

THE SWORD IN THE SHADOW

~Other Speakers G-L: Allan Halton:

One thing about the Internet is that it has brought into being an information overload. There is an overwhelming sea of information available. We have been deluged with knowledge... and you pretty much need an "ark" to get through it all safely. For, though it was never God's intention, even Christian teachings end up becoming that—just more information. There are thousands of websites hosted by Christians, thousands of messages, thousands of blogs like this one. How much of it actually penetrates the heart in a way that changes us? It can become a habit to not read things carefully and prayerfully—and selectively—with a prepared heart. You just skim things quickly, and move on.

Let us be careful that our spiritual faculties don't become dull with all this use. That can happen. I want to be watchful to not let that happen. Here is why.

The other day I sensed the Spirit of the Lord reminding me again that He yet intends to speak forth a very powerful word. And it is going to surprise many. I was reminded of a passage in Isaiah.

Listen, O isles, unto Me; and hearken, ye peoples, from far; The LORD hath called Me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of My name.
And He hath made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid Me, and made Me a polished shaft; in His quiver hath He hid Me;
And said unto Me, Thou art My Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified (Isa. 49.1-3).

This passage is no doubt speaking of Christ Himself. For it is Christ who has "the sharp sword with two edges" proceeding out of His mouth (Rev. 1.16, 2.12). At the same time this is speaking of a corporate testimony: "Thou art My Servant, O Israel...". Israel is a corporate entity. Yet here this corporate entity is spoken of in the singular. "Thou art My Servant, O Israel..." In the King James Version of the Bible, thou is always the second person singular pronoun.

And so I think this is one of the places in the Old Testament where we see hidden the mystery of the corporate Man that God revealed to his apostles—particularly the apostle Paul—the mystery of Christ. Paul wrote, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12.12). He didn't say, "so also is the body of Christ." He said, "so also is Christ." We then as members of the body of Christ are this sword, this mouth, that Christ greatly desires to speak out of.

One of the weapons of our spiritual armour is, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6.17). It is not just the Bible. It is "the Spirit's sword, which is the word of God." It is the word that the Spirit of God speaks that is the sword of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is we who wield—actually become—this sword.

We are reminded of Gideon and his little band of three hundred. "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon..." they cried. Not just the sword of Gideon. And not just the sword of the Lord either. "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon." One sword! The sword of the Lord and of Gideon and his little band of dedicated men who were in one with Him. It wrought utter havoc among the enemies of the people of God.

How little we have seen of this formidable spiritual weapon. How little our world about us has seen of it. How little our enemies have tasted of it... though they dread it like nothing else.

We—and they—are yet going to see this terrible swift sword.

There is no more formidable weapon in the whole universe.

And it is going to go forth only from the mouths of those who have been hidden in the shadow of the hand of the Lord.

The hand speaks of the Lord's dealings in our lives, His discipline, His chastening... His love... His covering, His protection... His own work. "In the shadow of His hand hath He hid me..." Others can't see you there. His shadow is over you... and He is working. What is He doing? You yourself may wonder at times. Is He doing anything in my life? You may wonder why you never amount to anything when others are

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out there in the light doing great things for God. But as He keeps you hidden from view in the shadow of His hand He is molding your mouth, shaping your mouth into a sharp sword with two edges. You are learning not to speak your own words, but His. You are learning that many times you have nothing to say. His purpose in it is that you might become part of this corporate Servant in whom He is glorified.

Jesus said of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shew (declare) unto you" (Jn. 16.15). This is the commitment of the Holy Spirit—not to speak from Himself, but what He hears the Son of God saying (Jn. 16.13).

But when He speaks—He and the one in whom He abides—it is Christ Himself speaking.

What is the Lord Jesus Christ going to do with this sword?

First, He is going to purify His churches with it (Rev. 2.12). It is a two-edged sword (a two-mouthed sword as the original has it: God's mouth and our own mouth) that pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is a sword—a word—with the very eyes of God in it, and lays all bare before Him (Heb. 4.12,13). Only those in whom the hand of the Lord has wrought the heart of a priest are going to be entrusted with this kind of sword.

Then He is going to bathe this sword in Heaven (Isa. 34.5). That is, He is going to cause principalities and powers in heavenly places, the rulers of the darkness of this age, to know its power.

And He is going to visit the serpent, the dragon, in the midst of the sea with this sword (Isa. 27.1).

Very wondrous things, these, and fearsome.

A mouth that is a sword of light laser sharp... and just as penetrating.

A man or woman who long hidden in God's quiver is the arrow He selects and suddenly shoots into the heart of His enemy like a bolt of lightning.

Only those who continue to abide under the shadow of God's hand will become this kind of weaponry.