

TAKE UP THY SWORD †

A newsletter with hope and encouragement from the Holy Bible

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... (Hebrews 4:16)

Issue 4

November 2008

Supernatural Supply for Natural Necessity

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want (lack) to them that fear him...but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing (Psalm 34:8-10).

We are constantly reminded throughout the scriptures not to fear but to put our faith in God. But for some strange reason, it appears that we may have forgotten these words of instruction and consolation from King David: *Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass (Ps 37:3-5).*

Remember how Abraham's obedience was tested when he was asked to sacrifice Isaac? He feared the Lord more than the death of his son because he already experienced the power of the "Almighty God" (El-Shaddai) in Genesis 17:1. But in Genesis 22:14, "Jehovah-jireh" was revealed when God provided a ram in the bush as the substitute burnt offering. Didn't Jesus also take our place at Calvary in order for us to have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10)? He is well aware of our struggles and is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb 4:15).

When I was unemployed for 8 months and needed to pay my mortgage and car note, buy Christmas gifts, and plan a birthday party for 10 pre-teens, God supplied all of my needs each and every time (Phil 4:19). When I needed food for school lunch but only had \$1.77 in my bank account, God did not forsake me and my child did not have to beg anyone for bread (Ps 37:25). We are overcomers by the Blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony (Rev 12:11), and I share these victories to reveal the answers to these common questions:

1. Why do God's people have to endure suffering?

...The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no...that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live (Deut 8:2-3).

2. How can we win the battle in the face of defeat?

...If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee...(Deut 28:1-2).

We can read two stories in which the Lord supplied supernatural provision for His prophet, Elijah, in 1 Kings 17. And since "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), we know that He is also "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph 3:20).

During a 3-year drought, God instructed Elijah to go down to a brook where he could drink the water and have ravens feed him. The Lord had already commanded these 'predatory scavengers' to bring the man bread and meat daily. If an animal was used to sustain God's servant, we can expect our neighbors to be used in our time of need:

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom...(Luke 6:38).

Because there was no rain, the brook eventually dried up. This time, the Lord commanded a poor widow woman to provide for Elijah. She had given up all hope and was planning to eat her final meal and die with her son; but when Elijah told her to make the last little cake for him first, she obeyed. This woman received the promise that the Lord would provide for her household because of her sacrifice. We should believe in this same covenant:

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine (Prov 3:9-10).

In this economic famine, remind God of His Word and know that we have the "power to get wealth" (Deut 8:18)!

THUS SAITH THE LORD, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt 6:25, 32).

PRAYER: *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower (Ps 18:1-2).*

"...Be encouraged in the law of the Lord" (2 Chron 31:4):

Deuteronomy 2:7, 6:10-19, 7:12-15; 2 Chronicles 20:6-9, 26:5; Nehemiah 9:19-21; Job 36:11-12; Psalm 23:1-6, 33:18-22, 37:16-19; Proverbs 28:25-28; Ezekiel 36:25-30.