

Sunday June 08, 2008

The message today is classic example of *Rehema* Word of God: that personal and subjective Word that speaks to our unique circumstances. Only the individual knows what the Lord whispers to our ears as He speaks in our situations. Compare with the *logos* Word of God which is majestic, enduring and that is objective like the Law. Only the Lord is able to merge the two and make His Word so complete for us.

I prayed yesterday for the Lord to help me understand the lesson He was seeking to teach me in Jude and I am so thankful for the way God has helped me understand it better now because of the dream you shared with us; to further illuminate my own understanding. The dream ties in many respects with the message in the scripture we read.

The writer addresses “...*those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ...*” (V.1) and the whole letter of Jude describes a situation in the state of the church, especially these days. “...*For certain men have crept in unnoticed...ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord Jesus Christ.*” (V4)

The Lord knows how we long to hang out with the crowd because it feels good to be in the big group and to flow with the traffic. The collective energy of the mob is appealing and hopping on board makes things seem so pleasant and fun. It is just so human! I find the image of walking against the traffic flow so powerfully descriptive of the journey which a disciple of the Lord Jesus has to walk. It is interesting that walking towards traffic flowing in the opposite direction is the safest way to walk on a public road, because then you can see oncoming traffic.

In 2002 and 2003, I felt bad that I was not “accepted” at All Saints. Later on also, my family and I felt like strangers at Mesa and at the other churches where we sought to belong. I know my first motive for starting Baraka Anglican Church was to have a Church for hanging out with my friends and the Lord knows of this need in all of us and He does meet that need in ways different from how we would expect; because it is not the primary purpose for which He calls us. Now I know the purpose for which He called me and for which he allows Baraka Anglican Church to continue is so we may serve Him in the way that He has ordained for us and I dread to deviate from this call. I do not fear however because I know that as long as I continue to pray and to seek God’s help on a daily basis; I will make it. I pray for the Lord to show more of us what He is doing and to help all of us to hold steadfastly onto what we have received from Him.

The image you shared about the tricycle is so appropriate for Baraka and it captures exactly the way I feel about what we do. I ask the Lord to help us all who attend Baraka to have our eyes of the spirit opened and see what the Lord can do in and through us, and be amazed.

If I were to return to Kenya to my family today, I would still feel a stranger and never truly at home as long as the family I seek to belong to is not centered in Christ. It is riding a tricycle alone against the flow of traffic but amazingly, the tricycle I ride does go places and is indefatigable and works; small as it may be in the eyes of many but God uses it to bless me and others. I saw a child riding a tricycle outside by the road as we were having coffee in the kitchen this morning. She was small and was riding her tricycle but I noticed she was not alone. She was in the company of others who were probably her parents. I

can not imagine her crossing the road to the opposite side because her parents would certainly reprimand her for sure and even if she succeeded to cross the road; if somehow it would be safe enough to cross; her wanting to go across to meet other persons who the parents would certainly not approve of would put her in serious trouble.

You see, sometime God allows us to see things and to see ourselves as He sees us in order that we are able to pray within His will. This is a real blessing and a sign of God's love for us. From His eyes, we are like small children. *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believed in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* John 1:12&13. We also read, *"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is."* 1John 3:2

Earlier in my journey of faith, when the Lord started speaking to me, He used the same language as He spoke about my friends. I had many friends as an Attorney; many of who were not good and positive influences unto godliness. At that time, Grace was about 4 years old. In the city of Nairobi where we lived, there were many street children who were without parents and were loathed by many residents of that city because they sniffed glue to stay high, and stole from people walking the streets of Nairobi and generally were a negative group of young people; I am sorry to say. The Lord showed me in a dream my young daughter playing with these kids; and I was so frightened for my daughter. I was angry at the kids because they would hurt her. For Grace I had to teach her how dangerous it is to hang out with such kids and she had to know it must never happen again. Grace in the dream was me as God saw me.

Those emotions I went through taught me how God felt about my friendships etc. and unfortunately, I was not quick enough to listen and what followed were instances of discipline which I do not want to go through again. I do not need to tell you how an angry dad who loves his child deals with those bad influences? We must understand God as our heavenly Father; and that is exactly how He deals with us. We can not delve into why God sees our friends etc. in that way, but that is just the way it is. I pray for the Lord to show you the meaning of the images of Jackson and Steven for you. It is a subject to be approached prayerfully; for we know our God is a jealous God.

Talking of dreams, the writer of Jude has spoken at length about dreamers who reject authority and who speak evil of dignitaries i.e. loose talking etc. Those who speak evil of whatever they do not know and we hear many preachers who tell us how we are all o.k. and are so much loved by God but without telling us the truth of what sin does to our relationship with God. It alienates us from God our Father, making us homeless and like the street children of Nairobi, without parental care and without a proper home. Many of us, especially in this country are blessed and enjoy much free speech about everything, but in the things of God nobody seems to be sure about anything any more. When we do not hear from the Lord, the best we do is conjure up things which are not from the Lord. We create imaginary ideas which Jude calls "dreams" and we have plenty of dreamers who the culture encourages a lot calling them artists or people in exercise of their freedom of conscience. We are not encouraged by the culture to think distinctions these days because it is not the politically correct thought process.

What then do we make of what we read, *"And on some have compassion, making distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the*

garment defiled by the flesh.” Vs.22&23? Reject it? We do not toss it but instead we need to ask the Holy Spirit to teach us for such scriptures only make sense when the Lord Himself teaches us their meaning. God is merciful and He sees us through difficult situations, at times with much pain and disciplining. “But others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.” V.23

Filthy garments really signify sinfulness and unregenerate human behavior. Ref. Zachariah 3:3-5. The High Priest in the 3rd Chapter of Zachariah was saved by God Himself as from the fire. He was plucked from the fire like an already smoldering piece of wood although Satan was contending. His old clothes were exchanged for a new set; signifying God declared him clean and forgiven.

The way forward for us is what is described for us in Jude:

20 But you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. May we be founded upon the faith we have received since the days of the Apostles and grow from it and in it on a day to day basis. We pray because it is how we get strength and praying we must in the Holy Spirit. It is a blessing when the Lord opens our eyes so we know our situation as we even begin to pray. After we see ourselves to be truly needy of the Lord; like the High Priest in Zachariah, or like a little child in need of the Lord’s help and of His protection, the Lord must do something and will intervene for us in our circumstances. Then we are able to pray in the Holy Spirit and in the wisdom that has come from the Lord.

When we continue to pay attention to what the Lord is teaching us and as we seek to do His will and to please Him, then we remain stayed in His love and in His protection from our enemies and from those who hate us because we are His. The thief is very close by and comes only to kill, steal and to destroy what the Lord has blessed us with and so we must remain in the full armor of God and in the Lord’s all encompassing love. Let us also remain focused forward upon the future in Christ Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith and source of eternal life.