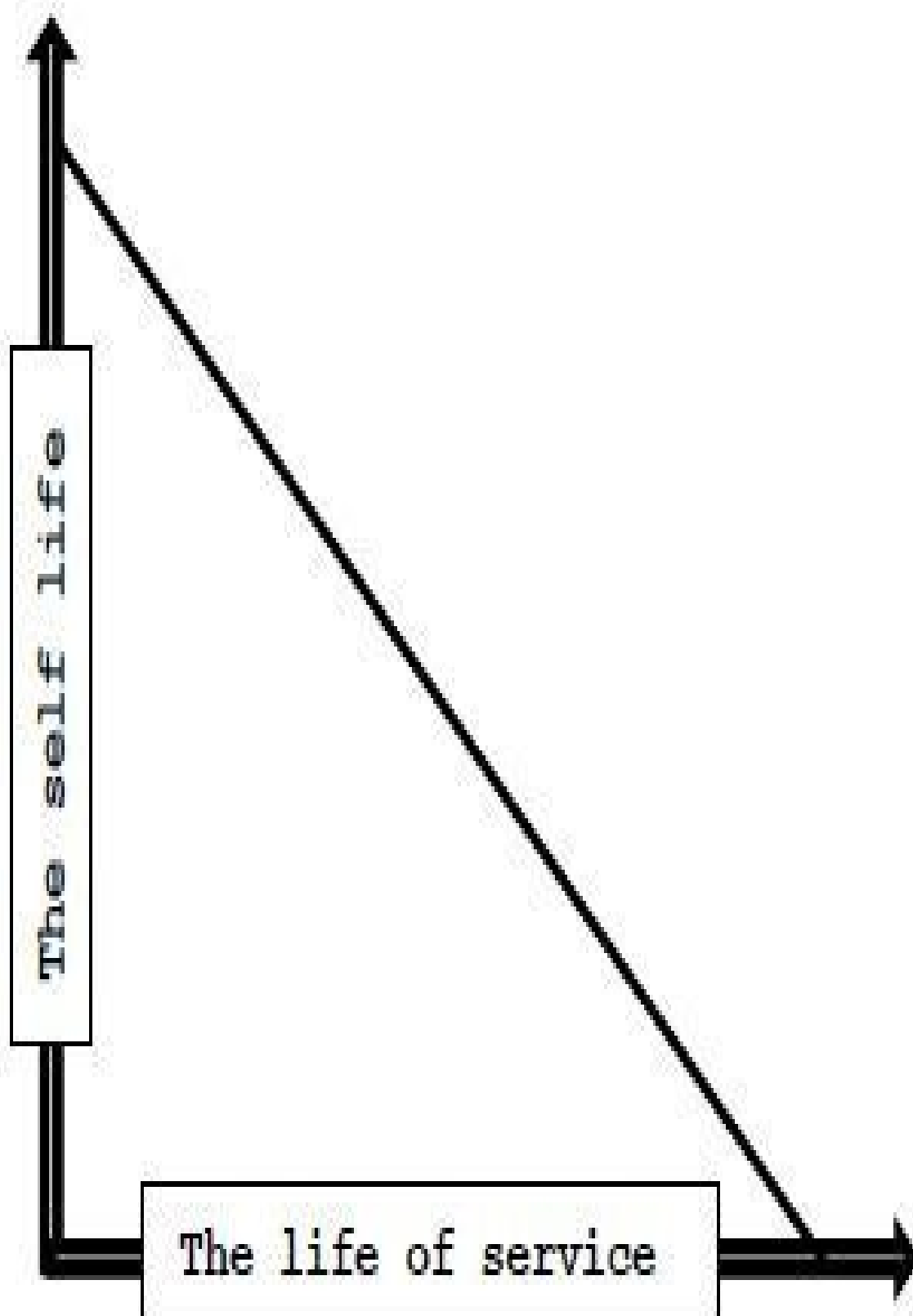
One thing is certain, the self-life is at enmity with God's best desires for His own. This is illustrated in the following:

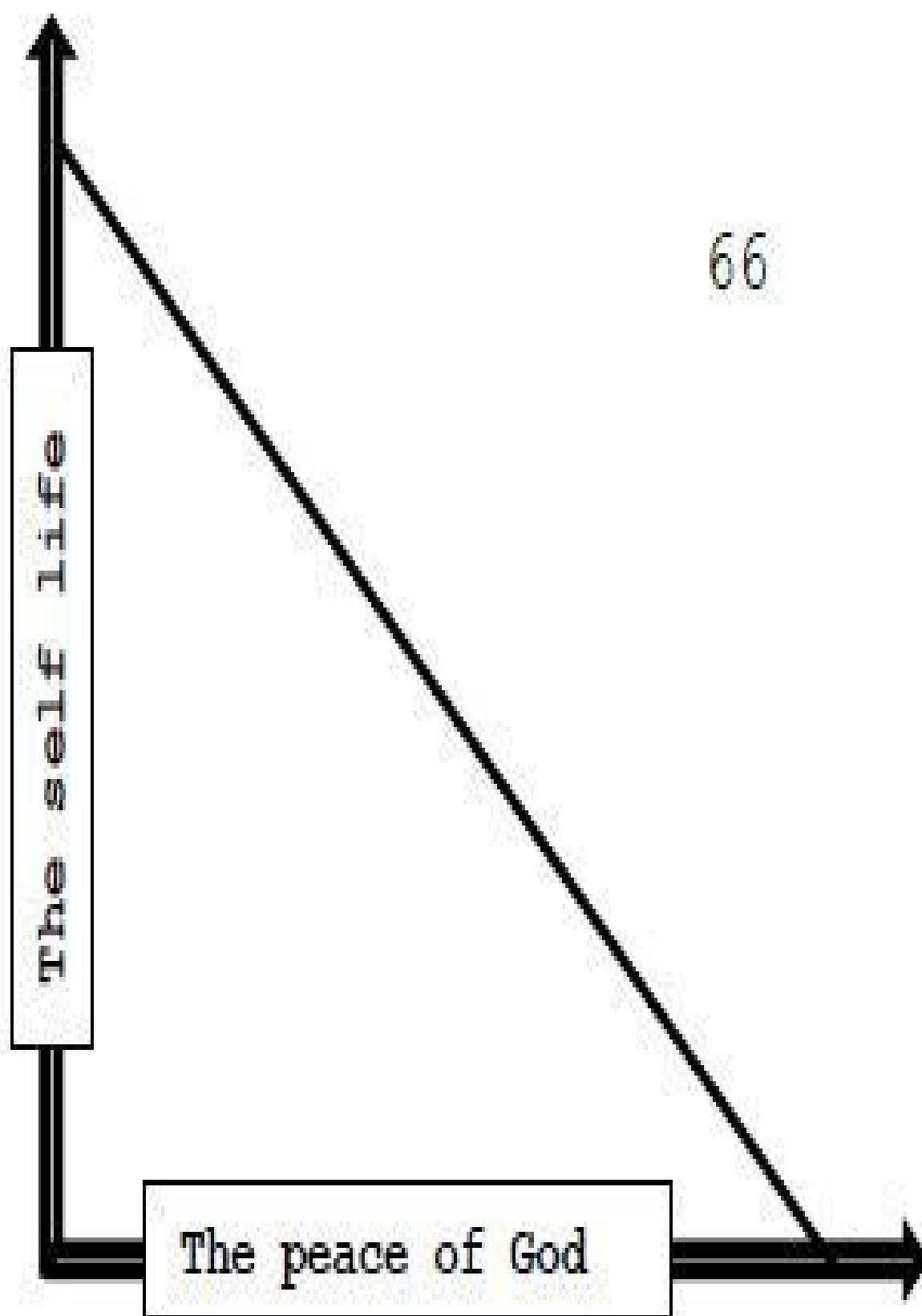




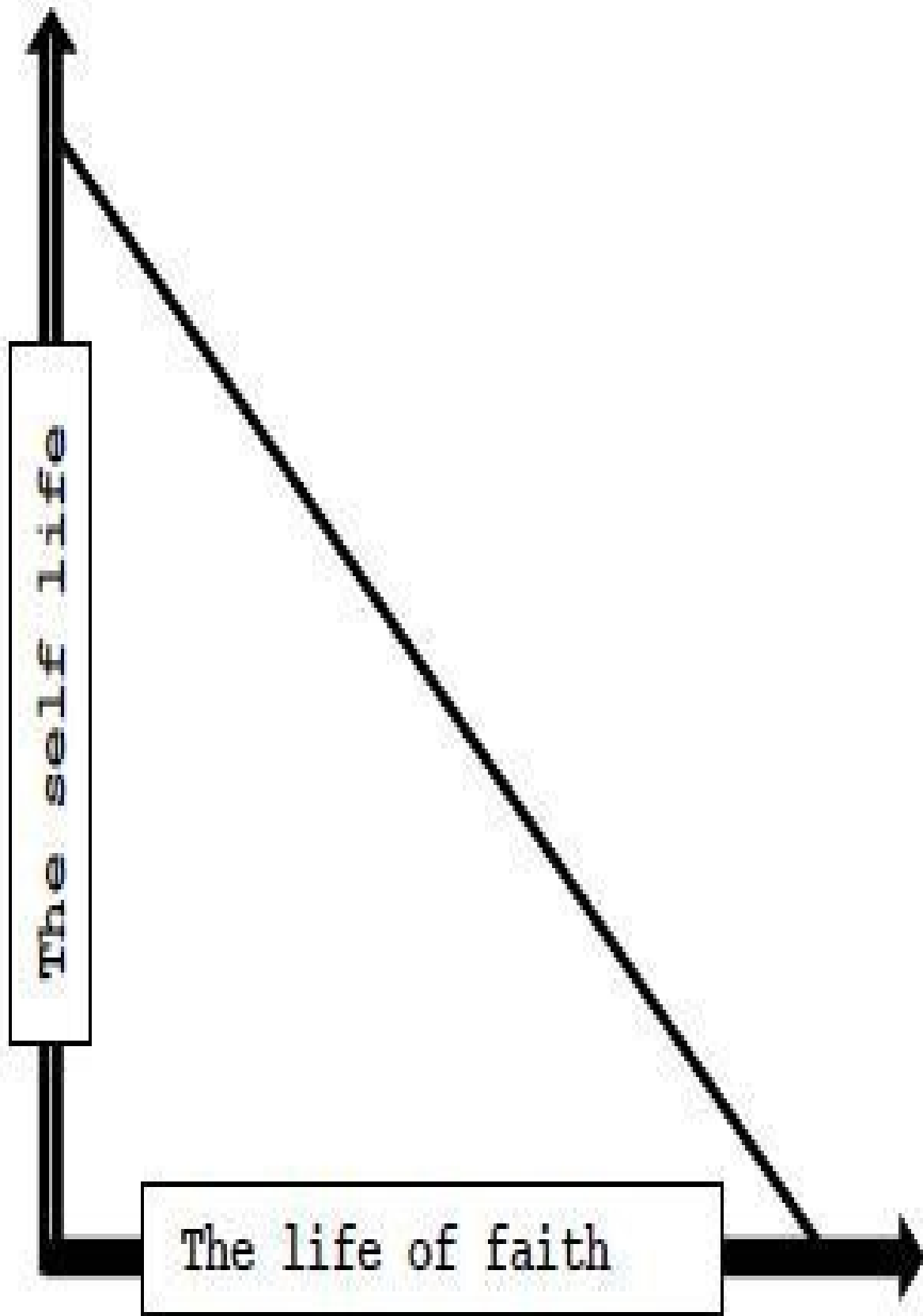


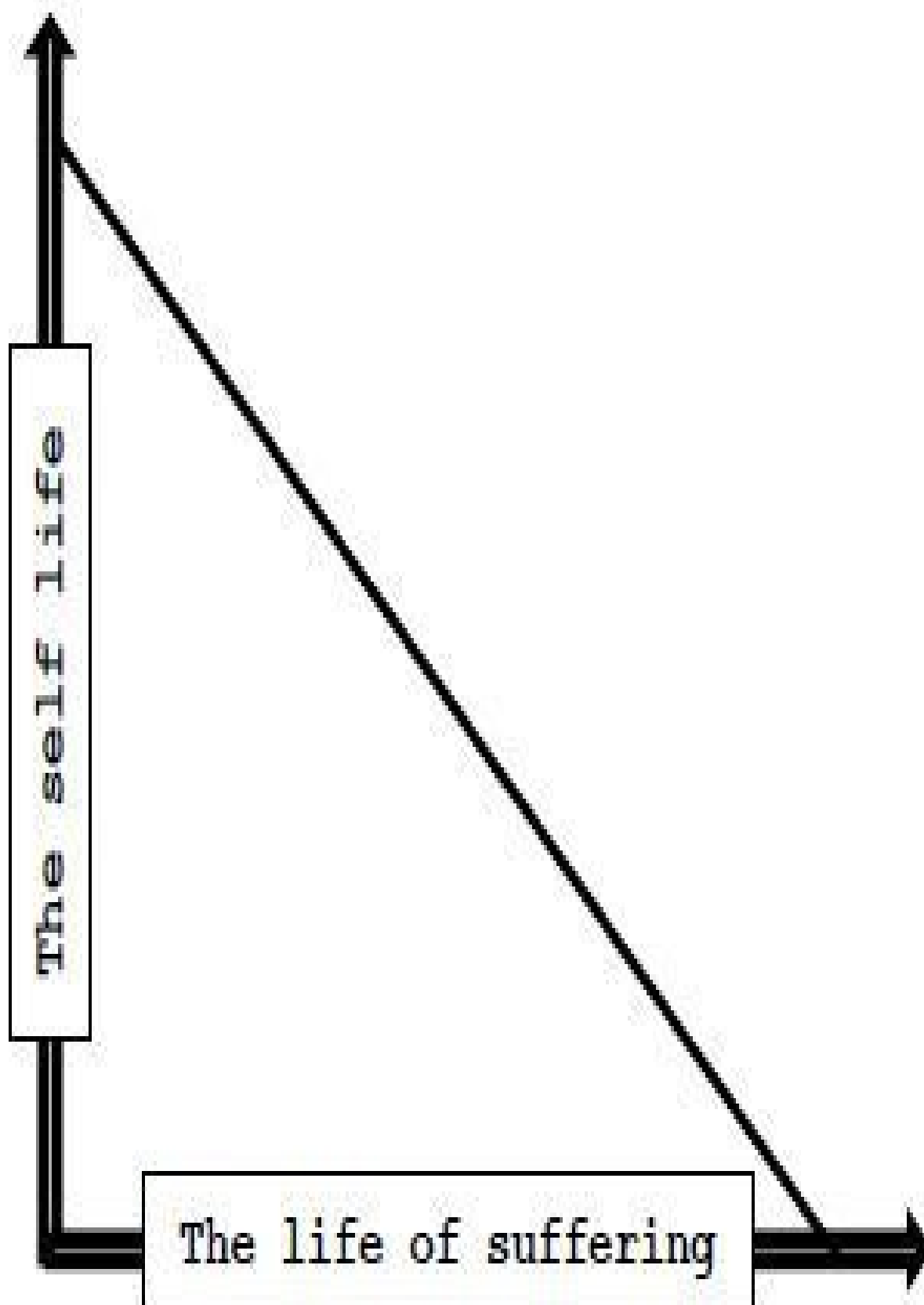


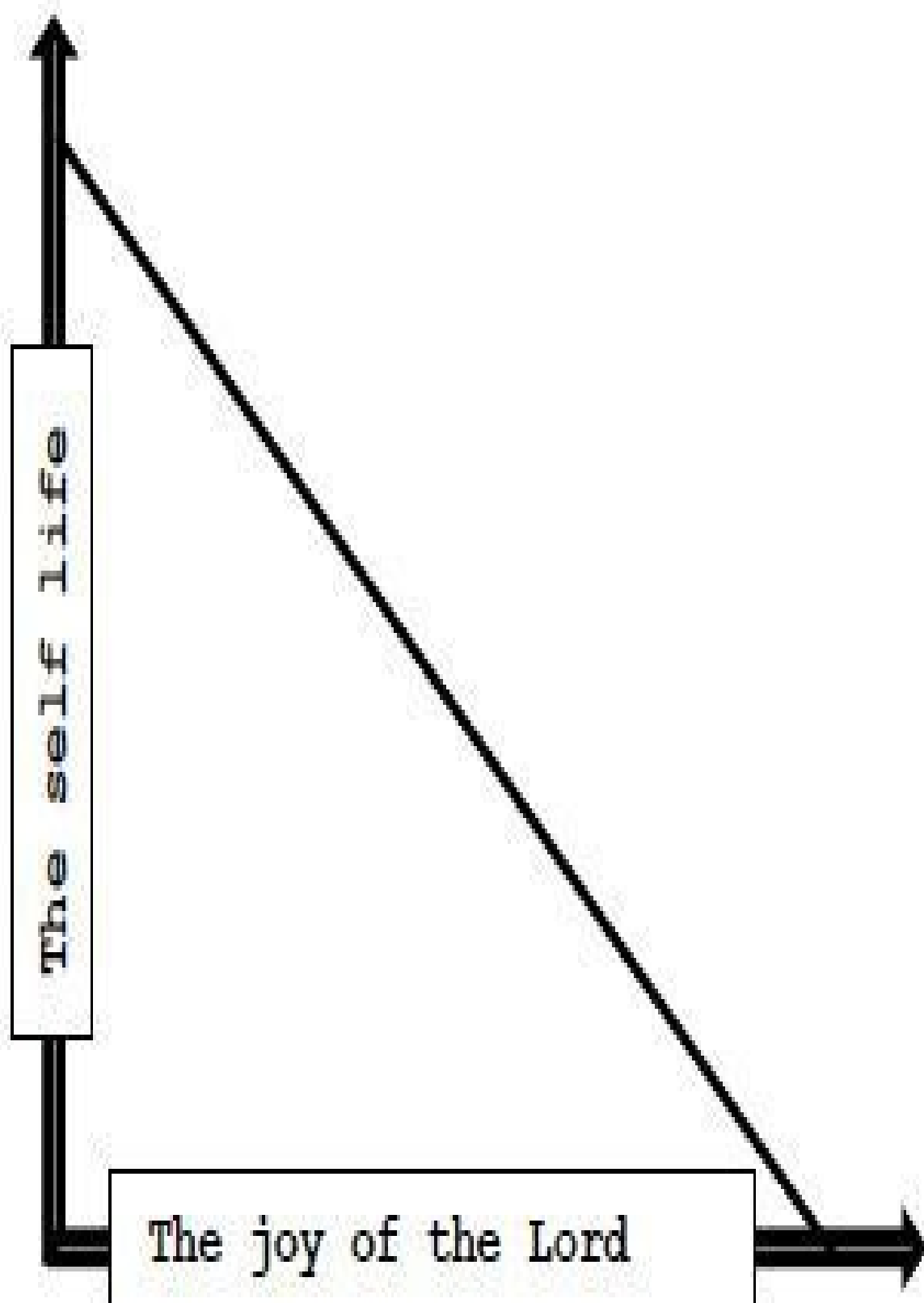




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The University Of God - 2

God had one big lesson to teach Moses in Midian. That lesson was that he was a nobody. Moses' life has been thought of as being divisible into three main parts:

Crisis

Crisis

The University of
Satan

Forty years spent in
thinking that he was
somebody

0 year

40 years

The University of God

Forty years spent in
learning to know that
he was a "nobody"

80 years

The walk with God
and Service of God
with God

Forty years spent in
learning to know
what God could do
with a "nobody"

120 years

We have already seen how he acquired worldly education in Egypt and was mighty in his words and deeds there. This continued for forty years until at the crisis of being discovered for applying worldly wisdom and methods to the solution of a spiritual problem, he fled to Midian. As he left Egypt for Midian, studies in the University of Satan ended and he was enrolled in the University of God. He stayed in the University of God until he was totally welded in his spirit, soul and body to the fact that he was a nobody. Then he had the crisis encounter with God that brought him out of the University of God into a life of walking with God and serving God with God.

Moses As A “Nobody”

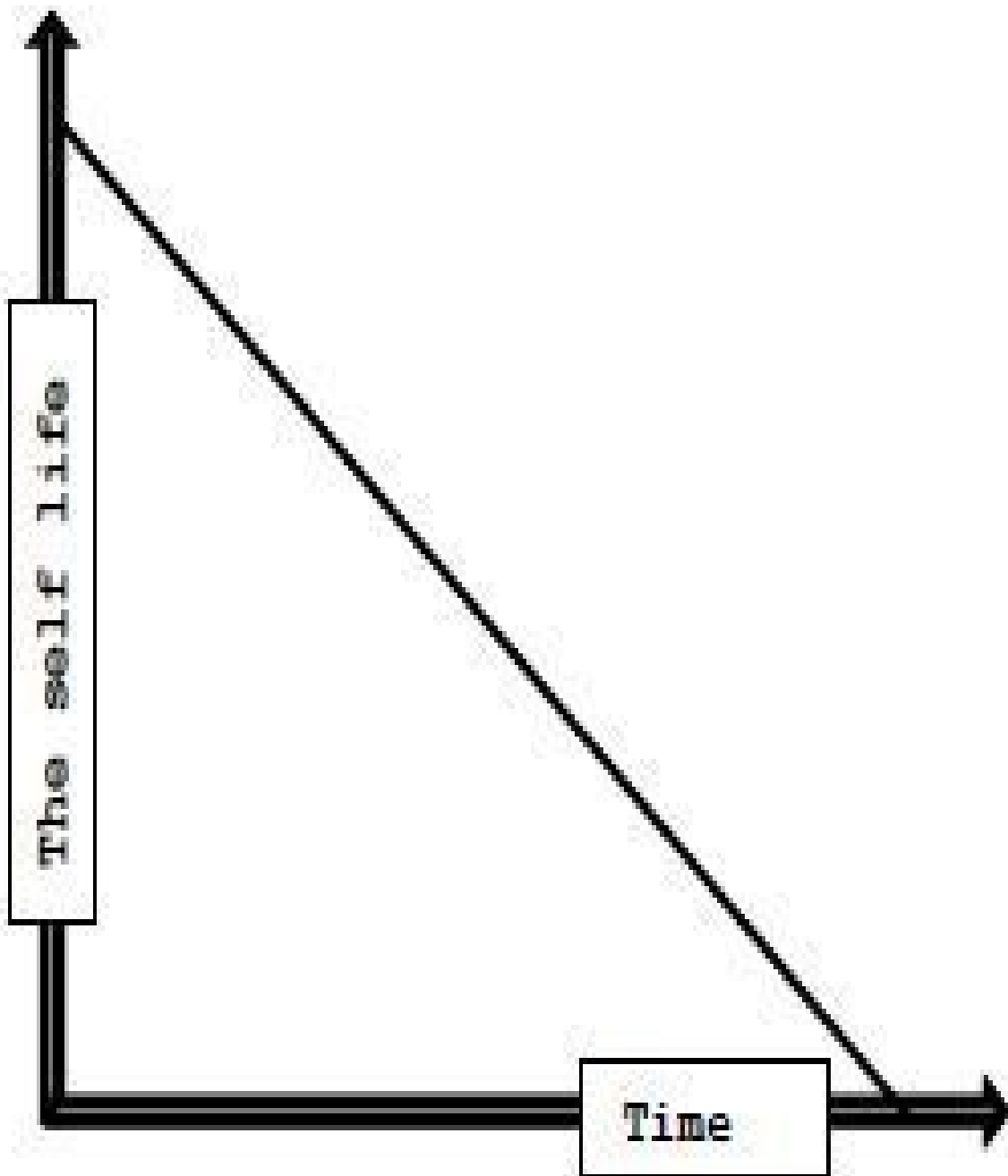
We have already seen that Moses was dependent in everything - food, shelter, wife and all. He was also dependent in service. He was a shepherd but the flock was not his. The Bible says,

“Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian” (Exodus 3:1).

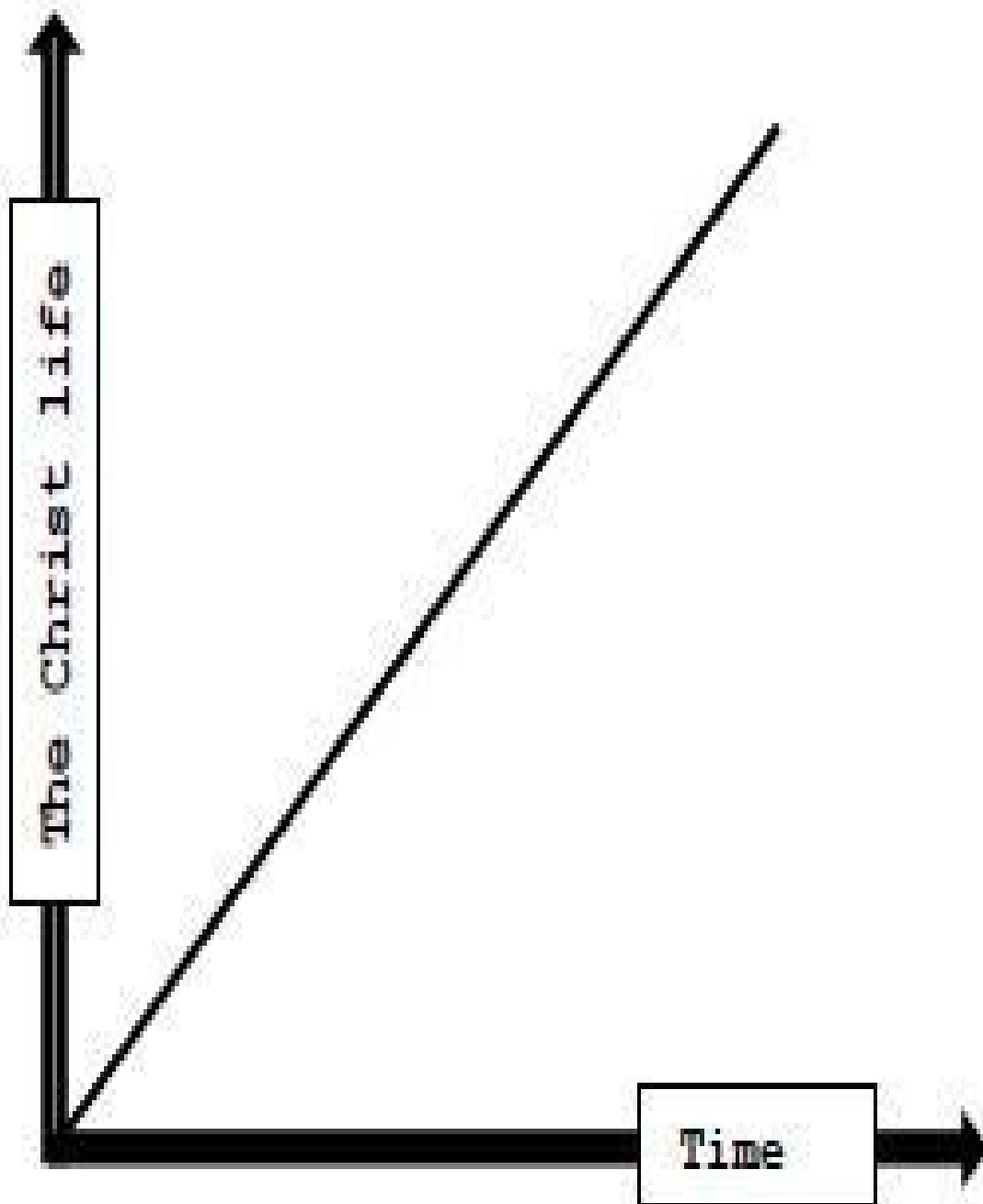
If the flock increased in size, praise did not go to Moses but to Jethro. If the flock multiplied, all the praise went to Jethro. On the other hand, if the flock did not fare well, if they were sick or some were stolen, the blame went to Moses.

A “nobody” is a person who receives all the blame for what goes wrong and none of the credit for what goes right. A servant is a person who willingly offers to desire no praise for all the good that he may do, but gladly accepts blame for all that may go wrong even though he may not be the one who is responsible for things going wrong.

Moses made progress. Although he quit the University of Satan on his departure from Egypt, he nevertheless entered the university of God with all the Satanic things that he had learnt. This means that the time in the University of God was essentially spent in “unteaching” him what he had been taught in the Enemy’s University. There was first of all, an important process of breaking down, of “unteaching”, of “uprooting”, before there could be teaching. We can consider Moses as filled with the wisdom of the world and therefore, not in any condition to receive spiritual wisdom. He had to be liberated from the wisdom of the world before he could be taught the wisdom of God.



The cross works to bring the self-life to an end



The Holy Spirit works to
establish the Christ-life

Often, the two processes go on simultaneously. Sometimes, the dealing with the self-life has to continue for many years before there is any hope of building. In the case of Moses, the work of dealing with the self-life went on for forty years and was completed before the work of the formation of Christ within began.

Time

Time is a great servant of the Lord. God takes time in doing anything, that He wants to do. He is never in a hurry. He is not carried away by quantity. Quality is His hallmark. For example, He took four thousand years from the day that Adam betrayed the race through sin, for the fulness of His time to come for the Saviour to be born. He has taken nearly two thousand years in preparing the Bride for His Son.

Moses entered the University of God at forty. He enrolled in the crucial department of “Emptying of Self.” God Himself was the Professor there. The other professors were the “Circumstances of life” and others. After five years, Moses was still in that University. Then ten years went past. This was followed by another ten years and then another ten years and then the last lap of ten years rolled by. Then Moses was taken in for His final examination in the University of God. There was only one paper and in that one paper there was one question. The one question was “contentment.” Moses was contented with changing circumstances. He did not complain. In the beginning he possibly complained much about the circumstances of life:

weather,

food,

the behaviour of his wife,

the behaviour of his children,
the behaviour of his father-in-law,
the behaviour of his mother-in-law,
the behaviour of the flock in summer,
the behaviour of the flock in winter,
the behaviour of the ewe when pregnant,
the behaviour of the ewe while giving birth,
the behaviour of the ewe while suckling,
the behaviour of the he-goats during mating,
the behaviour of his wife's sisters,
-the behaviour of the husbands of his wife's sisters,
the behaviour of the children of his wife's sisters,
the behaviour of visitors,
the way his wife dressed,
the way she chewed food,
the way she cooked his food,
the way she served him food,
the quality of food served to him,
the quantity of food served,
the way family funds were used,
the interference of Jethro in his affairs,

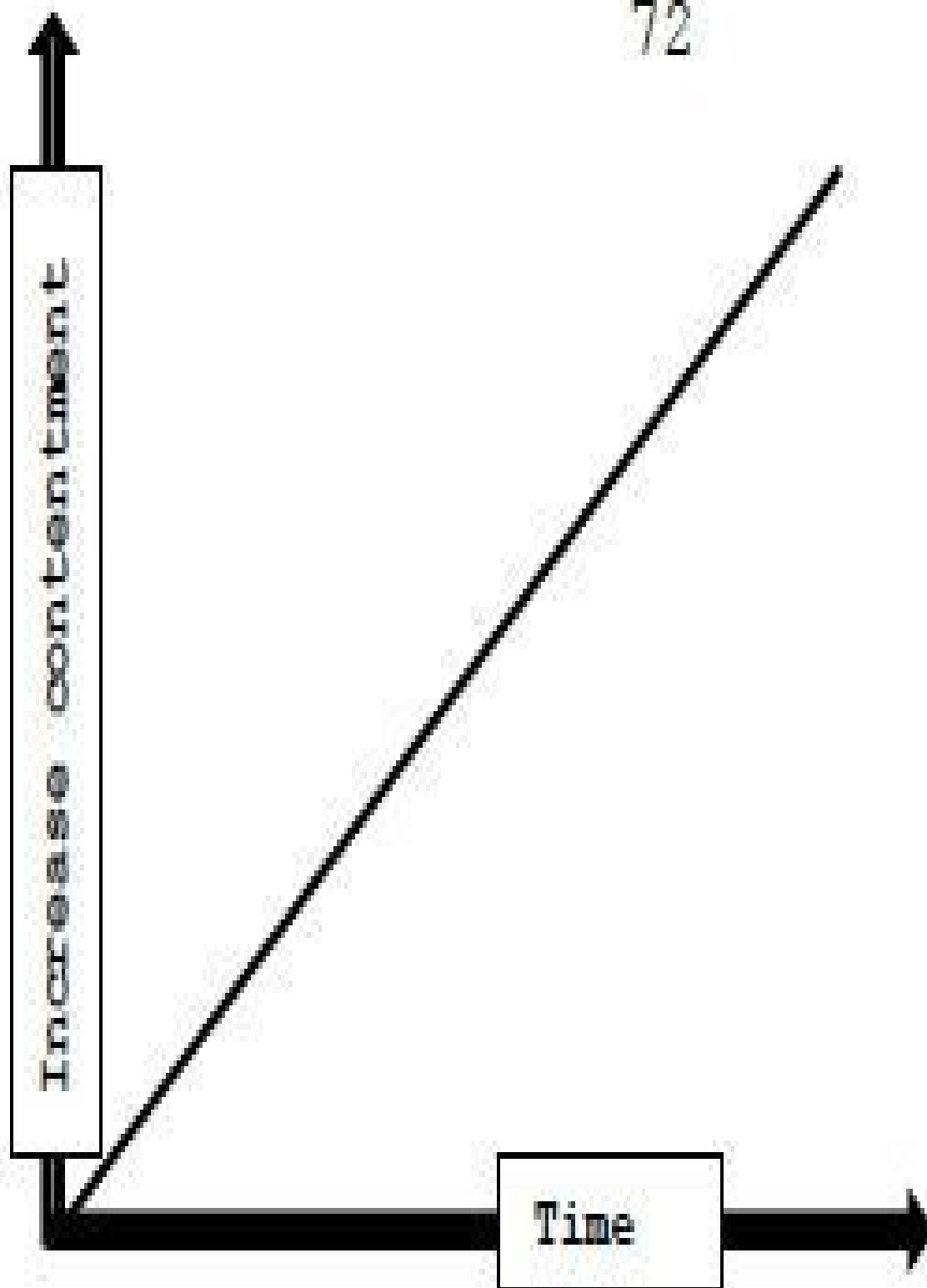
the way Jethro was praised for the growing number of sheep without some of the credit being given to him,

the way Jethro blamed him fully and completely for every sheep that died from sickness or was stolen or torn by wild beasts,

the long hours of work that he had to put up with because of the increasing flock and the shortage of more helpers,

and a thousand other issues.

Then, as he made progress in the University, he complained less and less and became increasingly contented. Then there came a day when he did not complain at all for one, two, three, four or six hours, not because he was alone, but because he had been delivered completely from complaining. Then one whole day passed, and then another passed without his complaining. Then a week passed by, and soon a month and then two and then three. Then the winter came and went without his complaining. He was calm, serene and totally at rest. He was ready for the final examination. He was ready for graduation.



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PROGRESS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GOD

Moses spent forty years before he was ready. Let it be understood that he could have spent forty months, forty weeks, forty days, forty hours, forty minutes or forty seconds. The length of time was not determined by God but by Moses. God can do the work in a much shorter time if He finds students who are co-operative with Him.

Moses spent forty years but he had another forty years to invest in the service of the Lord. If someone who is going to live for seventy years decides to spend the first forty years of his life in the University of Satan, and then hopes to spend another forty years in the university of God before he is ready to serve the Lord, he would discover that he cannot even graduate from the university of God when the time is up.

There is need for people to co-operate with God and so redeem the time by letting Him have His way as soon as possible.

God has not ordained that we spend much time in the University of Satan followed by much time in the University of God. His desire is that we would spend the minimum time in these universities and the longest portion of our lives in His service. Let us labour to bring that desire of His to fruition.

Let us recognize where we are today and do something serious about it.

Glory be to God.

The University Of God - 3: Contentment

The life of contentment is a measure of the extent to which a man has been delivered from the self-life. The Apostle Paul made great strides and came very close to perfect deliverance from the self-life. He said,

“Not that I complain of want, for I have learnt in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased and I know how to abound, in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:11-13).

He had learned to be content in whatever state he was. He had also learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want in any and in all circumstances.

He did not complain about his circumstances even though they were far from easy. Look at some of them:

With far greater labours.

With far more imprisonments.

With countless beatings.

Often near death.

Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.

Three times I have been beaten with rods.

Once I was stoned.

Three times I have been shipwrecked.

A night and a day I have been adrift at sea.

On frequent journeys.

In danger from rivers.

In danger from robbers.

In danger from my own people.

In danger from the Gentiles.

In danger in the city.

In danger in the wilderness.

In danger at sea.

In danger from false brethren.

In toil and hardship.

Through many a sleepless night.

In fasting often.

Often without food.

In cold and exposure.

(2 Corinthians 11:23-27)

The Apostle Paul did not complain in any of those circumstances. He was content in all of them. He derived his contentment not from what happened on the outside, i.e. outward circumstances but what happened in the inside, i.e. in the inward circumstances. The inward circumstances were the condition of his spirit and he maintained undisturbed communion with the Lord and so was at peace. So Paul had two goals - the first was to be united to Christ in an undisturbed way. That goal could not be hindered from outside. The second goal was to conquer the world for Christ. The accomplishment of the goal too could not be hindered from outside. He knew that

imprisonments,

financial stresses,

lack of paper,

difficult political regimes,

and the like, could not hinder the conquest of the world for Christ. Yes, he knew that Communism could not hinder the advance of the gospel. He also knew that Democracy could not advance it.

In the past I thought that a

better economy,

greater political freedom,

greater administrative efficiency,

and the like,

would help us in our bid to conquer the world for our Lord in our generation. Now, I have to face the fact, and to admit that the above conditions are irrelevant to the success of the work that God has called us to do. The only thing that matters is my knowledge of Christ, and my knowledge of the power of the resurrection, and my fellowship with Him in His suffering ¹.

That is why Paul made this his goal. He said,

“That I may know the power of his resurrection, and may share his suffering, becoming like him in his death” (Philippians 3:10).

He pursued that goal relentlessly and made a success of his spiritual career. There is no other way to it.

He recommends from hard-earned experience to his junior co-worker, Timothy, and to the rest of us that,

“There is great gain in godliness with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world, but if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs” (1 Timothy 6:6-10).

But the problem is not only money. There is the love of fame, the love of sex and the love of food. All these are manifestations of the self-life and the answer to them lies in the dealing with the self-life.

The University Of God – 4: Dealing With The Self-Life Today

Many believers recognize the fact that the self-life is an obstacle to their knowledge and service of the Lord. Many songs have been composed by saints seeking deliverance. Let us look at three of such songs. We have underlined key phrases in them.

O Jesus Christ, grow Thou in me,

And all things else recede!

My heart be daily nearer Thee,

From sin be daily freed

Each day let Thy supporting might,

My weakness still embrace;

My darkness vanish in Thy light,

Thy life my death efface.

In Thy bright beams which on me fall

Fade every evil thought,

That I am nothing, Thou art all,

I would be daily taught.

*More of Thy glory let me see,
Thou Holy, Wise, and True!
I would Thy living image be,
In joy and sorrow too.*

*Fill me with gladness from above,
Hold me by strength Divine;
Lord, make me a glow of Thy great love
Through my whole being shine.*

*Make this poor self grow less and less,
Be Thou my life and aim;
Oh, make me daily through Thy grace
More meet to bear Thy name.*

S.S. and S. NO. 585.

*My Saviour, Thou hast offered rest:
Oh, give it, then, let me!
The rest of ceasing from myself,*

To find my all in Thee.

*The cruel self, oh, how it strives
And works within my breast,
To come between Thee and my soul
And keep me back from rest!*

*How many subtle forms it takes
Of seeming verity,
As if it were not safe to rest,
And venture all on Thee.*

*O Lord, I seek a holy rest,
A victory over sin!
I seek that Thou alone should reign
O'er all without, within.*

*In Thy strong hand I lay me down -
So shall the work be done:
For who can work so wonderfully
As the Almighty One?*

Work on, then, Lord, till on my soul

Eternal light shall break;

And in Thy likeness perfected,

I “satisfied” shall wake.

S.S. and S. 589.

“Not I, but Christ,” be honoured, loved, exalted;

“Not I, but Christ,” be seen, be known, be heard;

“Not I, but Christ,” in every look and action;

“Not I, but Christ,” in every thought and word.

“Not I, but Christ,” to gently soothe in sorrow;

“Not I, but Christ,” to wipe the falling tear;

“Not I, but Christ,” to lift the weary burden;

“Not I, but Christ,” to hush away all fear.

“Not I, but Christ,” in lowly silent labour;

“Not I, but Christ,” in humble earnest toil;

Christ, only Christ! no show, no ostentation;

Christ, none but Christ, the gatherer of the spoil.

Christ, only Christ, ere long will fill my vision;

Glory excelling, soon, full soon, I'll see -

Christ, only Christ, my every wish fulfilling -

Christ, only Christ, my All in All to be.

S.S. and S. 623.

The “self” is an idol that seeks to be worshipped. It is an idol that usurps the throne of God in man. It is an idol that needs to be overthrown. One hymn writer wrote,

The dearest idol I have known,

Whate'er that idol be,

Help me to tear it from thy throne

And worship only Thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,

Calm and serene my frame;

So purer light shall mark the road

That leads me to the Lamb.

A person can set out to struggle with the “self” all his life and make some progress. However, there is a short and decisive way of dealing with the self. This is in an encounter with the Lord! One Hymn writer put it this way:

Show me Thy face - one transient gleam

Of loveliness divine

And I shall never think or dream

Of other love save Thine:

All lesser light will darken quite,

All lower glories wane,

The beautiful of earth will scarce

Seem beautiful again.

Show me Thy face - my faith and love

Shall henceforth fixed be

And nothing here have power to move

My soul's serenity.

My life shall seem a trance, a dream

And all I feel and see,

Illusive, visionary - Thou

The one reality!

Show me Thy face - I shall forget

The weary days of yore,

The fretting ghost of vain regret

Shall haunt my soul no more.

All doubts and fears for future years

In quiet rest subside,

And naught but blest content and calm

Within my breast reside.

Show me Thy face - the heaviest cross

Will then seem light to bear,

There will be gain in every loss,

And peace with every care.

With such light feet the years will fleet,

Life seem as brief and blest,

Till I have laid my burden down,

And entered into rest.

S.S. and S. N° 573.

One such encounter with the Lord turned and changed Paul's life. As we shall see later on, one such encounter sealed the transformation of Moses' life. For many saints over the years, one encounter with the Lord of all glory, was the turning point. They saw Him. They beheld His glory and all the offers and all the attractions of this world became dim and meaningless. They saw Him in His wondrous beauty and all idols, including the idol of self, became thoroughly ugly. They saw Him and had one consuming passion: to enthrone Him Lord of their lives. Then they found that there was one obstacle - self was on His throne. Then, there was no difficulty in taking the decision - self had to be torn down and He enthroned. So they went straight ahead and tore every form of the idol self and enthroned Him Lord for ever.

Those who receive divine revelation and act upon it, deal with the self-life in one go. They come to one major crisis and everything is settled there and settled at once. That is the pathway that we should pursue.

We can then say that there are two ways by which the self life can be dealt with. It can be dealt with in a long process lasting forty years or it can be dealt with in

forty months

forty weeks

forty days

forty hours

forty minutes or

forty seconds.

The Hymn writer wrote:

“The dearest idol I have known

Whate’re that idol be

Help me to tear it from Thy throne

And worship only Thee”

The idol is self. A person can decide to tear the self from the throne of God in forty years, forty months, forty weeks, forty days, forty hours, forty minutes or forty seconds. The time that he takes will depend on whether he wants to go about it gently, allowing the self as much time as possible to reign before it is overthrown or if he has decided to deal with it at once and most quickly. Should he choose to act totally and quickly, it will cost him much pain but the surgery would be brief and effective.

Each believer must decide for himself how long it will take. Since service that satisfies the heart of the Lord is a post-deliverance-from-self affair, in deciding how quickly the transaction is to be carried out, the believer is also deciding how soon he can begin to truly serve the Lord.

Have you settled this matter in your own life?

Have you sought and “seen” the Lord?

Has the world been made to appear as indeed it is - empty and vain?

Has the desire for the glory of the Lord filled you?

Would you have His all at any cost?

Would you have His all at any cost today?

Graduation From The University Of God

Moses finally graduated from the University of God! It was obvious that he was qualified to graduate. The Moses who entered the University of God and the Moses who graduated were hardly identical.

The things which were important to him before he entered the university of God became of no importance whatsoever. The power of his words on people, a former treasure, became absolutely meaningless. His personal power to do things became of no consequence. His relationship with Pharaoh became of no consequence. Before, he sought the approval of Pharaoh. Now he did not bother at all about the opinion of Pharaoh. Before, he did not bother about the opinion of God. Now, he clung to what God said, and only what God said mattered. Before he was concerned with the praises of men. At graduation, the praises of men offered him no joy. He only bothered about satisfying the heart of God. Before enrolment, worldly possessions - possessions in Egypt meant everything to him. On graduation, worldly possessions, possessions in Egypt meant absolutely nothing to him.

Moses was so transformed that he hardly bothered about things that meant much to him before and was not moved one bit by the absence of things that he once held dear.

We can tabulate the life of a person who is ripe for graduation from the university of God as follows:

BEFORE ENROLMENT	AT GRADUATION
1. Was pre-occupied with self. 2. Sought self-glory 3. Did things to be seen by men. 4. Loved the things of this world. 5. Depended upon his intelligence. 6. Initiated personal projects 7. Sought God to help him accomplish his projects. 8. Loved self-made projects. 9. Self-confident 10. Depended upon past accomplishments. 11. Proud 12. Felt that success depended upon his gifts and abilities and therefore was self-confident. 13. Felt that the future depended on his abilities. 14. Independent	1. Is pre-occupied with God. 2. Seeks the glory of God. 3. Does things to be seen by God. 4. Loves the things of the world to come (heaven). 5. Depends upon the wisdom of God. 6. Waits and receives God's projects and then works at them. 7. Is a servant to God and labours to help God accomplish His projects. 8. Abhors everything that has its origin in man. 9. Believes God. 10. Seeks God for the present and has no faith in the past, regardless of how wonderful it was. 11. Humble 12. Knows that success depends on the Lord and therefore clings to the Lord. 13. Feels that all the future hangs on the Lord's mercy and power. 14. Depends absolutely on God.

The things that people clamour for and rely so desperately on are totally useless in the service of God. Moses succeeded in the future because all that was his source of confidence and pride in the world was all abandoned and he clung totally, desperately and helplessly to the Lord. Nothing that is of the old creation can serve God's purposes in the new creation. My Lord, teach me to know this in the fullest measure.

■

1 In my opinion the most dedicated christians of the generation are to be found in countries with totalitarian regimes. The fastest growing churches of the generation are in communist China. It could also be that the most lukewarm, worldly and self-satisfied churches of this generation are in countries where there is the maximum development of democracy and human liberty!

THE INDISPENSABLE ENCOUNTER

In the knowledge of God, there must be a beginning!

That beginning is important, for it provides the first real contact between a man and God. Before that encounter, a man may have some ideas about God. He may receive blessings from God and may even serve God in some kind of general way, but he does not know God. Job had such an encounter with God and then confessed,

“I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee; therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5-6).

The problem with many believers is that all they can say of their knowledge of God is, “I have heard of thee, by the hearing of the ear.” Few are there who can add, “But now my eye sees thee.” We consider this, “But now my eye sees thee” as indispensable to a knowledge of God at a deeper level. There is a knowledge of God that is possessed by those who “have heard of him.” That knowledge has its usefulness. There is a knowledge that is the possession of those “whose eyes have seen him.”

The Indispensable Encounter

“Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west of the wilderness, and came to Horeb the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, ”I will turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.’ When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him, out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, ‘Here am I’ Then he said, ‘Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ And he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God” (Exodus 3:1-6).

The Need For Faithfulness

The Lord prizes the character trait called faithfulness. Moses was faithfully keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro. He actually led his flock to the West side of the wilderness and came to the mountain of God. It is then that the Lord appeared to him. The Lord always appears to people who are faithful at what they should be doing. He appears to people who are faithfully occupied with the ordinary things of life so that they may become occupied with His extraordinary things. Let us look at a few examples:

1. JACOB.

The Bible says,

“Jacob left Beersheba, and went towards Haran. And he came to a certain place, and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it

reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac, the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. Behold I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you" (Genesis 28:10-15).

2. GIDEON

"Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valour." And Gideon said to him, "Pray, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this befallen us, And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian.' And the Lord turned to him and said, 'Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?' And he said to him, 'Pray, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.' And the Lord said to him, "But I will be with you and you shall smite the Midianites as one man.' And he said to him, 'If now I have found favour with thee, then show me a sign that it is thou who speakest with me. Do not depart from here, I pray thee, until I come to thee, and bring out my present, and set it before thee.' And he said, 'I will stay till you return'" (Judges 6:11-18).

3. SOLOMON

"Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father; only he

sacrificed and burnt incense at the high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place, Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings upon that altar. At Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I shall give you.' And Solomon said, 'Thou hast shown great and steadfast love to thy servant David my father, because he walked before thee in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards thee, and thou hast kept for him this great and steadfast love, and hast given him a son to sit on his throne this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child, I do not know how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this thy great people?' (1 kings 3:3-9).

So, we see that God revealed Himself to Solomon. He also revealed himself to Abraham who later on said,

"The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth and who spoke to me and swore to me, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you and you shall take a wife for my son from there" (Genesis 24:7).

He also revealed Himself to Joshua saying,

"Moses my servant is dead, now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you as I promised to Moses" (Joshua 1:2-3)

He revealed Himself to many others. One thing stands clear: He always revealed Himself to people who were already faithfully doing something useful. He also, always revealed Himself to people who were prepared and willing to co-operate with Him in carrying out some tasks.

For example, to Paul He said,

“I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you, to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you” (Acts 26:16).

To Gideon He said,

“Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?” (Judges 6:14).

Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying,

“Whom shall I send and who shall go for us?” Then he said, “Here am I! Send me.” And he said, “Go and say to this people...” (Isaiah 6:8-9).

God is looking for people who are faithful in small matters that He might reveal Himself to them and thus call them to do greater things for Him. Moses was one such! Jacob was another! Gideon was yet another! And you?

The Importance Of The Miraculous.

“The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, ”I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” (Exodus 3:2-4).

It is interesting to see that God often uses the miraculous to initiate people into spiritual things. The angel appeared to Moses in a flame of fire. The bush was burning yet it was not consumed. Moses was attracted to the great sight and when he turned aside to see, God called to him.

God will do everything to draw the attention of those to whom He wants to reveal Himself or those to whom He wants to speak in a special way. For Paul, He used the lightning that knocked him and the others to the ground. In this way He drew his attention and when he listened, the Lord spoke to him. For Jacob, he dreamt and the Lord spoke to him in the dream. For Joshua, it was the sight of a man who stood before him with his drawn sword in his hand. When Joshua went to him, the Lord spoke to him.

Each believer should regard every miracle of God as an invitation to something bigger and greater. The miracle should not be seen as an end in itself.

The Initiative Is With God.

Moses did not seek the Lord. The Lord sought Moses. The greater always takes the initiative towards the lesser. God had a work for Moses to do and so God

sought Moses so that He might introduce Moses to the task that was in store for him. If a man has his project in which he wants God to help him, he can take the initiative Godwards. He will then be the initiator and God the servant. However, if God is the initiator, then He must also be allowed to take the initiative to call, to appoint and to reveal Himself.

There is a question in my heart. It is this: Why is there so much human initiative towards God in our day? Why is God not allowed to take the initiative? I think the problem is that too many of God's children are not satisfied with the will of God. They find the assignments of God uninteresting and therefore move quickly to something of their own initiative and there begin to ask God this and that. Were they to be satisfied in the will of God, they would continue faithfully at the place of God's call on them and, as faithful servants, be assured that the Master knows when to give them the next task. There is a real need for many of the Lord's children to ask themselves, "Am I a servant of God or have I made God my servant?" For all I know, a servant does not initiate. He receives instructions!

Let me make it personal. Are you a servant of the Lord or are you His boss? If you have initiated this programme and that, this project and that and you need His help to accomplish your projects, then you are the boss and He is your servant!

The glory of the Lord is only manifested where He initiates. All the good works that the Father wants were all pre-planned from the foundations of the world. No one can initiate anything for Him now. All His servants receive His projects and His directions and accomplish that which He has ordained for them to do for Him. All those who initiate their projects and solicit His help are not serving Him. They are serving themselves.

God took the initiative to seek Moses. He did everything to draw the attention of Moses. He, however, could not force Moses to respond. The Lord compels no

one. He will not break the will of anyone so that that one may become His servant. He calls and waits for a response.

Moses, Moses! what a call!

It was personal!

It was clear!

It was heard!

It was understood!

God never calls people in a way that they cannot understand. I have had many people come to me with weird dreams which they thought were messages from God. I have simply told them to forget the dreams. God always makes calls clear. He never speaks in a way that leaves the person in doubt as to whom He is speaking and as to what He is saying.

“Moses, Moses!” --> Exodus 3:4

“Samuel, Samuel!” --> I Samuel 3:4

“Simon, Simon!” --> Luke 22:31

“Abraham, Abraham!” --> Genesis 22:11

“Abraham!” --> Genesis 22:1

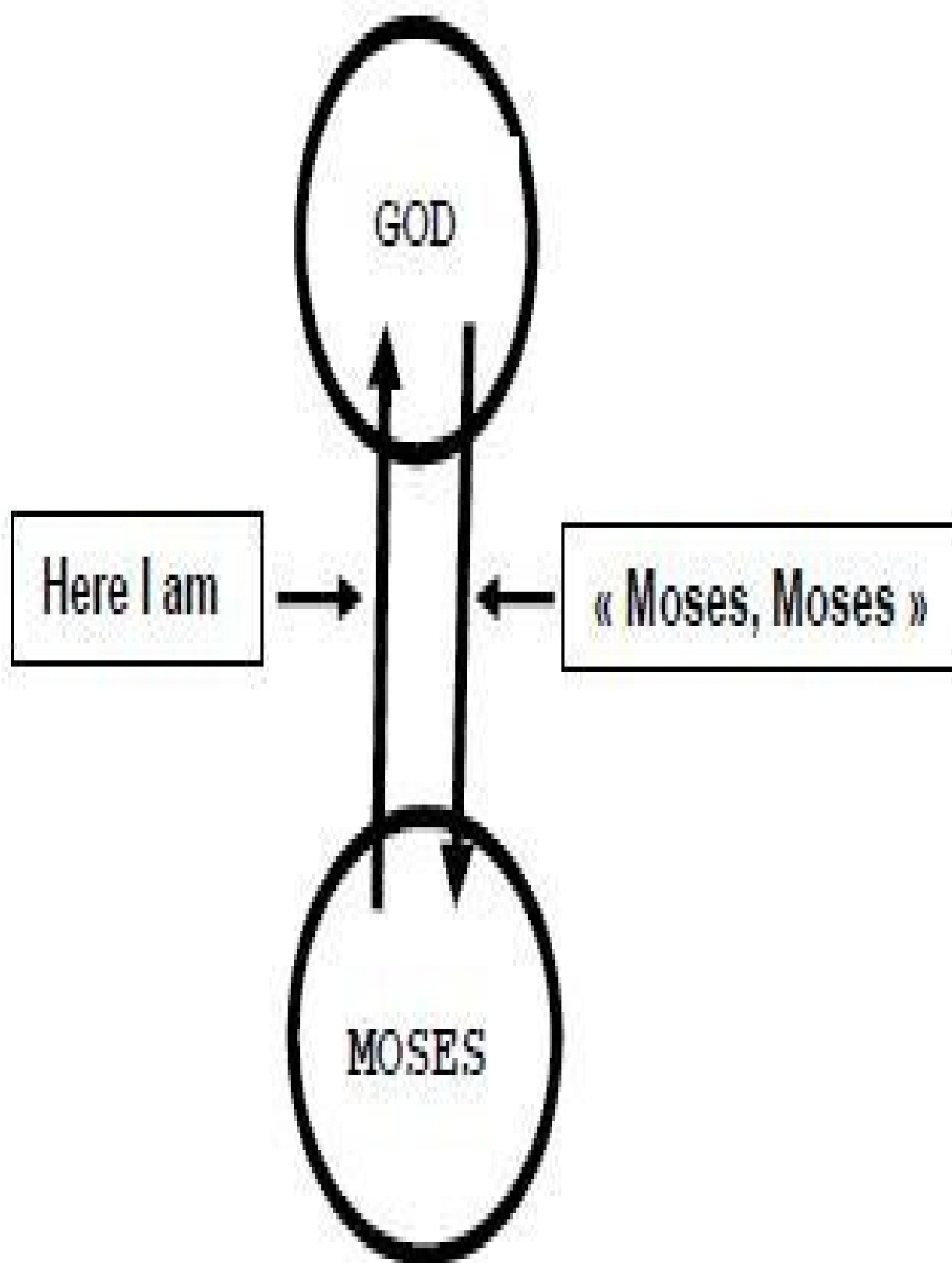
“Zacchaeus” --> Luke 19:5

“Saul, Saul” --> Acts 9:4

If you are confused as to whether or not God has called you, I will advise you to forget it. The voice of the human spirit can be confusing and deceitful. The voice of God is always clear.

Responding To God

When the Lord called, “Moses, Moses,” He waited for Moses to answer. It was a fearful moment, for regardless of the good and great intentions that God had, He would have done nothing without the response of Moses. We thank the Lord that Moses did not only hear the voice of God, but he answered. He spoke back. “Here am I” With those words from Moses, the contact was established!



The Holiness Of God

When Moses responded to the voice of God, the first thing about which God spoke to him was His holiness.

“Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5).

Moses had never heard God’s voice before. The Lord had never appeared to him. This was the first encounter. It would be obvious that the first thing he would hear from God would be stamped indelibly on his heart and on his mind. He would remember it for ever. It would mark his walk with God and influence him permanently.

What did Moses hear? He heard,

“Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

What made the place holy ground? Was it the type of soil to be found there? Was it the type of rocks? No. These cannot make a place holy. The thing that made the place holy was the presence of the Lord. The Lord was there. He possessed the place and permeated it and thus gave it His character. He is holy. He is the God of holiness and whatever He touches takes something of His character, viz, His holiness. This holiness of God is indicated in the following words of a hymn writer:

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!

God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! all the saints adore Thee,

Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,

Cherubim and Seraphim falling down before Thee,

Which wert, and art, and evermore shall be.

Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,

Though the eyes of sinful man Thy glory may not see;

Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,

Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

All thy works shall praise Thy name in earth, and sky, and sea;

Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!

God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

S.S. and S. N° 22.

Moses knew from the beginning that he was dealing with an All-holy God. He knew that he had, therefore, to walk before God in holiness and to sanctify the Lord in everything and in every place and at all times. He knew that he had to fear the Lord and manifest this fear by doing everything that the Lord asked him to do, regardless of how difficult it might be, and by doing everything that he promised the Lord that he would do. This fear of the Lord so gripped and possessed Moses that he walked perfectly in it for the following forty years, obeying the Lord in everything at any cost to himself. Only once in the forty years did he fail to sanctify the Lord. Only once in the forty years did he fail to obey the Lord in everything and when he disobeyed, he was disqualified, not only from leadership but also from walking before God.

So Moses was brought face to face with the holiness of God!

The Personal Introduction Of God

When Moses responded to the call of God, the next thing that happened between them was that the Lord Almighty introduced Himself. He said,

“I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6).

God introduced Himself. In fact, it was imperative that He did so. Had He not done so, there would have been no way in which Moses could have known Him. The Lord Jesus later prayed and said to the Father,

“I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes, yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father and no one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Matthew 11:25-27).

Yes, no one can know the Lord on his own. The initiative is always with God. God knows Himself and no one on his own can know God. When God reveals Himself, He can then be known. That is why the Lord went out of His way to tell Moses who He was. Had He not done it, Moses would never have known Him.

In fact, it would have been possible for Moses to have a part of the burning bush experience without ever knowing God. It would have been possible for him to see the bush that was burning but not being consumed, and that was all. He would have gone away and told people about a strange sight that he had seen - a burning bush that was not consumed. He could even have made a religion out of the place or the incident. He could possibly have made it into a “holy site” and caused people to come from over the world to kneel, bow, cry or do every sort of thing at the place!

Things could even have developed further without Moses coming to a knowledge of God. For example, Moses could have seen the burning bush that was not consumed and as he turned aside to see, heard a voice that called out “Moses, Moses!”, he could have gone ahead to answer, “Here am I” and the whole thing would have ended there. Moses would have been through a spiritual experience and might have interpreted and used it the way he wanted and yet not known God. He could have gone and started the religion called. “Burning Bush,” or “Burning Religion of Moses,” since the voice called out, “Moses, Moses!” The sad thing is that there are many such religions today and they even attract crowds and spread from one town to another, from one nation to another, and from one continent to another, without the “worshippers” knowing why the

bush was not burnt or who called out!

It is folly merely to seek spiritual experience. It is dangerous just to want to see miracles or strange things. The Lord Jesus told the Samaritan woman,

“You worship what you do not know” (John 4:22).

He also said to her,

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

There are many types of worship and many types of worshippers. The Lord Jesus talks of true worshippers. He was thereby indicating that there are false worshippers. The difference between a false worshipper and a true worshipper does not depend on the intensity of worship. A false worshipper can be thoroughly caught up with his worship and have his human spirit flow out to the unknown God. His worship would all the same be false. There can be “spiritual worship” that is false.

All worship that is merely of the soul is also false. That is, worship that has its origin in the

mind,

will and/or

emotion.

This is all soulical worship and it is false worship.

All worship that is merely of the body is also false. That is worship that has its origin in the mind, will and emotion and then overflows to the body and is manifested in

bones,

muscles,

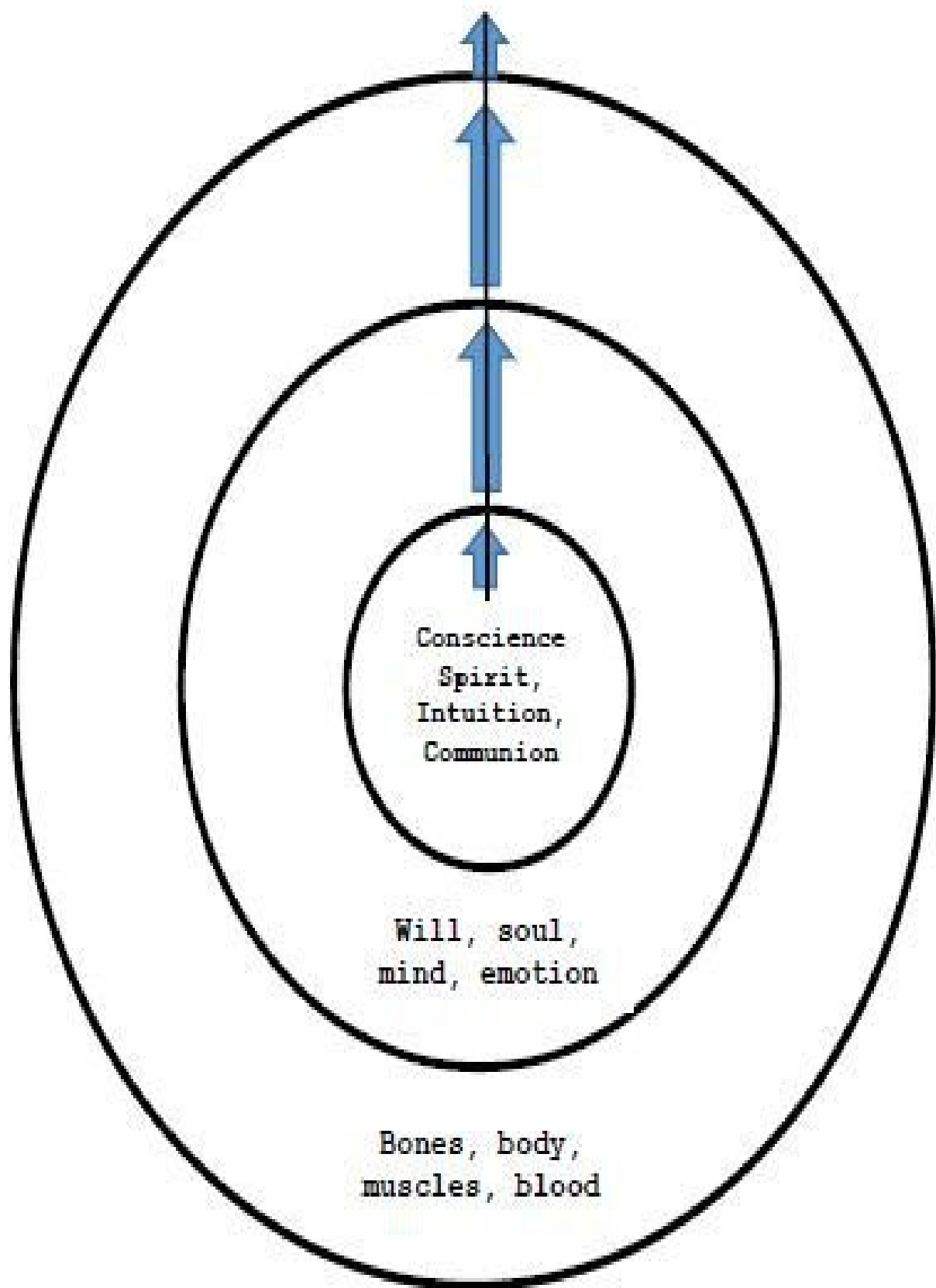
blood...

Worship can be spiritual, soulical and bodily and yet be false. Such worship would have its origin in the human spirit, which will then flow to the human soul and then to the human body. We can illustrate it as follows:

Human spirit {
Conscience
Intuition
Communion

human soul {
Will
mind
emotion

human body {
bones
muscles
blood



Spiritual worship that is false. It originates in the human spirit, and then reaches out to the human soul and then to the body, and its effects are, consequently, visible externally.

A man does not become someone after God's heart merely because he has had a spiritual experience or because he continues or even abounds in spiritual experiences. These could be mere activities of the human spirit. They have their origin there and flow out and the goal of it is the self.

Spiritual experiences can be of three origins:

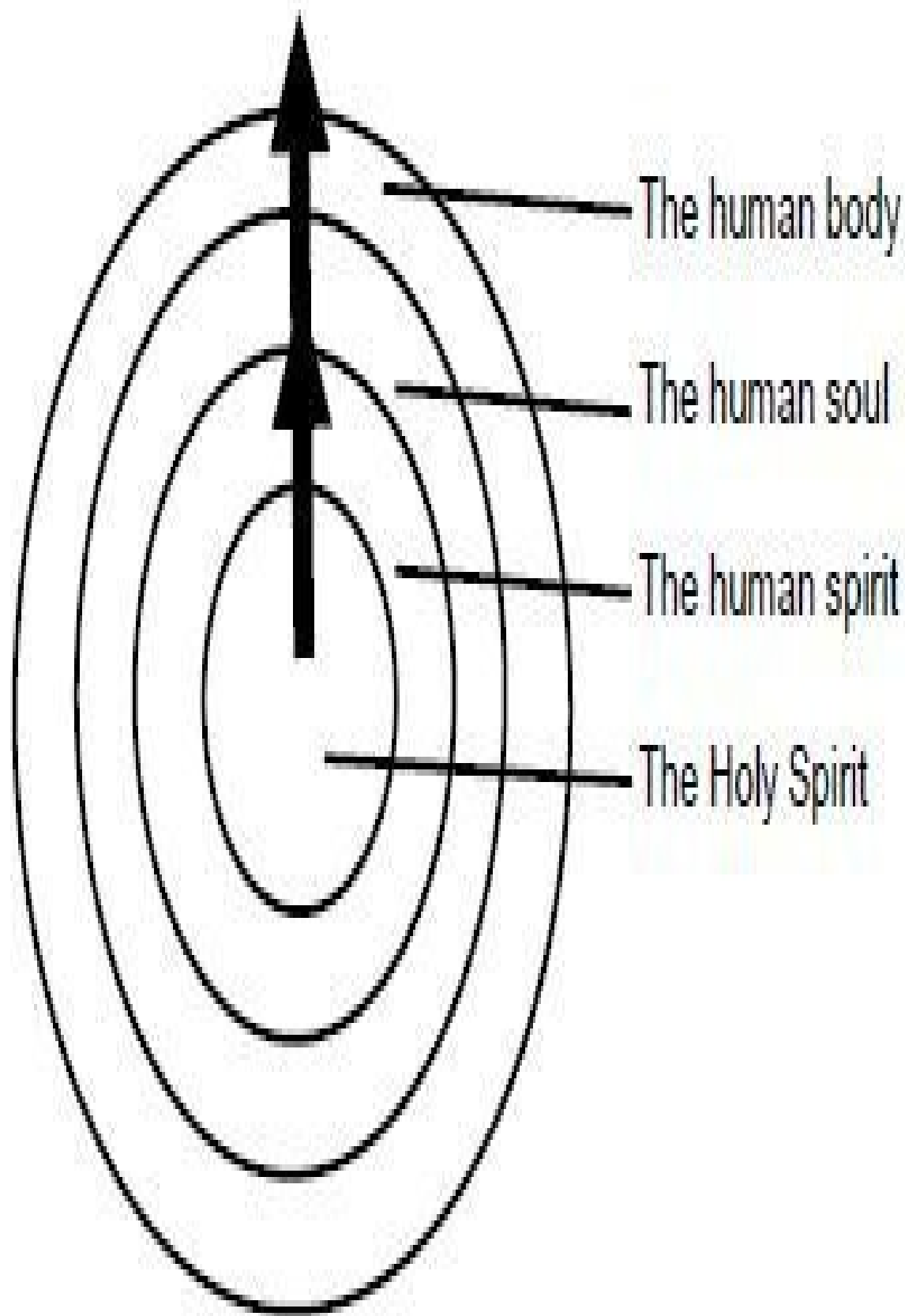
Of God with the goal of having the Lord worshipped i.e. of the Holy Spirit.

Of the human spirit with the goal of having the "self" worshipped.

Of the devil with the goal of having the devil worshipped.

There is also true worship. In true worship, the Spirit of truth, i.e. the Holy Spirit moves the human spirit to worship the Father in response to a revelation of the truth or some aspect of the truth. That is why the Lord Jesus said that true worshippers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. We can illustrate this as follows:

The Holy Spirit --> The Human spirit --> The Human soul --> The Human body



True Worship

In true worship, the Spirit of truth initiates the worship. He only initiates that which is true. True worship continues in the human spirit at the command and control of the Holy Spirit. From the spirit, true worship then continues in the soul and to the body. This is the worship that the Lord demands. It is Holy Spirit-initiated. It is in truth. It flows first from the Holy Spirit to the human spirit and, then, to the soul and finally comes through the body. True worshippers are encouraged to let the Holy Spirit have and use all of their spirits, souls and bodies in the worship of the Father. The Lord said,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5). The Lord Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30).

We say today, “You shall worship the Father in all the truth, that is, Jesus, with all your spirit, soul, and body!”

Knowledge Of God Indispensable

We have seen that worship is a function of the human spirit. We have also seen that there can be true worship or false worship. We have seen that false worship is initiated either by the devil or by the human spirit. It is not in the truth and it does not have the glory of God the Father, through the Lord Jesus, in view.

It was, therefore, important that Moses should not merely have a “spiritual

experience”. It was, therefore, important that Moses did not just hear a voice that spoke to him commanding him to take off his shoes because the ground was holy. If it had ended there, he could have gone ahead and founded a religion based on people removing their shoes on holy ground. He would indeed have heard a voice and obeyed the voice and yet be totally wrong because he did not come to know who was speaking. This might be the case with many religions today! Partial revelations could and always leads to dangerous things. Judaism is the fruit of a partial revelation; of a people who heard a part of what God wanted to say but did not press on to have the whole message. They stopped hearing God in the Old Testament but did not move with God into the New Testament.

I well remember the comment that one of my lecturers, Dr Owens, wrote in one of my essays in my undergraduate course. She wrote, “Good as far as it went.” Yes, it was good as far as it went but it did not go all the way and consequently, it was an incomplete view of the subject. When a part is presented as a whole it becomes false indeed.

It is indispensable that God be known.

The love of an unknown God is futile.

The worship of an unknown God is a waste of time.

Sacrifices to an unknown God is folly.

Do you know the God you are worshipping?

God Revealed Himself - 1

The Lord who took the initiative to call Moses, also took the initiative to introduce Himself to Moses so that Moses may have the truth about the One who was speaking to him. The Lord said,

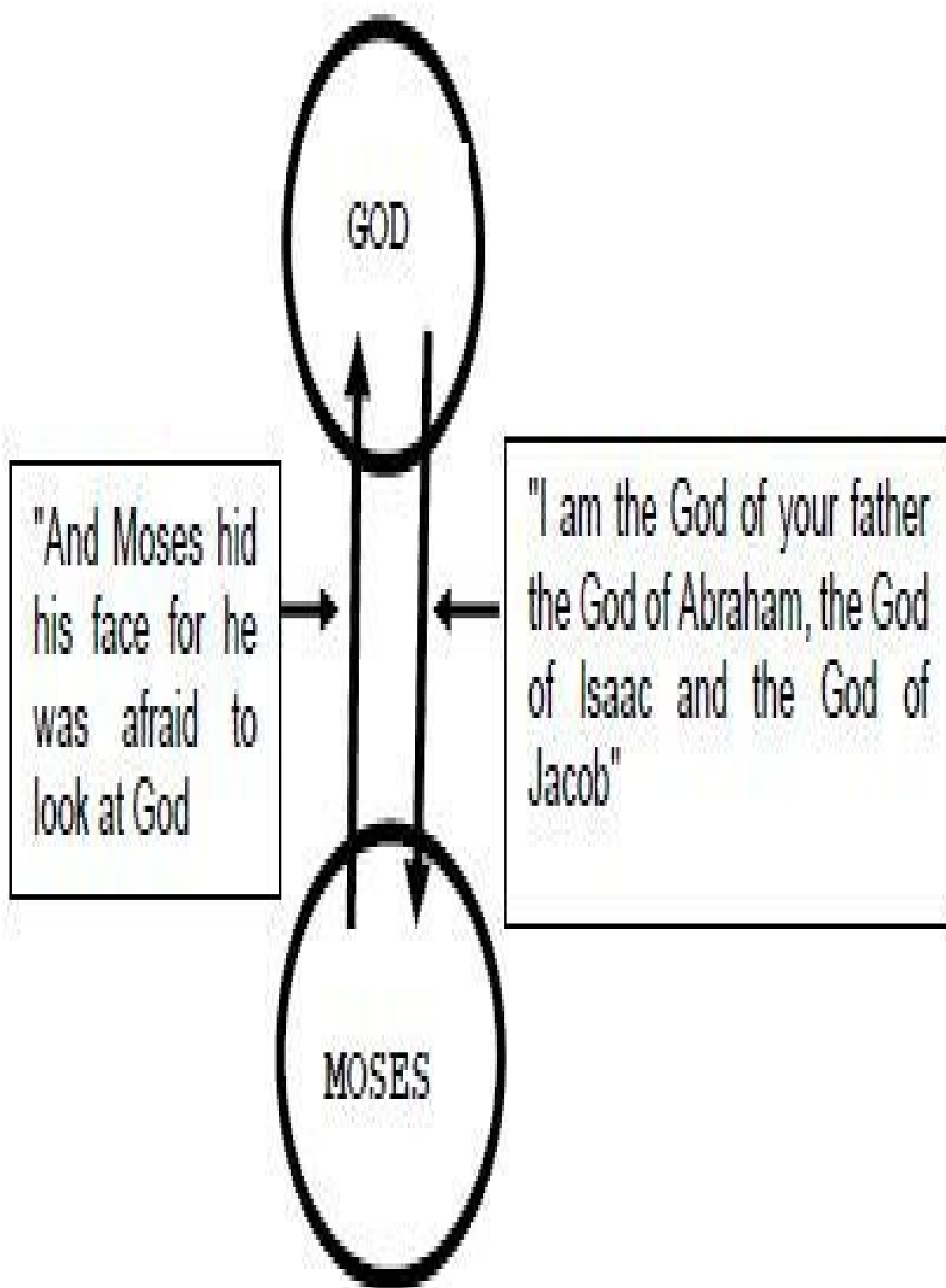
“I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6).

Moses had been told of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Lord was thus revealing Himself to Moses in terms that he (Moses) could understand. The Lord never wants to leave anyone in doubt or in confusion. He goes out of His way to make things clear. If anyone is confused, it is not because the Lord has not made things clear. It is because of some problem in his heart. What the Lord did to Moses, He does over and over to many people in our day. He does it because He wants to be known for who He is and to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Moses received the revelation! The Bible says,

“And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God” (Exodus 3:6).

We again see that God, took a step towards Moses and Moses responded! God always takes the initiative towards man!!



God Revealed Himself - 2

We have seen that the Lord did reveal Himself to Moses at the burning bush. He introduced Himself in terms Moses easily understood. That one revelation did not settle everything.

When the Lord gave Moses work to do for Him and Moses was being sent to the Hebrew people in Egypt, Moses needed further revelation.

He asked the Lord,

“If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ What shall I say to them?”

It is very clear that all the knowledge that Moses had of God was given to him by God Himself. All was by revelation. That is wonderful. He did not turn to somebody and say, “Please tell me all that you know about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” If he had done that he would have gathered some facts about God or obtained some “head knowledge.” However, this would not have been spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is knowledge that comes by revelation.

The seven sons of Sceva had some “factual knowledge” or some ideas about God gathered from the careful watching of the deliverance ministry of the Apostle Paul. They understood and learnt by heart the words he used and thought that they, too, could carry out deliverance. It nearly cost them their lives. The Bible says,

“And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.’ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know but who are you?’” And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, mastered all of them, and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled” (Acts 19:11-17).

There are many today who act as the seven sons of Sceva did. They are only fortunate that the spirits have not treated them similarly, most probably because these imitators are genuine believers who want to minister beyond their experience! They have heard how some other believer, out of a deep experience or deep experiences with God, acted and what was the consequence of what he said and did. Without the same depth of knowledge of God, they have gone out to carry out some imitations of him, to the disgrace of the Lord! This is a shame!

Permit me to ask you two questions,

”Are you carrying out a ‘ministry’ that is based upon what you heard and saw from someone or does your ministry spring from your own relationship with the Lord - from what He has said to you and has done in you?”

”Are you teaching what you heard someone else teach or you are teaching what has been worked out in your life by the Cross and by the Holy Spirit? Do you have both the “light” and the “life” of what you are teaching? If your ‘ministry’ and your ‘teaching’ do not stem out of what God has done in you, then you do well to stop it at once. Ministry must stem out of a relationship with the Lord

and doctrine taught must flow from revelation and experience. If you do not stop that which you are doing or teaching by mere imitation, you should bear in mind that you are doing the Lord and His kingdom great harm. He might have to redeem His honour and His glory by allowing you to face what the sons of Sceva faced. When that happens, do not say that you were not warned! You have been warned!!

Moses Was Different!

Moses was different. The Lord revealed Himself to him at the burning bush and introduced Himself to him as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses was being sent to go and speak on God's behalf. He wanted more self-revelation by God so that he might grow in the knowledge of Him. He also wanted more knowledge so that he might serve as a convincing witness. He asked God His name and God spoke to him. He said,

"I AM WHO I AM." And he said, Say this to the people of Israel, I AM has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14).

How gracious our Lord is. He gave Moses a double revelation at this point. He gave a revelation of Himself that was exclusively for Moses. He said to him, "I AM WHO I AM." That was for Moses. Then for the people of Israel, Moses received what to say: "I AM has sent me to you."

So Moses had a knowledge of God that was personal and I dare to say, exclusive. It was a knowledge of God, a knowledge of a name of God that he did not need to tell others. Then he also had a revelation of God, a name of God that he was to pass on to others!

Revelation Kept - Hidden.

There are people who expose everything that they receive from the Lord to others. They keep nothing for themselves. Everything is publicized. Such people become increasingly less weighty.

There are others who keep everything they receive from the Lord for themselves. They want to monopolize the Lord. They want to monopolize the things of the Lord. Such selfishness will mean that someday they cannot receive more from the Lord. They will be so full of “old revelations” that they would have no place for newer things from the Lord.

There are others who come to the Lord and receive from the Lord that which is for themselves. What they thus receive is jealously guarded and the temptation to draw attention to themselves by speaking out is overcome. They thus grow indeed. These same people also receive from the Lord what the Lord wants them to share with the others. They share what they should share and in this way the body of Christ is made rich. By thus sharing what they should share, they make (open) room for the Lord to give them more: some to keep for themselves and some to give out to others. In this way, they remain fresh and receptive. That was what Moses was. That is what all of us must labour to become. Praise the Lord!

The End Of The Self-Life

We can say that Moses graduated from the University of God at the Burning Bush. What he heard and saw, followed by the call to holiness and service, put an end to anything of the self-life that was left in him.

He saw the Lord!

He saw the glory of the Lord!

He also saw himself!

He saw the loathsomeness of the self!

He parted with the self-life for ever!

Before that day, Moses might have seen much in himself that he could praise, but that day, he beheld the glory of the Lord and that glory so overwhelmed him that he could never quite recover from it. He encountered the glory of God, and the ugliness of the self was so obvious that he abandoned the pursuit and the worship of self for ever.

At the burning bush, Moses was also commissioned. The Lord said to him,

“I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out

of Egypt” (Exodus 3:7-10).

Self seeks to be worshipped. Self takes the throne of God and sits on it and extracts all the worship of the heart of a man that it can get out. Self-worship is a kind of religion and it is totalitarian in its demands. Self-worship goes hand in hand with the service of self, for a man serves that which he worships.

Moses at the burning bush received the call of the Lord to serve Him. As he answered the call of God, he also enthroned God where self was once enthroned and he then gave God the service that was once rendered to self. He listened to God.

understood what God was saying,

obeyed what God was saying,

did God's thing God's way,

at God's timing,

with God's resources,

with God's methods,

and for the glory of God.

Such service seals the doom of the self-life completely.

For all the years that followed, Moses never sought his own glory even once. He never sought to be worshipped. He never sought to be praised and he never sought to be promoted. He never sought security. He never sought financial

remuneration. He was satisfied with the Lord. He was satisfied with the service of the Lord. He was not only satisfied. He was content with the Lord, and he was content with the service of the Lord. He sought to know the Lord in an ever increasing measure. He sought to serve the Lord

increasingly,

fully,

perfectly,

and the one reason for serving the Lord was that the Lord might receive all the

honour,

glory and

exaltation.

That is the end of the self-life! Amen.

The Beginning Of Spiritual Service

We saw that while Moses was in Egypt, while he was ruled by the self-life, he initiated a project to liberate the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. He saw their need through his own eyes. He authored a plan of deliverance and set out to execute it. The origin of it all was Moses. We saw clearly that that project led to the death of an Egyptian, no real liberation for any of the Hebrews and the

initiator of the project had to flee for his life.

At the burning bush, God called Moses to spiritual service. You may ask, “What is spiritual service?” We state that spiritual service is that service that is:

God’s work, i.e. a work that God wants to do.

a work that God Himself is involved in.

a work that God bears at heart.

a work to which God calls the one or the ones He wants to work with.

a work about which God imparts some of the burdens on His heart to the person or persons He has called to help Him in doing the work.

a work whose timing is determined by God and by God alone.

a work whose dimensions are determined by God.

a work whose methods are decided upon by God.

a work in which God is the leader and man is God’s helper.

a work done to glorify the Lord and to glorify only Him.

It is quite obvious that God can only begin such work when He finds an instrument or instruments in whom the self-life has been truly overthrown.

Moses was called to such a work by the Lord.

The Bible says that the Lord said to Moses,

“I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings” (Exodus 3:7).

God saw their affliction. It was the affliction of God’s people. It was not just the affliction of the Hebrews. There was no place for any nationalistic spirit on the part of Moses (There must be no place for any nationalistic spirit in the heart of any child of God!). God knew which of His people He was talking about - those who were in Egypt. God heard their cry and knew the reason why the cry was there. God knew their suffering. He was a part of their suffering. He was welded to their suffering. He and they were one. He suffered as they suffered!

The Lord then said to Moses,

“I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites” (Exodus 3:8).

Do you see that it was God’s work which was to be done by God Himself? God said that He was coming down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians. God was going into deliverance personally. There is a sense in which, having been initiated by God and now that it was going to be carried out by God, its success was guaranteed. There is a sense in which this could never become the work of anyone. For anyone to call it his work would have meant either that God had withdrawn from it or that that person was simply ignorant. The Lord also knew clearly from where He would deliver the people and to where He would take them.

How different this is from what Moses wanted to do by himself in Egypt! He had no clear deliverance plan. He did not know where to take the people. He got entangled in a small episode which could never lead to the deliverance of all the people. The end result was that one Egyptian died and one man, the supposed deliverer, fled. All man-made projects, regardless of the dimensions on which they are planned, will end in failure. They will do more harm than good to the purpose of God. Let all who fear the Lord, run away from meddling in God's affairs. Let each human being take his place before God and say, "Lord, the work is Yours. All of it is Yours. My work is to wait on You, receive Your commands and obey them."

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SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

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The initial encounter with God is important. However, spiritual knowledge is determined by the frequency, the intensity, and the duration of encounters between a man and his God.

Spiritual Knowledge

We have seen that Moses had an initial experience of the Lord and subsequent experiences of the Lord, at the beginning of his walk with God. We also saw that when he was “old in the Lord” he cried out to the Lord.

“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favour in thy sight” (Exodus 33:13).

He was not satisfied with the experiences of the past. They only caused him to desire more and more of the Lord. In fact, he prayed,

“I pray thee, show me thy glory” (Exodus 33:18).

God promised to make all His goodness pass before Moses and to proclaim His

name before him.

He did not only promise. He fulfilled the promise. The Bible says that the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed,

“The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Exodus 34:6-7).

Moses responded! He made haste to bow his head towards the earth and worshipped” (Exodus 34:8).

Moses had frequent encounters with God. He also had intense encounters. For some of his encounters with God, he remained for forty days in the presence of the Lord.

Paul, too, had frequent encounters with the Lord. One of such encounters, the one that took place in Arabia, lasted three years. Another encounter was described in the following words,

“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years, ago was caught up to the third heaven - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows - and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter” (2 Corinthians 12:2-4).

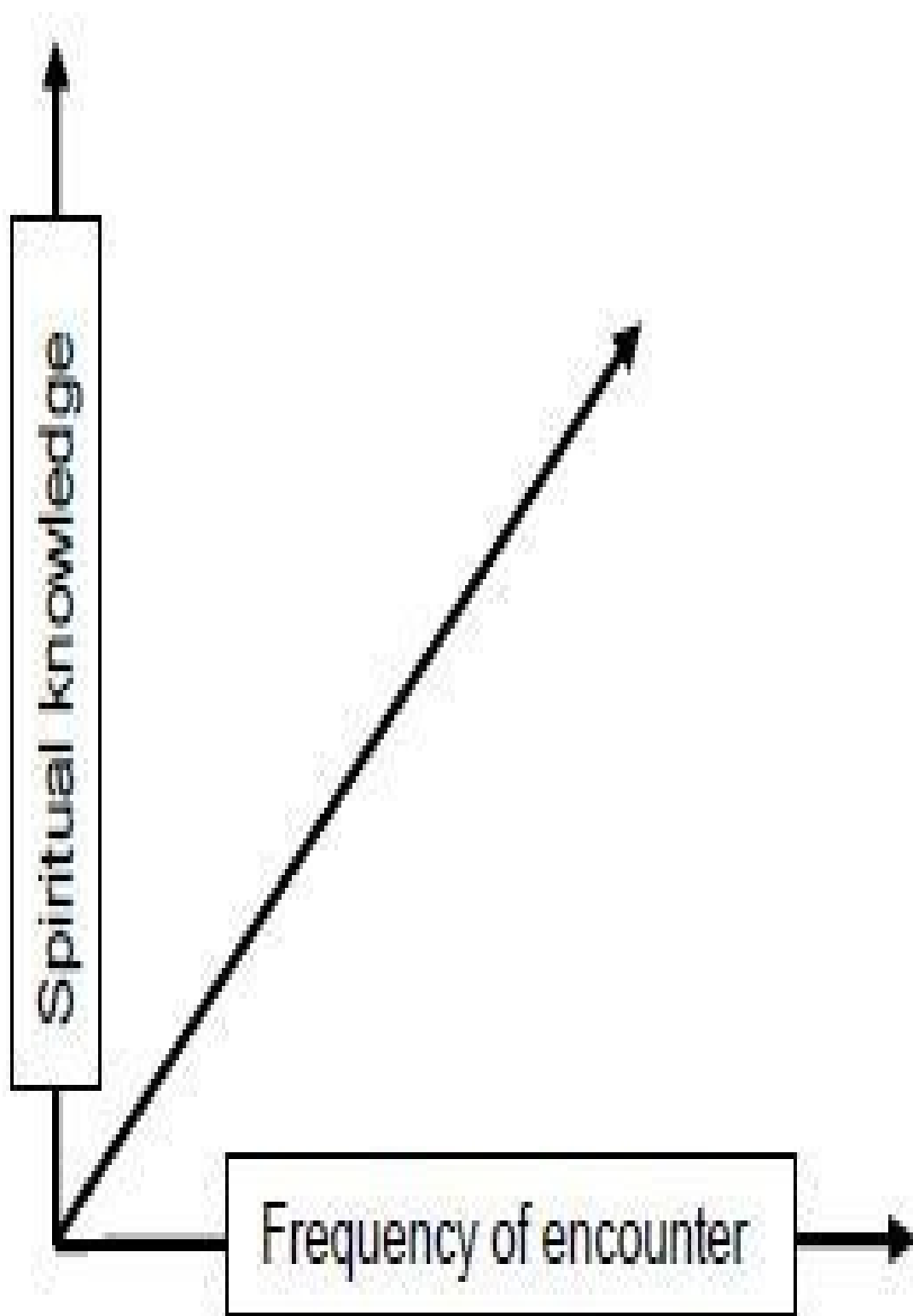
The Apostle Paul was very rich in revelations and visions. He said,

“I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 12:1).

He again said,

“And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated” (2 Corinthians 12:7).

It is obvious that spiritual knowledge can be measured by the frequency of encounters between the Lord and a man, by the intensity of the encounters and by their duration. We can represent these truths as follows:



The Relationship Between Spiritual Knowledge and the Frequency of Encounter.

The more frequent the encounters between a man and his God, the more the person will know the Lord. Take two people for example. One encounters the Lord for ten minutes every week and the other one encounters the Lord for ten minutes every month. After ten years, the difference in the knowledge of the Lord of the two people would be enormous!

It is also obvious that spiritual knowledge can be measured by the intensity of encounter. Some people have superficial encounters with God that may last for ten minutes. Others, within a ten minute period can have an encounter with the Lord that is so deep that it alters the course of a life. So, we say that the knowledge of God would be directly proportional to the intensity of the encounter.

The Relationship Between Spiritual Knowledge and the Intensity of Encounter.

Thirdly, it is one thing to have ten minutes of deep encounter with the Lord. It is another thing to have forty days of living in God's immediate presence. Those who have begun to truly enjoy the Lord, will find that even short intense encounters cannot satisfy them. They want more and more of the Lord and their knowledge of Him would be proportional to the length - the duration of each encounter with Him.

The Relationship Between Spiritual Knowledge and the Duration of Encounter.

It can be seen easily from the Scriptures that as people came to know the Lord

more and more, they had more frequent, more intense and more durable encounters with Him. They each pressed towards a point where all of life could become one consuming and never-ending encounter with God. Enoch knew this and experienced it. The Bible says,

“When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Genesis 5:21-24).

Enoch walked with God. Then his walk with God became an unceasing encounter and this continued for three hundred years! It was intense and it was continuous: unceasing. It satisfied Enoch and satisfied the Lord. God enjoyed it so much that He could no longer stand Enoch being on earth and He in heaven. To make their union more complete, He took Enoch to heaven. He wanted Enoch so much that He could not stand the gap that death would cause to their relationship and so He took Enoch to heaven alive. Yes, he was not, for God took him!

He obviously knew God deeply.

He possessed true spiritual knowledge of God.

He was truly spiritual ¹.

How Can A Believer Come To A Knowledge Of God?

Such knowledge is reserved for those who hunger, thirst and pant after Him ². He says in His Word,

“I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me” (Proverbs 8:17).

Such knowledge was the possession of the Psalmist. He cried,

“As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?” (Psalm 42:1-2).

Yes, such knowledge was the possession of a man who cried,

“O God, thou art my God; I seek thee, my soul thirsts for thee, my flesh faints for thee, as in a dry and weary land where no water is. So I have looked upon thee in the sanctuary, beholding thy power and glory” (Psalm 63:1-2).

If you would know God, you must put out of your life everything that offends Him even in the slightest way. You must separate yourself from all that He does not want and you must separate in that way for all time. Then, you must separate yourself to Him totally - to do all that He has told you to do and to do all that you ever promised to Him that you would do. You would, then, be walking blamelessly before Him. Then, ask Him to reveal Himself to you and give Him opportunities in His presence for Him to reveal Himself to you. He will do it and the initial revelation should lead to more hunger, more thirst and more panting.

This will lead to further revelation and so on.

Praise the Lord!

“How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the Lord;

my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God

(Psalm 84:1-2).

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord!!

Praise the Lord!!!

■

1 All in this life can be measured by its contribution to the knowledge of the Lord. Men ought to be measured by one invariable standard: their knowledge of God.

2 This subject matter will be developed in the book, Seeking God.

■

Very Important!!!

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If you have not yet received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, I encourage you to receive Him. Here are some steps to help you,

ADMIT that you are a sinner by nature and by practice and that on your own you are without hope. Tell God you have personally sinned against Him in your thoughts, words and deeds. Confess your sins to Him, one after another in a sincere prayer. Do not leave out any sins that you can remember. Truly turn from your sinful ways and abandon them. If you stole, steal no more. If you have been committing adultery or fornication, stop it. God will not forgive you if you have no desire to stop sinning in all areas of your life, but if you are sincere, He will give you the power to stop sinning.

BELIEVE that Jesus Christ, who is God's Son, is the only Way, the only Truth and the only Life. Jesus said,

"I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me"
(John 14:6).

The Bible says,

"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

“And there is salvation in no one else (apart from Jesus), for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God...” (John 1:12).

BUT,

CONSIDER the cost of following Him. Jesus said that all who follow Him must deny themselves, and this includes selfish financial, social and other interests. He also wants His followers to take up their crosses and follow Him. Are you prepared to abandon your own interests daily for those of Christ? Are you prepared to be led in a new direction by Him? Are you prepared to suffer for Him and die for Him if need be? Jesus will have nothing to do with half-hearted people. His demands are total. He will only receive and forgive those who are prepared to follow Him AT ANY COST. Think about it and count the cost. If you are prepared to follow Him, come what may, then there is something to do.

INVITE Jesus to come into your heart and life. He says,

“Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door (to his heart and life), I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me ” (Revelation 3:20).

Why don't you pray a prayer like the following one or one of your own

construction as the Holy Spirit leads?

“Lord Jesus, I am a wretched, lost sinner who has sinned in thought, word and deed. Forgive all my sins and cleanse me. Receive me, Saviour and transform me into a child of God. Come into my heart now and give me eternal life right now. I will follow you at all costs, trusting the Holy Spirit to give me all the power I need.”

When you pray this prayer sincerely, Jesus answers at once and justifies you before God and makes you His child.

Please write to us (ztfbooks@cmfionline.org) and I will pray for you and help you as you go on with Jesus Christ.

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Thank You

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For Reading This Book

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Finally, we would like to recommend to you the next suitable book, Revelation: A Must:

ZACHARIAS
TANEE FOMUM

“ God's Word in Your
Head Can Become Your
Spiritual Experience ”



Revelation:



MUST!

There are many aspects of Biblical truth that you know in your head, but you do not live them out in your daily life. Those aspects of the truth are in your head but not in your heart; those facts are reasonable and you acknowledge them as being true and for you, but you are somehow cold and indifferent to them. What do you need for such aspects of the truth to become experience in you? The answer is that you need a personal revelation of those aspects of the truth. A personal revelation will set those aspects of the truth aflame and set you aflame to obey them. That is what this book is about. Yes, you can have a personal revelation of the truth! Yes, you need a personal revelation of the truth. Indeed, you must have a personal revelation of the truth!

As we move increasingly towards the close of the age, and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ being nearer than at any other time in the past, it is important that you who are a part of His Bride should enter into the experience of all the truths in His Word. You need a revelation of those aspects of the Word that you have understood with your mind but have not yet experienced. You also need a revelation of other aspects of the truth that you have not even yet grasped with your mind. This book is written to help you convert Bible truth into actual spiritual experience. May you be abundantly blessed as you read it!

If the Lord blesses you in a special way as you read this book and you would like to share your testimony with me, I shall be very glad to hear from you.

God bless you exceedingly!

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About the Author

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Professor Zacharias Tanee Fomum was born in the flesh on 20th June 1945 and became born again on 13th June 1956. On 1st October 1966, He consecrated his life to the Lord Jesus and to His service, and was filled with the Holy Spirit on 24th October 1970. He was taken to be with the Lord on 14th March, 2009.

Pr Fomum was admitted to a first class in the Bachelor of Science degree, graduating as a prize winning student from Fourah Bay College in the University of Sierra Leone in October 1969. At the age of 28, he was awarded a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry by the University of Makerere, Kampala in Uganda. In October 2005, he was awarded a Doctor of Science (D.Sc) by the University of Durham, Great Britain. This higher doctorate was in recognition of his distinct contributions to scientific knowledge through research. As a Professor of Organic Chemistry in the University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon, Professor Fomum supervised or co-supervised more than 100 Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree theses and co-authored over 160 scientific articles in leading international journals. He considered Jesus Christ the Lord of Science ("For by Him all things were created..." – Colossians 1:16), and scientific research an act of obedience to God's command to "subdue the earth" (Genesis 1:28). He therefore made the Lord Jesus the Director of his research laboratory while he took the place of deputy director, and attributed his outstanding success as a scientist to Jesus' revelational leadership.

In more than 40 years of Christian ministry, Pr Fomum travelled extensively, preaching the Gospel, planting churches and training spiritual leaders. He made more than:

700 missionary journeys within Cameroon, which ranged from one day to three weeks in duration.

500 missionary journeys to more than 70 different nations in all the six continents. These ranged from two days to six weeks in duration.

By the time of his going to be with the Lord in 2009, he had preached in over 1000 localities in Cameroon, sent over 200 national missionaries into many localities in Cameroon and planted over 1300 churches in the various administrative provinces of Cameroon. At his base in Yaoundé, he planted and built a mega-church with his co-workers which grew to a steady membership of about 12,000. Pr Fomum was the founding team-leader of Christian Missionary Fellowship International (CMFI); an evangelism, soul-winning, disciple making, Church-planting and missionary-sending movement with more than 200 international missionaries and thousands of churches in 65 nations spread across Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Oceania. In the course of their ministry, Pr Fomum and his team witnessed more than 10,000 recorded healing miracles performed by God in answer to prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. These miracles include instant healings of headaches, cancers, HIV/AIDS, blindness, deafness, dumbness, paralysis, madness, and new teeth and organs received.

Pr Fomum read the entire Bible more than 60 times, read more than 1350 books on the Christian faith and authored over 150 books to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 5 million copies of these books are in circulation in 12 languages as well as 16 million gospel tracts in 17 languages.

Pr Fomum was a man who sought God. He spent between 15 minutes and six hours daily alone with God in what he called Daily Dynamic Encounters with God (DDEWG). During these DDEWG he read God's Word, meditated on it, listened to God's voice, heard God speak to him, recorded what God was saying to him and prayed it through. He thus had over 18,000 DDEWG. He also had over 60 periods of withdrawing to seek God alone for periods that ranged from 3 to 21 days (which he termed Retreats for Spiritual Progress). The time he spent seeking God slowly transformed him into a man who hungered, thirsted and panted after God. His unceasing heart cry was: "Oh, that I would have more of God!"

Pr Fomum was a man of prayer and a leading teacher on prayer in many

churches and conferences around the world. He considered prayer to be the most important work that can be done for God and for man. He was a man of faith who believed that God answers prayer. He kept a record of his prayer requests and had over 50, 000 recorded answers to prayer in his prayer books. He carried out over 100 Prayer Walks of between five and forty-seven kilometres in towns and cities around the world. He and his team carried out over 57 Prayer Crusades (periods of forty days and nights during which at least eight hours are invested into prayer each day). They also carried out over 80 Prayer Sieges (times of near non-stop praying that ranges from 24 hours to 120 hours). He authored the Prayer Power Series, a 13-volume set of books on various aspects of prayer; Supplication, Fasting, Intercession and Spiritual Warfare. He started prayer chains, prayer rooms, prayer houses, national and continental prayer movements in Cameroon and other nations. He worked with leaders of local churches in India to disciple and train more than 2 million believers.

Pr Fomum also considered fasting as one of the weapons of Christian Spiritual Warfare. He carried out over 250 fasts ranging from three days to forty days, drinking only water or water supplemented with soluble vitamins. Called by the Lord to a distinct ministry of intercession, he pioneered fasting and prayer movements and led in battles against principalities and powers obstructing the progress of the Gospel and God's global purposes. He was enabled to carry out 3 supra – long fasts of between 52 and 70 days in his final years.

Pr Fomum chose a lifestyle of simplicity and “self- imposed poverty” in order to invest more funds into the critical work of evangelism, soul winning, church-planting and the building up of believers. Knowing the importance of money and its role in the battle to reach those without Christ with the glorious Gospel, he and his wife grew to investing 92.5% of their earned income from all sources (salaries, allowances, royalties and cash gifts) into the Gospel. They invested with the hope that, as they grew in the knowledge and the love of the Lord, and the perishing souls of people, they would one day invest 99% of their income into the Gospel.

He was married to Prisca Zei Fomum and they had seven children who are all involved in the work of the Gospel, some serving as missionaries. Prisca is a national and international minister, specializing in the winning and discipling of children to Jesus Christ. She also communicates and imparts the vision of ministry to children with a view to raising and building up ministers to them.

The Professor owed all that he was and all that God had done through him, to the unmerited favour and blessing of God and to his worldwide army of friends and co-workers. He considered himself nothing without them and the blessing of God; and would have amounted to nothing but for them. All praise and glory to Jesus Christ!

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