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HENCEFORTH KNOW WE NO MAN AFTER THE FLESH!

By Gordon F. Nelson

The Apostle Paul, standing before King Agrippa in his own defense against charges made by the Jews, said, *"At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen (off our horses) to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (Gk.-to prick, or sting as with a pointer or goad)."* Paul is telling the king how he was a loyal subject to Rome, until a force greater than Caesar gave orders he must obey. *"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."* Acts 26:13-14,19.

It was at midday in Oakland, California, while driving a truck, O avid reader of the *RIVERBANK NEWS*, that your editor heard a voice from heaven screaming through the roof of the cab of the truck I was driving, saying, *"Henceforth know we no man after the flesh!"* It was a loud, commanding voice that sounded angry! At first, hearing the words frankly frightened me because I was unsure who was speaking.

"Before I judge too harshly," I thought, "let me first look it up in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance." I was a graduate from the Patten Bible College where I was ordained a "minister for eternity." I had been a Christian for about five years, but yet I was uncomfortable that these particular words were in the Bible. To my utter amazement, Strong's solved the mystery. The words were in the Bible--2 Corinthians 5:16.

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ AFTER THE FLESH, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

This incident transpired over fifty years ago. My, how time does fly! What if you received such an order from heaven? What would you do?

The Book of Hebrews says, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."* Heb. 1:1-2. I knew the voice of the Son. Could I possibly have heard the voice of Father God? He was angry! Anyway, I wasn't going to try and figure it out anymore. Mine was to obey; but how? What do I do? How can you possibly know anyone except by the flesh?

Perhaps God was giving me the gift of the discerning of spirits. There are nine gifts of the spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. In 1 Corinthians 12:11, it plainly states the Holy Spirit, divides these gifts “*severally as he will.*” But, God is still God! Besides, all normal people want God to be God! If it pleased God, couldn’t He bestow a gift upon man as a reward for faithfulness?

I had been the prime motivator to stop Dr. Bebe H. Patten’s husband-manager from raping teenage girls and robbing senior citizens of their life’s savings by purchasing things like orphanages and radio stations that never materialized.

The state put Jim Bakker behind bars for selling a couple of timeshare apartments after reaching capacity. They thought no way would every apartment owner show up at the same time! You only buy for a month or two weeks every year. You own an apartment during that time span. The next month, someone else will own the same apartment. Jim Bakker was a saint alongside a real con-artist, C. (for Cash) Thomas Patten. “If you have plenty of money and smart lawyers, you can do anything and get by!”

When you are into religion, and own your own three-name, non-profit religious incorporation, you are a “little god.” These are the only ones that can “speak the word,” and eight brand new Cadillacs are in their driveway. This was Tom Patten’s testimony from the platform on the day I visited the District Attorney for Alameda County.

Does God give gifts for faithfulness? Lord knows, my entire family was put at risk to bring about the conviction of Thomas Patten, alias Jack Groves of Lyle, Tenn. My wife lost a baby as she was hit by a hit and run driver while the case against the Patten’s was at the grand jury level. I had at least two shots of sugar put in my gas tank. My mother appeared on the front page of the San Francisco Examiner holding a rock with a rose tied to it that was thrown through her window at the stroke of midnight. The suspect in the hit and run was later killed driving a motorcycle.

Anyway, it was after all this foreplay that God spoke in a clear, loud voice at midday, “*Henceforth know we no man after the flesh.*” The first people I went to were evangelist Connie Stimpson and his wife, Lucy, in their Hayward, Calif. home. They were longtime friends to my family. During the course of the conversation, I suddenly yelled out, “Who are you? What is your name?”

Naturally, it shocked my friends with my sudden outburst of energy. Immediately, they responded, “Why, I am your friend, Connie, and this is my wife, Lucy. What do you mean, Gordon? Who are we?” And, in that instant, I saw who this Pentecostal evangelist was. He was the man the disciples stumbled upon that was casting out devils all alone, recorded in Mark 9:38. “*Master, we saw*

one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.” The disciples knew one went out two by two to cast out demons, but never alone, besides, he was not one of us (sectarianism).

The disciples of Jesus would have condemned every healing evangelist that the Pentecostal religion ever produced! Why? Because they were all alone. Jesus always sent the disciples out two by two. *“But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.”* Mk. 9:39-41.

This editor receives great joy in that particular scripture, because he visualizes each monthly issue of the *RBN* as that *“cup of water”* given to each of you freely every month for over the past 5½ years. He anticipates all who participate, to receive a reward from God for their help in sending the *RIVERBANK NEWS* to others. *“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear MY VOICE; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”* Jn. 10:16.

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” 2 Cor. 3:6. Young people are the first to come to a revival that exalts the Son of man, and the first to leave upon its demise. Youth are still searching! They have not cemented their value system in concrete until after the age of 29. About 85% of all Christians made that decision before the age of 29. I became a Christian at the age of 21. I was 1-A, and would be drafted for war. I had to think about dying.

“And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli...there was no open vision.” 1 Sam. 3:1. *“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”* Prov. 29:18. The vision is that there is a God, and that such a God communicates with man. The child, Samuel, would grow up and become a prophet. Thus, the vision was reopened by a prophet who walked and talked with God.

When I pastored my church in Hayward, Calif., at the corner of Foothill Blvd. and C Street, the glory of God would come down every night and bless young people. It was here that Randy B. became a Christian. He was a slave to Lake Tahoe gambling, knowing every pit boss by their first name. He was 20 years old, and had already lived a life that men twice his age had never seen.

At first Randy was skeptical, but he enjoyed “happy faces,” as he put it. He kept on coming! The only time you catch a gambler is when the cards fail them and they are down on their luck. I told those kids, “We have a congregation that nobody wants. Do you think the fancy churches uptown are going to put up with a bunch of bearded hippies, lesbians, gamblers and plain sinners?” When

they found Christ, off came the beard. This new convert emerged from behind all that hair and was simply beautiful to behold. One such “new creature” started a business in downtown Hayward, and employed a Jewish boy from our church.

Sure, I’d tell them about the God of Abraham. It is the God of Abraham that we set out to serve. Randy was right there, flat broke. One night I preached a sermon on work. If you didn’t work, you had no right to eat. These kids were doers of the word, not hearers only. I remember Randy, being obedient to the message, went out and hung sheetrock for a building contractor. At the next service, Randy showed me his fingers, hands, and knuckles. Wow! How could one miss the sheetrock nails so many times with his hammer? My advice to Randy was to hang up the hanging of sheetrock. Every man has his own gift, but the hanging of sheetrock was definitely not Randy’s.

Why have I singled out Randy in this message? He has been with me from the beginning of the revival. I told him, “You can pick a car out of the paper, buy it, and sell it for \$1,000 more than you paid for it.” This came so easy for him. He knew automobiles. “If you can sell automobiles,” I told him, “you can sell houses!” He obeyed me, and is now a commercial real estate broker in the Monterey area.

God gave me this gift from heaven to discern man’s spirit. It continued to bring life and excitement among the congregation. Besides myself, I cannot think of one person that attended that was over 29. Try to convert that which you know will change. Each time one says no to a gospel call, they are hardening their heart. It will be that much harder the next time. Thirty years of saying no, and even God says He will deliver them to a “*reprobate mind*.” Rom. 1:28.

Another person that was at the beginning of revival was Lot. Lot was probably at his Grandfather Terah’s house when Terah received a call from God. How exciting! Whenever God communicates with man, that is what creates the “open vision.” God had given Terah the same command he later gave to Abraham, “*Get thee out of thy country, and from THY KINDRED, and from THY FATHER’S HOUSE, unto a land that I will shew thee.*” Gen. 12:1. God always calls us to separate from kinfolk who backslide and worship strange gods. Randy’s spirit of Jacob has been transformed into the spirit that was resident in Lot who lived in Sodom. As Lot was in the revival from the beginning, so Randy was also. In the story, as we progress, I wanted you to know Randy was a type of the citizen Lot of Sodom, so we can put flesh on this story.

Jesus said, “*A man’s foes shall be they of his own household.*” Matt. 10:36. Idolatry is the main reason for this separation. Terah must have been a Baptist, because in his journey to Canaan’s land (type of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost), he settled down in Haran, a very dry place. Why didn’t he

leave Haran? Kinfolk! Terah stopped in Haran. It was family reunion time!

Once again, idolatry begins to show its ugly head in Haran. Hence, the same call goes out to Abraham that went to his father, Terah. *“Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred.”* Once again, the caravan moves on toward Canaan under the leadership, this time, of Terah’s son, Abraham.

“And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram’s cattle and the herdmen of Lot’s cattle” (Gen. 13:7), and they had to separate. Lot received the first choice, and with his eyes chose the well-watered plains of Sodom. He had lived in the desert all of his life and was ready for the change. Lot and Abraham separate.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and TOUCH NOT THE UNCLEAN THING; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you (the come outers), and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

Do you know what *“the unclean thing”* is that you are not to touch? Idolatry and witchcraft. A recent new convert that I was involved with in San Diego, simply could not understand my adamant spirit against a statue of Buddha in her house. I prevailed, and Buddha was smashed and destroyed. It all was a joke to her, for she claims she didn’t worship Buddha, but, ma’am, did you touch it?

My own son of my flesh, through his involvement with yoga, was soon led to idolatry. Buddha was sitting somewhere in the house. Rome had many gods, and would gladly have accepted Jesus to their chain of gods. The persecution of Christians was because of their insistence that there was only “one God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

One of the Ten Commandments reads explicitly, *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”* Ex. 20:4-5.

This is just one commandment. Shall we go on? You can readily see why this *“untoward generation”* doesn’t want the Ten Commandments hanging on their public school walls! We, as the church, are exhorted by Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, *“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”* Acts 2:40. Just how are you going to do that? By separation. It will never happen by amalgamation, which the church is engaged in today, called ecumenicalism.

“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins (one world religion headed up by the false prophet, the Pontiff of Rome), and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.” Rev. 18:4-5.

For you to be introduced to this rare “*gift of the discerning of spirits*” (1 Cor. 12:10), I will ask you to read The Pilgrim’s Progress, by John Bunyan. It was written while he was in prison, being persecuted for the gospel. In this book, Pilgrim is directed to the Eternal City, provided he stay on the highway. Oddly, everyone he meets has a name. None of them bear the name given by their Mom or Dad. Usually, the name given them depicts their character; Mr. Pride, Mr. Avarice, Miss Melancholy, Mr. Hate, etc. Seemingly, all knew that Pilgrim was bound for the Eternal City on the King’s Highway. The objective of those he meets, and for climbing onto the King’s Highway, is to attempt to get Pilgrim to detour from his goal of reaching the Eternal City. The only book to exceed The Pilgrim’s Progress in sales every year is the Holy Bible. Don’t you think you should read it? An excellent children’s gift for Christmas. They love the story of Pilgrim’s Progress.

Indians have far more sense in naming their children than the white man. The Indian will wait, sometimes until the child is eight years of age. Why? They are attempting to name his spirit by something he does. All Bible names are given for the same reason. When the character of Saul was changed, God changed his name to Paul.

“Henceforth know we no man after the flesh!” It is in a command form from God to me that never leaves my spirit. In my church we welcomed all kinds of spirits into the service. For when the Captain began to name the various spirits, the understanding of the Bible would become real, and literally *“the word was made flesh.”* It became like a journey that Pilgrim was making toward the Eternal City. *“Ye are our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men.”* 2 Cor. 3:2. God used me to put flesh upon these spirits, by naming them, who thus became our epistles to be known and read of all men. Looking at flesh, there is nothing to read. *“That which is flesh is flesh.”*

I had a young man come to me with his problem. He was good in both music and physical competitive sports. His dad wanted him to be a musician; he wanted to be a physical education teacher. I told him, “Robert, you have a green thumb and don’t even know it. Your name is Adam, and as such be a landscape architect.” Later, I married Adam and Eve right in the church. Eve had dated so much before ever coming to Christ that she was unable to choose the right man for herself. Imagine, such faith in my gift to select a better choice of a mate for her than she could? They never had a date, but I knew her name. She had the same spirit as Eve. Can you imagine the excitement among youth to attend a wedding of Adam and Eve?

In these same powerful meetings, Randy was named Jacob. Jacob, the supplanter! *“And he (Esau) said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times.”* Gen. 27:36. What does supplant mean? Hebrew--to seize by the heel; fig. to circumvent. Jacob is a con-artist. He had a different kind of gift, but he knew it worked! He conned Esau, his brother, out of his birthright.

“And Jacob sod (Heb.-to seethe, deal proudly) pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom (Heb.-red, flushed red neck).” Esau had a name change when he ate Jacob’s red pottage. *“And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.”* Gen. 25:29-31.

Stealing the birthright of Esau could represent a bigger heist than John Dillinger received from robbing a bank. Isaac, his father, inherited all the wealth of Abraham. By the law of the first born, Esau would inherit all the wealth of Isaac, his father. When you are dealing with Jacob, you’ve a professional thief on your hands. Jacob never gives; just takes! Anytime he does give, it is loaded with charm. Imagine a mess of pottage for the wealth of Abraham! You call that a supplanter? That is putting it mildly! The Bible says, *“Thus Esau despised his birthright.”* Gen. 25:34.

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Lk. 9:62. All Lot’s wife did was look back. God hated Esau before he was even born. *“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that THE PURPOSE OF GOD according to ELECTION (predestination) might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.”* Rom. 9:11.

You were born into this world for a purpose. Whenever I meet someone, immediately something like the old fashioned phonograph begins, “Who are you? What is your name?” It constantly repeats itself. “Who are you? What is your name? Why were you born to take up space on planet earth?” To hear God’s voice only one time, can be an eternal part of you until you meet the Lord.

When Jesus went to the country of the Gadarene’s, the demon-possessed man asked Him, *“What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.)”* Do you know the unclean spirit did not obey the Son of God? Read it in Luke 8:26-30. AFTER, this defeat, Jesus came against these demons again, only this time Jesus wanted to know their name.

Apparently, demons like the darkness. They fear the light because their deeds are evil. Once you know the name of the spirit that is the driving force in that individual, they become weak, and cease to be an effective hell-raiser. *“And Jesus asked him (the man), saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.”* Lk. 8:30. If Jesus needed to know the

name of spirits that reside in men, how much more do we mortals need to be so equipped to work in the harvest field.

The more recent readers of *RBN* will have a harder time digesting the strong meat that is being offered to you in this December issue. We have been doing this for over 5½ years. As we approach the year 2000 AD, God always saves the very best wine until the end of a millennium. God is ending this year by putting some “flesh on the Word.”

We will close this message by stating that God only chose two men out of the entire Bible to warn you about the wrath to come. Of these two, only one should really concern us for the day in which we live. The name of these two men are Noah and Lot, recorded in Lk. 17:26-36.

Noah is a type of the law, while Lot is pure grace. If it were not for Peter exonerating Lot by one scripture, most of us good Christians would never believe he was saved. *“And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.)”* 2 Pet. 2:7-8.

Only two scriptures give an account of Noah, Luke 17:26-27, while eight scriptures (four times the amount) are devoted to Lot, Luke 28-36! By content alone, which of these are weightier if placed on a scale?

Why Lot? We are to see ourselves in Lot as sinners saved by grace. In Lot’s day, only Sodom and Gomorrah were given over to the Sodomite lifestyle. Today, through television, radio, Hollywood, public education, the Web, and Corporate America, this *“untoward generation”* is dedicated to jamming this deviate lifestyle down our throats, whether we like it or not. Lot lived in Sodom, and so do we. Lot survived Sodom only by rapture! Sodomy is like a break in the dike of morality. The dam will soon break.

I had a dream about our present government. The Socialists of America voted into law that following a divorce, one must sandwich in between heterosexual marriages, a queer! That single law would increase the speed to which we would be amalgamating heterosexuals and the homosexuals into one society.

This message will come as a great surprise to Randy, as it did to me. His hip was bothering him, and he was limping when he walked. We had been attempting to believe the “supplanter” would have a change of character. *“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”* Matt. 5:37.

While in my home, a short time ago, the fire of God came into my hands. I knew it was for

Randy's hip. I had always assumed his change would follow the biblical account of Jacob, and we'd have an Israel. Just think about it. Jacob had twelve sons. Lot produced nothing but girls. If Randy were to try again, he'd probably get another girl. Why? Because he is Lot. Lot had four daughters and no sons.

God *"saved Noah...a preacher of righteousness (the law)." 2 Pet. 2:5. "Noah was a just man and PERFECT in his generations, and Noah walked with God."* Gen. 6:9. The Bible depicts Noah in a class of perfection that only three other men attained to; Noah, Daniel, Job, and of course, Jesus, the Son of man. Ezekiel 14:14, tells us of this. *"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their OWN SOULS BY THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS, saith the Lord GOD."* Jesus Christ could deliver the entire world by His righteousness. Noah, Daniel and Job were teachers of the law. *"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."* Rom. 15:8. Apostle Paul says that Jesus Christ was a minister of the law. This is a very hard statement for Christians to accept into their theology.

There are only two ways to be justified before a Holy God. #1 - Join Noah's club and stand perfect upon your own righteousness. Or, #2, stand upon the righteousness of another along with Lot. You just remember Lot will make it through. I prophesied over Randy in my church in Hayward and singled him out as one of God's millionaires.

You must remember that in addition to just eating, drinking, the marrying of wives, and attending weddings as they did in Noah's day, they worked and builded in Lot's day. In Lot's Sodom, they were entrepreneurs, just as in our day. The Sodomite's did everything they did in Noah's day, but in addition, they worked! *"They bought, they sold, they planted, they builded."* You can get so totally absorbed in Sodom, that your only escape is by rapture.

The two angels visiting Lot in Sodom gave the order, *"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee!"* Gen. 19:17. They are the same two angels that will come for the church, which is once again in the vise-grips of Sodom. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."* 1 Thess 4:16. Jesus Christ will shout, with the voice of the archangel, and still another angel will blow the trumpet. Even the angels go into Sodom to deliver the city two-by-two. Two angels will also deliver the church out of a wicked world.