

¹THE HARNESS OF THE LORD

There is a terrific operation of the Spirit going on today to bring the Sons of God into an absolute confinement to the perfect Will of God. This is the day of His preparation, the day on which He is preparing the channel through which He shall pour forth his glory for all the world to see. This channel is His body in the earth, the glorious company of people who are being conformed through such tribulation and fiery tests to the image of the Son of God. This is His "*Battleaxe and weapons of war*" with which He shall subdue kingdoms and overcome all His enemies. This is His "*Mighty and strong one*" to whom He shall commit the work of judging this world. This is His overcomer, His "*Great army*" with which He shall bring the nation's into submission. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal natural weapons, but they are mighty weapons, mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. These are those who shall be strong and do great exploits.

But before God can commit this great and tremendous Ministry into their hands, they must submit themselves to the discipline of the Lord, letting Him truly be the Lord of their entire lives. We have long since dealt with the question of open sin but now God is dealing with the inner rebellion of our own wills. Some good Christians are not now being so dealt with, for they are not in this First Fruits company, but nevertheless, there is a real dealing of God going on within those who are called into the High Calling of God. This is a very real thing, and is the work of the Refiners Fire. To those who are going through it, some of its aspects are horrible, but very necessary, and the end result is glorious as we are brought into absolute and complete submission to the will of our Lord.

It was in a ministers conference and convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma that God gave me a vision which I want to share with you concerning this harnessing of our wills. There were more than 30 ministers present in this particular Thursday morning service, and God, the Father of Spirits, was present to deal with His sons to correct and discipline them to the absolute obedience to his will. There was such a stern dealing in the spirit that no one could go into the pulpit to Minister, there was a reluctance among the ministers to say anything, except that which was directly ordered by the Spirit. And as those men of God sat in the awesome presence of Almighty God, some of them having been many years of Ministry, some missionaries, all of them capable of getting up and preaching a powerful sermon, I was impressed by the way they responded to the discipline of the spirit. And in the midst of this terrific dealing of God with our spirits, the Holy Spirit gave me a vision....

I SAW THE KING'S CARRIAGE

on a dirt road in the middle of a wide field stood a beautiful carriage, something on the order of Stagecoach, but all edged in gold, and with beautiful carvings. It was pulled by six large chestnut horses, 2 in the lead, two in the middle and two in the rear. But they were not moving, they were not pulling the carriage, and I wondered why. Then I saw the driver underneath the carriage, on the ground on his back, just behind the last two horses heels, working on something between the front wheels of carriage. I thought, "*My, he is a dangerous place for if one of those horses kicked or stepped back they could kill him, or if they decided to go forward or got frightened somehow they would pull the carriage right over him*". But he didn't seem afraid, for he knew that those horses were disciplined and would not move until he told them to move. The horses were not stamping their feet nor acting restless, and though there were bells on their feet, the bells were not tinkling. They wore pom-poms on their heads and Harness, but the pom-poms were not moving. They were simply standing still and quiet, waiting for the voice of the Master.

THERE WERE TWO YOUNG COLTS IN THE FIELD.

As I watched the harnessed horses, I noticed two young colts coming out of the open field, and they approached the carriage and seemed to say to the horses: "*Come and play with us, we have many fine games, we will race you, come catch us*." And with that, the colts kicked up their heels, flicked their tails and raced across the open field. But when they looked back and saw the horses were not following them, they were puzzled. They knew nothing of harnesses, and could not understand why the horses did not want to play. So they call to them: "*Why do you not race with us? Are you tired? Are you too weak? Do you not have strength to run? You are much too solemn. You need more joy in your life*." But the horses answered not a word, nor did they stamp their feet or toss their heads. They stood, quiet and still, waiting for the voice of the Master.

¹ Date & source uncertain – first seen about late 1970's or early 1980's. Ps. Lew McMaster, Emmanuel Christian Outreach Inc. Strathalbyn SA. Tel. +61 885 362 825; Email: lewm@ecsm.org.au

Again the colts call to them: *"why do you stand still in the hot sun? Come over here in the shade of this nice tree, see how green the grass is? You must be hungry, come and feed with us, it is so green and so good. You look thirsty, come and drink from one of the many streams of cool water.?"* But the horses answered them not as much as the glance, but stood still, waiting for the command to go forward with the King.

COLTS IN THE MASTERS CORRAL.

And then the scene change, and I saw the lariat nooses falling around the necks of the two colts, and they were led off to the Masters Corral for training and discipline. How sad they were, as the lovely green fields disappeared, and they were put into the confinement of the Corral with its brown dirt and high fence. The colts ran from fence to fence, seeking freedom, but found they were confined to this place of training. And then the trainer began to work on them with his whip and bridle. What a death for those who had been all their lives accustomed to such freedom! They could not understand the reason for this torture, this terrible discipline. What great crime, had they done to deserve this? Little did they know of the responsibility that was to be theirs when they had submitted to the discipline, learned to perfectly obey the Master, and finish the training. All they knew what it was that this processing was the most horrible thing they had ever known.

SUBMISSION AND REBELLION.

One of the colts rebelled under the training and said *"This is not for me. I like my freedom, my green hills, my flowing streams of fresh water. I will not take any more of this confinement, this terrible training"* So he found a way out, jumped the fence and ran happily to the meadow of the grass and I was astonished that the Master let him go, and did not go after him. But he devoted his attention to the remaining colt. This colt, though he have the same opportunity to escape, decided to submit his own will, and learn the ways of the Master. And the training got harder than ever, but he was rapidly learning more and more how to obey the slightest wish of the Master, and to respond to even the quietness of his voice. And I saw that had there been no training, no testing, there would be neither submission or rebellion for either of the colts. For in the field they did not have the choice to rebel or submit, they were sinless in their innocence. But when brought to the place of testing and training and discipline, then was made manifest the obedience of one and the rebellion that lay hidden in the heart of the other. And though it seems safer not to come to the place of discipline because of the risk of being found rebellious, yet I saw that without this there could be no sharing of His Glory, no Sonship.

INTO THE HARNESS

Finally, this period of training was over. Was he now rewarded with his freedom and sent back to the fields? Oh no. But a greater confinement than ever took place, as a Harness was dropped around his shoulders. Now, he found there was not even the freedom to turn about the small Corral, for in the harness he could only move where and when his master spoke. And unless the master spoke, he stood still.

The scene change, and I saw the other colt standing on the side of a hill, nibbling at some grass. Then across the fields down the road came the Kings carriage drawn by six horses. With amazement, he saw that in the lead, on the right side, was his brother colt, now made strong and mature on the good grain of his master's stable, he saw the lovely pom-poms shaking the wind noticed the glittering gold-bordered Harness about his brother, heard the beautiful tinkling of the bells on his feet... and envy came into his heart. Thus, he complained to himself: *"Why has my brother been so honoured, and I am neglected? They have not put bells on my feet, nor pom-poms on my head. The Master has not given me the wonderful responsibility of pulling his carriage, or put about me the golden harness. Why had they chosen my brother, instead of me?"* *"Because one submitted to the will and discipline of the Master, and one rebelled, thus, one has been chosen and the other set aside."*

A FAMINE IN THE LAND

Then I saw a great drought sweep across the countryside, and the green grass became dead, dry, brown and brittle. The little streams of water dried up, stop flowing and there was only a small muddy puddle here and there. I saw a little colt (I was amazed that it never seemed to grow and mature), as he ran here and there across the fields looking for fresh streams and green pastures, finding none. Still, he ran, seemingly in circles, always looking for something to feed his famished spirit. But there was a famine in the land, and the rich green pastures and flowing streams of yesterday were not to be had. And one day, the colt stood on the hill on weak and wobbly legs, wondering where to go to find food, and how to get the strength to go. Seemed like there was no use, for good food and flowing streams were a thing of the past, and all the efforts to find more only taxed his waning strength. Suddenly he saw the Kings carriage coming down the road,

pulled by six great horses. And he saw his brother, fat and strong, muscles rippling sleek and beautiful with much grooming. His heart was amazed and perplexed, and it cried out "*My brother, where did you find the food to keep you strong and fat in these days of famine? I have run everywhere in my freedom searching for food, but I found none. Where did you in your awful confinement, find food in this time of drought? Tell me please, for I must know!*" And then the answer came back from a voice filled with victory and praise. "*In my master's house, there is a secret place in the confining limitations of his stable where he feeds me by his own hand, and his granaries never run empty, and his well never runs dry*".

And with this the Lord made me to know that in the day when people are weak and famished in their spirits in the time of spiritual famine, that those who have lost their own wills and have come to the secret place of the most high, into the other confinement of his perfect will, shall have plenty of the corn of Heaven and the never ending flow of fresh streams of revelation by His Spirit. Thus, the vision ended.

r INTERPRETATION OF THE VISION

Hab 2:2 Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.

Jer 46:4 Harness the horses, mount the steeds! Take your positions with helmets on! Polish your spears, put on your armor!

Being born into the family of God, feeding of the green pastures and drinking of the many streams of the unfolding revelation of his purposes is fine and wonderful, but it is not enough.

While we were children, young and disciplined, limited only by the fence of the law that ran around the limits of the pastures (that kept us from getting in the dark pastures of poison weeds). He was content to watch us develop and grow into manhood, spiritually speaking.

But the time came to those who fed in his pastures, and drank of his streams, when they were to be brought into discipline or "*child-training*" for the purpose of making them mature sons. Many of the children today cannot understand why some of those who have put on the harness of God cannot get excited by the many religious games and playful antics of the immature. They wonder why the discipline ones run, not after every new revelation or feed on every opportunity to engage in seemingly good and profitable religious activities. They wonder why some will not race with them in a frantic effort to build great works and greater notable ministries. They cannot understand the fact that this company of saints is waiting for the voice of the Master... and they do not hear God in all this outward activity. They will move in their time, when the Master speaks, but not before though many temptations come from the playful cults. And the cults cannot understand was why those who seemingly have great abilities and strength are not putting it to good use. "*Get the carriage on the road,*", they say but the disciplined ones, those in God's harness, know better than to move before they hear the voice of the Master.

And the Lord had made me to know that there were many who have been brought into training, who would have rebelled against the discipline, the chastising of the Father. And they could not be trusted with the great responsibility of mature sonship. So, he let them go back to their freedom, back to their religious activities and revelations and gifts. They were still his people, still feeding in his pastures, but he set them aside from the great purpose for this end of the age. So they revel in their freedom, feeling that they are the chosen ones with the many streams of water, not knowing that they had been set aside as unfit for his great work in this end of the age.

And he showed me that though the chastising seems grievous for a time and the discipline hard to endure, yet the end result for the glory of Sonship is worth it and the glory to follow far exceeds the suffering we endure. And though some even lose their lives in this training, yet they will share alike in the glory of his eternal purposes. So faint not, Sons of God for it is the Lord that does bring you into confinement and not the enemy. It is for your good and for his glory so endure all things with praise and thanksgiving that you have been counted worthy to share in his glory. Don't fear the whip in His hand for it is not to punish you, but the correct and train you that you might come into submission to his will and be found in his likeness in power. Rejoice in your trials and annual tribulations and glory in His cross and in the confining limitations of His harness, for has chosen you and take upon Himself the responsibility of keeping you strong and well fed. So lean upon him, and don't trust in your own ability and your own understanding. In this way, you will be fed and His hand shall be upon you and His glory shall overshadow you and flow through you, as it goes forth to cover the earth. Glory to God, bless the Lord, He is wonderful. Let him be the Lord of your life friends, and don't complain at what he brings to pass in your life.

PLENTY IN THE TIME OF FAMINE

For in the hour when famine sweeps the land, he shall feed his by his own hand, those who are submitted to His perfect will, and to dwell in the secret place of the most high. When terror stalks land, those in His harness shall not be afraid for they shall feel his bit and bridle and know the guidance of his spirit. When others are weak and frail and fearful, there shall be those who shall be strong in the power of His might, and shall lack no good thing. In the hour when traditions of the religious systems have proven false, and their streams dried up, then His chosen ones shall speak forth with a true word of the Lord. So rejoice, Sons of God, that you have been chosen by His grace for this great work in this last hour.

The fence which kept the colts in their own meadows and their pastures, means nothing to the team in the harness, for the gates open to them, and may go forth pulling the Kings carriage into many strange and wonderful places. They do not stop to eat the poison weeds of sin, for they feed only in the Master's stable. These fields they trample under their feet as they go forth on the Kings business. And so to those who are brought into absolute subjection to His will, there is no law. For they move in the grace of God, led by His spirit, where all things are lawful but not all things are expedient. This is a dangerous realm for the undisciplined, and many have perished in sin as they leaped over the fence without His harness and His bridle. Some have thought of themselves as being absolutely harnessed and submitted to Him, only to find that in some avenue of their life there dwelled rebellion and self-will. Let us wait before Him until He puts His noose around us and draws us to His place of training. Let us learn of the dealings of God and the movings of His spirit until at last we feel His harness drop about us, and hear His voice guiding us. Then there is safety from the traps and pitfalls of sin, and then we shall abide in His House for ever!