

Glorying in Deprivation, Part 3
Two Co-workers, Provision and Deprivation
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In the interplay of divine provision and deprivation, only faith can see that deprivation must always yield to provision, and only a mature faith understands that deprivation is bound to serve provision in spite of, and, enigmatically, because of, its adversarial nature. We can never know the full riches in glory by Christ Jesus without the experience of emptiness, lack and denial. God's ultimate answer to all of our cries for deliverance is yes, but very often He says no while we are on the way to that final yes.

In His prayer in Gethsemane, Jesus said that He had given us the glory which He had with the Father before the world began. This takes us out of time into eternity and the relationship that we, in Him, have always shared with the Father. Christ's resurrection and glorification returned Him and us, in Him, to that glory which has always been our portion in Christ.

Glory: excellence put on display, or excellence that calls forth praise. That is the inheritance of the saints--- to have, and to be the glory of the Father in transfigured earthiness. But in between our translation from eternity into the aeons and back, the Seed of our glory has been planted in soil enriched by deprivation in order for glory to reach its full bloom.

Adam came out of eternity, out of the bosom of the glory of God with his glory intact, but he was, in the outer man, consciously denied the aware enjoyment of his possession. This is what made his Eve vulnerable to, and helpless against, the subtle suggestions of the serpent. The idea that Adam walked about in the Garden of Eden fully aware of who he was and what He possessed in God, makes for nice sentimental imaginings, but I don't believe it's true. We are not going back to Eden as it WAS. We are going forward into the Eden that IS, since our Lord Jesus has fully partaken of and become the Tree of Life for us and in us.

Being created in the image of God (the image of God being Christ) and being aware in his soiliness of what accrued to him in that

image are two different things. Only partaking of the Tree of Life would give him that enlightenment, for "This is life eternal (aeonian), that they might know Thee, the only true God, and (even) Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Though the Lord had said, "Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest eat..." (excepting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), He did not tell them WHEN they could eat of the Tree of Life.

Before that could occur, they must experience, left to themselves, without the light of the glory of God, that all the other permissible trees of the garden, good as they might be, could not bring fulfillment of being, and also that they would become prey to the deception that religious knowledge could satisfy their innate sense that something was missing.

Eternity has within it the contrasting dimension of time, and it is in that dimension that the Eternal draws forth from His depths His fullest riches. How?

Paradoxically, God buries Himself, and us in Him, in the soil of contradiction, and as a seed draws from the soil in order to sprout and bring forth its fruit, so God draws from elements contradictory to all that He is that by which He causes Himself to fulfill His divine potential.

He makes the contrarian to serve that purpose by presenting Himself with that which He must overcome, and in that challenge He reaches down, as it were, into His own depths in order to prevail. He has not, and does not do that alone. In Him, we have been subjected to all to which He subjects Himself. If it's been your understanding that God stood aloof from the futility to which He subjected all creation, you are wrong. He did it by subjecting Himself and thus the creation which is in Him.

Therein is the mystery of the passion of Christ. Faced with the trial of His faith, a trial sovereignly ordered by His Father, and knowing that He could call upon legions of warring angels to come to His aid if He chose to act autonomously. He did not because it was not the will of His Father for Him to be spared. He faced the futility of resisting sin and death and overcame them by yielding to their attack. In so doing,

He swallowed up death in victory. Can we see the nature and depth of the futility that He faced?

He faced having that which was a violation of His intrinsic Being intrude upon His holy Person. How could He permit such a thing? But if He refused, it would be refusing His Father's will. The only way left to Him was the way of faith in the wisdom and goodness of His Father. With the cry, "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit," He surrendered to the unthinkable; the unthinkable that Life itself should be murdered. He drank the cup to its last dregs and swallowed up death in victory.

We need to have a keen sense of the sanctity of our sufferings. We are participants in God being God at His best when we are called into the fellowship of His sufferings, when we are partakers of the sufferings of Christ. We are communicants in HIStory which begins and ends in glory, but necessitates often being deprived of the same along the way.

The better translation of Rom. 3:23, instead of merely indicating coming short of the glory of God, carries the thought of being in want of, or lacking of, His glory, or trying to reach, catch up to His glory. This is the ultimate deprivation, the deprivation within all deprivation. But what is the result? "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **HAVING THE GLORY OF GOD.**

Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper." (Rev. 21:10,11 NAS, emphasis mine)

From having the glory of God before the world began, to having it, as it were, removed from our consciousness, and then returned, will make glory more glorious than if it had never been put to the test.

What is your present and painful lack, dear one? A lack of healing, a lack of money, or satisfying relationship? Do you find yourself, though scripturally knowledgeable about the love and grace of God, bereft of any feelings of being loved and being treated graciously? Do you hear others testify of their wonderful experiences with Jesus while you feel like you and He have become strangers?

Well, "I have a word for you." Wait, wait, I know you've probably had more than your share of those who presume to have such a word, but give me a chance. The word is, "Behold, I make all things new." He does, He really does, and I promise that He will not forget you. I cannot promise that there will not be some deprivations that you will have to bear even to the end of this life, but I know that He will blend together just the right mix of provision and deprivation that will perfectly prepare you to receive fully the glory that is yours when you exchange this perishable for the imperishable.

So, "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing.....after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His aeonian glory in Christ will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you."

Much Love,