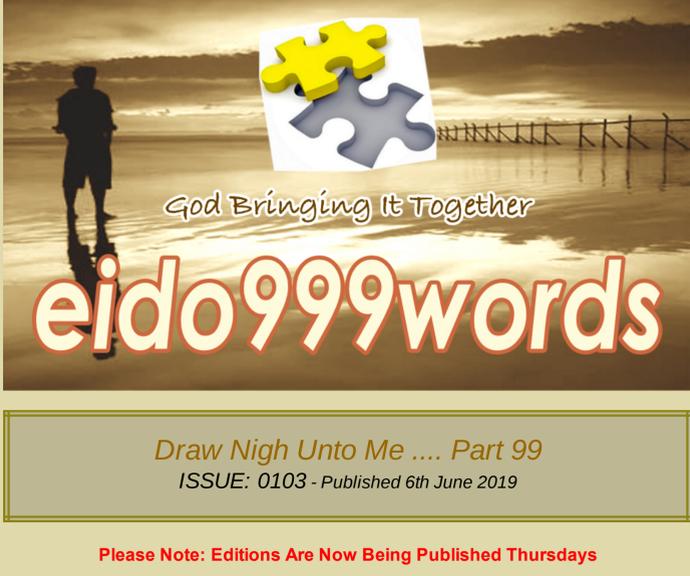


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Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 99

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Defaced - Week 91

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 38

So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)

The way of fallen man & the ways of this sinful world can be complex, daunting, overwhelming, intimidating, fearful & downright frightening.

Is it any wonder why we spend so much of our time seeking gratuitous pleasures to brighten our outlook within the moment being lived, or for the hopeful enhancing of the future?

Our knowledge of good & evil serves only to provide a banqueting table laden with a diverse collection of things from which to choose our gratuities.

Yet only serves to create in us a complex, intricate, entanglement of constant change or variety.

All in promotion of an image to brighten our sense of fulfillment and/or wellbeing while we suppress our innermost fears & dreads hidden deep within our subconscious.

All motivated & inspired out of a natural need to struggle or even fight for self-preservation, being a process within which we find ourselves rarely pacified, always striving or driven by pride.

And there is no way of full escape from it while we remain in these bodies of death.

Yet last week I shared of one human, my uncle, & one animal, my dog, who both touched me deeply in somehow displaying unique exceptions to this 'rule of norm'.

Now, let us journey on together in hopeful discovery of what the Spirit of God might reveal in bringing us to See&Know as we search for answers to the following two questions.

Q1. What specifically was it in each of them that caused them to be such exceptions to the rule & is there a single correlating factor to be found there?

First fundamental point worthy of inspection is that one was human, the other animal.

Correlations that fundamental in mind, can we find any stark differences or bearings in what educated, motivated & inspired them to be the way they were toward others.

1. The Animal:

A most glaring fact is that all men fell into & continue to perpetrate sin, while animals do not sin but suffer under the effect of man's sin.

Seth instinctively knew how to serve man according to his nature being counted amongst the "some for man's service" as Matthew Henry wrote in describing the different roles God Created animals for.

However, Seth could disobey a command to play ball in the hot sunshine when he had need for the shade or strongly demanded when in need of something & you learnt never to mess with him when he was eating!

Any such acts of 'self' Seth displayed were never sin but came solely from within an inherent sense of self preservation, all forms of which exist only because of man's sin.

For the world around him was not the way God intended it to be for him or anything else.

Man's state of sin relegates all incapable of providing as God would have for all His Creation & thus self preservation exists in all of us.

Also let me remind you at this point of Cornelius Plantinga Jr's definition of God's Shalom:

"The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call shalom."

For all is not the way it's suppose to be:

Isaiah 11:6-9 KJV

6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

8 The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Romans 8:20-21 MKJV

For the creation was not willingly subjected to vanity, but because of Him who subjected it on hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Matthew Henry's Commentary on Romans 8:20-21

"(1.) That there is a present vanity to which the creature, by reason of the sin of man, is made subject, **Rom 8:20**.

When man sinned, the ground was cursed for man's sake, and with it all the creatures (especially of this lower world, where our acquaintance lies) became subject to that curse, became mutable and mortal.

Under the bondage of corruption, **Rom 8:21**. There is an impurity, deformity, and infirmity, which the creature has contracted by the fall of man: the creation is sullied and stained, much of the beauty of the world gone.

There is an enmity of one creature to another; they are all subject to continual alteration and decay of the individuals, liable to the strokes of God's judgments upon man.

When the world was drowned, and almost all the creatures in it, surely then it was subject to vanity indeed.

The whole species of creatures is designed for, and is hastening to, a total dissolution by fire.

And it is not the least part of their vanity and bondage that they are used, or abused rather, by men as instruments of sin.

The creatures are often abused to the dishonour of their Creator, the hurt of his children, or the service of his enemies.

When the creatures are made the food and fuel of our lusts, they are subject to vanity, they are captivated by the law of sin.

And this not willingly, not of their own choice.

All the creatures desire their own perfection and consummation; when they are made instruments of sin it is not willingly.

Or, They are thus captivated, not for sin of their own, which they had committed, but for man's sin: By reason of him who hath subjected the same.

Adam did it meritoriously; the creatures being delivered to him, when he by sin delivered himself he delivered them likewise into the bondage of corruption.

God did it judicially; he passed a sentence upon the creatures for the sin of man, by which they became subject.

And this yoke (poor creatures) they bear in hope that it will not be so always.

Ep' elpidi hoti kai, etc. - in hope that the creature itself; so many Greek copies join the words.

We have reason to pity the poor creatures that for our sin have become subject to vanity."

End of Matthew Henry Quote.

2. The Man.

My Uncle Jim was a man I rarely shared time with, for it was far from common to be in his presence, more especially once our childhood Christmas's spent at his home ended.

Every time we met a keen sense of unconditional acceptance instantly fortified the great respect I had for him.

Surely, like everybody else I have met some wonderful people who warmly welcomed me & in whose presence I felt comfortable & relaxed enough to enjoy easy conversation.

So what was it that made being with this one man stand out so prominently in my memory?

I believe the answer lies within the common knowledge I had of his life's history mixed with what he privately divulged to us during the one time we visited his home alone.

Forced into spending three years as a Prisoner of War building the Burma Railway & experiencing unbelievable cruelty must have educated him deeply in just how far man's depravity can reach.

He must have been privy to witness first hand acts that even animals would never even imagine doing, something most of us never have had to experience, thankfully.

Then amid this, I believe his having an encounter with Jesus brought about a profound determination of what is most important in life & set the mould for his future mode of living.

As I shared, he came home to bury his wife who died the day his feet reached his homeland again.

While having to deal with overcoming all this tragedy along with ongoing hatred for his captors & what they did which took decades to work through, he was to remarry & finally establish a family & home to house them.

He lived out his life working as a humble greenkeeper, attended Church within his self professed 'simple faith' & lived focusing passionately on the most important thing in his life, family.

That day as we spoke together he shared with us a little of what being held captive within such a cruel environment does to a man.

What he related to us all boiled down to the fact that we were listening to a man who through experiencing great tragedies, cruelty & dealing with a deep hatred had learnt great wisdom.

We all know good & evil, but what they forced him to learn of evil revealed a depth to him of the truth of the lie of life of this world.

This then caused him to resolve to retreat completely from both striving in or being driven by this life.

To now live a rare life pacified by having truly seen evil for what it is, producing keen observance of the minefield of its subtle allurements embedded in the 'living' of life.

All balanced through an encounter with Jesus under exceptional circumstance, a Touch of God strongly encapsulated within a spiritual pacification through the receiving of the Strength & Peace of Jesus Christ.

A pacification that for him relegated all striving or driving even within 'christian' pursuits to its rightful place, held under the Lordship of Christ.

Thus producing in him a major calming settlement of what for all of us is life's greatest challenge though unrecognised by most of the world & yet still a real struggle for those who have seen it.

That is to put aside the perceived hope we hold 'for better things' or 'self' will maintain a continual striving in us or even relentlessly drive many in an unceasingly intense or harsh way to achieve 'their' purpose.

This is regardless of whether we consider our actions to be defiantly unrighteous or convince ourselves of bearing a 'righteous intent'.

We must understand that the power of this 'rule of norm' is unique to this fallen world.

And one can only overpower or negate it to any degree when we learn to believe in somebody or something beyond ourselves.

That is why it is so hard at times to differentiate between great humanitarian works & those of Christians.

If we are founding our inward pacification with 'our' Christianity more upon 'our' works than Christ we are serving two masters & true pacification through Christ is not yet to be found in us.

The Compelling of Christ is yet to be known in our heart.

Whether he knew it not I believe Uncle Jim was living in a spiritual pacification through Christ that did not have need to project itself, its touch enough.

Next week we shall look at the second question & bring the answers to both.

Love,
Mwesigwa

[Defaced - Week 92 follows next week]

Your prayers of unity with us for God's Provision are most welcome.



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