



Lampstand Letters

That we may walk in the light
Isaiah 2:5; Luke 8:16

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“Write therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later” Rev. 1:19

In this edition: **THE MINISTRY OF MOURNING WOMEN & OTHERS**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In ancient Israel were groups of professional mourners, who could be hired and paid to weep at funerals. The louder they could cry the more popular and patronized they were. Their objective was to wipe up emotions so that more people will cry. A special category of their professional mourners was known as “the women who weep for Baal” (Contemporary English Version CEV). The god Baal was believed to have died (at certain periods) and (could) come back to life. So some women would go to place for worship, and weep over the death of Baal (CEV). It was believed that by their mourning over the death, they could bring it back to life. This actually was a Canaanite fertility ritual, which they do at beginning of planting season to give back “life to the soil”. In Jeremiah’s time, judgment was inevitable over the land because of the pervading abominations of desolation (Jer. 8;18- 9;26). The prophet saw ahead the tragic end of a spiritually sick and idolatrous nation that had stubbornly followed its own ways, in spite of prophetic warnings. The land was soon to be desolate, famine was to come on the land, the inhabitants scattered and enemy soldiers kill in the streets. For all these, Jeremiah repented, mourned and wept (Jer. 8:18, 9:1, 10 etc).

It was in this setting of impending judgment that the call for the mourning women was made in Jer. 9: 17-22. This time it was not for pretentious ‘professionally mourners’. It was to be for real, as death had already entered through the window to kill the children and husbands (Jer. 9:21). It was no time for entertaining, playing-to-the-gallery wailing women, who merely sought to stir up emotions so that all around would say ‘Oh, how much they loved the departed’ (See Matt 11:17 and John 11:28-36). Rather it was for mourners who like the widow of Zarepeth and the Shunamite women will mourn to literally receive their dead back to life (1 Kings 17:17-20; II Kings 4:20-36).

Theirs was to be heart-rending mourning for the impending judgement, a cry for mercy; peradventure God will hear and give beauty for ashes, a garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness. True heartfelt mourning, has always moved God to respond to such repentance and plea for mercy in times of judgement. Even the wicked king Ahab and the Ninevites received mercy when they cried out to God in true mourning and repentance.

The church in Nigeria is at the threshold of judgement. Abominations that bring desolation have brought the four horns that scatter arrayed against it. The fate of Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Yugoslavia beckons. Never since the last civil war has the need for mourning women become as urgent as now. The call was not for mighty men of valor, professional soldiers, prophets or even great ministers. It was for wailing, mourning women.

The call is not for novice wailers, but for skillful mourners and intercessors, ‘especially those who can cry the loudest’ (Jer 9:17 CEV). Women, who like Hannah, received life to her dead womb by mourning. Like Rachael, who refused to be comforted until the Lord restrained and comforted her (Jer. 31:15-17). Like

Mary Magdalene who stood weeping by Jesus' tomb, until she literally received the Lord from the dead (John 20:11-16). Women who are adept at weeping in private, qualified for this ministry of public mourning. They must be women who are available, who can be sent for and will quickly answer the clarion call. Women who will leave every other task, to hearken to this call. Who even if they have other secular assignments, will take this as an urgent priority above everything.

1.1 THE TASK OF THE MOURNING WOMEN INCLUDES:

- Sincere heartfelt mourning, repentance and contrition (verse 17)
- Provoke/stimulate the people of the land to mourn, confess and intercede (verse 18)
- Spend time to search the scriptures to find the Word of the Lord for the now (verse 20)
- Listen and pay attention to what the Lord is saying by His Spirit and by word of prophesy (verse 20)
- Teach and mobilize others, especially their daughters and friends, also to mourn and intercede (verse 20).

1.2 CONCLUSION

In Hebrews 11:35, the Bible lists and commends women who by faith "received their dead raised to life again" (Hebrews 11:35a). Mourning women have the grace to turn judgment into mercy, turn desolation into restoration and death to life. This generation and time calls for such women now. As the mourning women arise for the occasion and do these tasks, God will have mercy on the land, turn our grief to joy, and give us beauty for ashes, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Amen.

By the Lampstand. February 2002.

2.0 THE PROPHET AS INTERCESSOR

The prophet and the intercessor are two ends of the divine connection between God's throne and human activity. While the prophet have access to the heavenly council meeting, hear of God and speak to men on behalf of God (Jer. 23:18,22); intercessors take the hold of earthly affairs and stand in the council of heaven to speak as priests on behalf of men to God (Ezekiel. 22:30, Jer. 18:20). But there are times when both of these ministries will have to be manifested in one person, when the prophet will have to be an intercessor. At the time God's judgments are imminent, and the effect of judgement so frightening, then the prophet must be an intercessor.

The prophets Jeremiah and Amos were two such persons who were intercessors in the course of their prophetic ministry. Jeremiah's many intercessions, in response to prophetic revelations, are recorded in the scriptures (see Jer. 8:18 - 9:6, 10:23-25, 14:19-22, 32:16-25). Indeed, he boldly declared in Jer. 18:20 that "I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away Your wrath from them". Jeremiah indeed was a true loyal patriot. The prophet Amos was another intercessor prophet. May be because he was earlier a shepherd and tender of fruits, (Amos 7:14) he has learnt compassion. Twice in Amos 7:1-6, God threatened to judge the land, first with locusts and later with fire. In either case, Amos pleaded for the people, and God relented.

At such times as this, we need intercessor - prophets. As we receive from the Lord prophecies of judgement, we need immediately to stand in the gap as intercessors asking for mercy. We should not be modern day Jonahs, who will be upset when God decides to replace judgement with mercy (Jonah 4).

3.0 HORNS

Horns in the scriptures are used to symbolically or metaphorically represent strength and conquest (See I Sam 2:1, 10, Psalm 75:4-10 etc). When applied to nations, countries or tribes, they stand for enemy powers or kingdoms fighting against the people of God (See Daniel 7:21-27, Zech 1:18-21). The number four

represent completeness or totality e.g. the four winds, directions or corners of the earth- North, East, South and West (See Daniel 7:2, Zech. 1:18 and Revelation 7:1). Zech. 1:21 make reference to “the horns of the nations lifted up against the land of Judah”. At this point in time, there is a host of demonic forces working against the nation Nigeria and the church therein. The resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism (Shariah, etc); of ancient tribes/ thrones resulting in increased tribal strife, conflicts and agitations; of sporadic natural disasters in different parts of the country etc. are symptomatic of frenzied demonic activities upon the country and the church.

Four horns can readily be discerned as warring against the land, and affecting in various intensity, the different parts of the land. These are:

- 1 The northern armies of the aliens
- 2 The beasts/dragons of the rivers and waters of Nigeria
- 3 Thrones/ gods of tribes and ethnic groups
- 4 The abomination of desolation in the church.

3.1 The Armies of the Aliens

Spiritually this refers to the contentious spirit of the bondwoman/ sons of Ishmael. (See Gen 16; 11-12). Politically this refers to the age long political ambition of the ‘born-to-rule’ caliphate, to ‘dip the Koran’ in the sea’. Reference has been made to the large bodies of Fulani Emirs, Princes and people who migrated out of Nigeria in 1902 to Sudan, Egypt, Medina etc. rather than be subject to “British/Christian infidels”, believing that one day they will lead a Jihad into Nigeria, apparently with the support of their host Arab nations (See “The Horse and the Rider”. LampstandLetters, No. 19, February 2000). Many non-Nigerian tribes such as Zarma, Dendi, Kanuri, Mandara etc. have assimilated into the Northern border states of Nigeria, exerting strong political and economic influences (See “The Armies of the Aliens, Lampstandletters Number. 21-23, April to June 2000).

Economically, this refers to the ‘locust army of the North’, alien economic interests plundering the land and its resources (see Jer. 1; 14, 4:6, 6:1, 22, 23 and Joel chapters 1 and 2). The activities of Nigerian smugglers, the unscrupulous Lebanese, Indian, Arab, Europeans, American and IMF/World Bank interest and their Nigerian collaborators on the economy of the nation and the church falls in this category. A manifestation of this is the sabotaging of essential public utility services by various interests.

3.2 The Beasts of the Sea.

This is the second of the four horns raised against Nigeria and the church. The Bible in Daniel Chapter 7 and Revelation 13 describes the blasphemous beasts from the sea. These are kingdoms that persecute and make war with the saints of the Most High (Daniel 7:17-25, Rev 13:1-7). They are also given authority over every tribe, tongue and nation (Rev.13:7). (See “Healing the Waters of Nigeria”, Lampstandletters, Nos. 4 &5, December 1998). In all ages, water spirits have played strategic roles in the battle of kingdoms. Mentioned specifically in the bible are the water spirits TANNIN (Job 7:12, Ps. 74:13, Rev. 12:3); LEVIATHAN (Job 3:8-9, 41:1, Psalm 74:14, 104:26, Isaiah 27:1); RAHAB (Job 9 :13,26;12-13, Psalm 89:9-10 and Isaiah 51:9) and BEHEMOTH (Job 40:15-24)- See the article “The ISSUE OF WATER SPIRITS” Lampstandletters No. 25, Oct.- Dec. 2000.

The Bible illustrates the fact that water spirits are behind the Thrones of Nations, with the example of Egypt (Isaiah 30:6-7, Ezekiel 29:1-3 and 32:1-8); as well as the Kingdom of Tyre (Ezekiel 27:1 to 28:1-2). In Eze.29:3, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt is referred to as ‘the great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers’ and “a monster in the sea, bursting forth in your rivers, troubling the waters with your feet, fouling the rivers’ (Ezekiel 32:2). Likewise the King of Tyre says “I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the

seas". The Lord now replied "yet you are a man, not a god". As applied to Nigeria, which is named after River Niger, and has up to two-thirds of its states named after one river or the other, the beasts of the waters play similar roles. The activities of the Egbesu boys (Ijaw National Congress) can be linked to the spiritual energy of water spirits. For example, Allagoa 1972:43 has stated that the priest of the Egbesu shrine among the Egbema Izon subgroup is BERE-PERE, The Lord of the waters (See the article Egbesu, Oro and Ancestral thrones, Lampstand letters No.16, November 1998). Likewise the activities of the Odua People's Congress (OPC) can in more than one way be linked to water spirits. Gani Adams, the factional leader is from the Akoko-Ado reverie area of Ondo state. Then, the ancient Yemoja goddess is described as the mother of all waters and all orishas (See THRONES of NATIONS, Lampstandletters No. 11, June 1999 and ELIAKIM AND THE YEMOJA SPIRIT, No. 12 July 1999). Similar water beasts and dragons existing all the other waters and rivers of Nigeria, troubling the waters and causing chaos on the land. (Remember the drowning of hundreds in the Ejigbo canals as a result of the January bomb explosions.)

PRAYER POINTS.

- 1 Pray that the Lord will raise a standard against all enemies of Christ operating through any river of the land. (Isa.17; 12-14, 39; 19 and Rev 12; 15-16). Prophecy that the earth opens its mouth to swallow every water body used by the enemy against the church.
- 2 Ask the Lord to take away the breath and crush the head of all sea monsters causing trouble and destruction in the land. (Eze.29:1-6, Isaiah. 27:1, Psalm.74; 12-14,103; 25-29 etc.)
- 3 Prophecy that all thrones having their seat in the seas and rivers of Nigeria will fall and never rise again, like the King of Tyre (Eze.27:1- 28:19, Eze.31).
- 4 Pray daily that the rivers of Nigeria will turn into places of battle and judgment of the Lord's enemies (Judges 5:19-21, 2 Kings 23:29).

3.3 Thrones (gods) of Nations.

This is the third of the four horns warring against Nigeria. The word NATIONS as used in the bible refers to tribes/ethnic groups/people groups. This is opposed to the word COUNTRY that refers to a geographical expression/land (See Gen.10:5, 20, and 31). In Rev 5:9 and 7:9, the additional concept of languages and races are used. Applied to us, the land (country) is Nigeria; we are made up of some two hundred and forty (240) tribes and some four hundred and fifty (450) languages of the black race. The Yoruba for example are a tribe with languages such as Ijesa, Egba, Ijebu, Ekiti, Kabba, Akoko-Edo, Ibadan, Anago and some even say Itshekiri.

In Matt.19:28, Jesus promised his disciples the twelve thrones of the tribes of Israel. In Deut. 32:8, the Most High God gave land to every nation and assigned a guardian angel to each of them. In Acts 17;26, it is stated that God made the nations(tribes) to live on earth and decided when and where every tribe will be at a given point in time. In Deut.32 and Dan.10:13,20, we see that while that God assigns a guardian angel over every tribe, Satan also sets princes and principalities over them. Satan's principalities are then raised as idols /gods of the tribes. In Deut. 32;9,16-21, we see God lament that though he has chosen Israel for Himself, the people decided to reject him and choose new gods and idols which their fathers did not know or serve.

Isaiah 14:9 makes us understand that even in death; the spirits of ancient rulers are still interested and actively monitor the thrones of nations. Likewise Isaiah 19; 11 speaks of 'sons of ancient kings', seeking to perpetuate the spirit of occupants of tribal thrones. Every throne is thus sustained by allegiance to the gods/idols, which the fathers of the tribe have chosen to serve. Obvious from these is that every tribe has a throne and it is not by mistake that a tribe finds itself in a land or country at a point in time. Rather it is by divine design. Thus in a country like Nigeria made up of some 240 tribes, there are at least 240 tribal gods/idols exerting spiritual force and authority both to defend and expand their hold on nations (tribes). In

Exodus 12:12, Jer. 43: 11-12 and 46:25, reference is made to the gods of the country Egypt with regard to God's conflict with that land. Zephaniah 2: 11 link the gods of the earth to the nations (tribes).

Some of the specific tribal gods mentioned in the bible include AMON, the sun god of the Egyptians (Jer. 46:25), the BAALS and ASHTHEROTHs of the Canaanites (Judges 2:11-13, 10:6), CHEMOSH of the Moabites (Numbers 21; 29, Judges 11; 24. I Kings 11; 7-8), MILCOM (or MOLECH) of the Ammonites (I Kings 11; 33, Jer. 49; 1), MARDUK/BEL/MERODACH of the Babylonians and the HOSTS OF HEAVEN (STARS) as gods of the Assyrians (2 Kings 23; 4). Thus, actually it is the gods of nations (thrones of tribes) who provoke tribes to rise against one another in expansionist power play. The following lines are taken from the article EGBESU, ORO AND ANCESTRAL THRONES, Lampstand Letters No. 16, and November 1999;

"All over the world, and particularly in Nigeria, there is an intense spirit of ethnic nationalism, threatening to dismember geographical nations as they are presently existing. In its August 23-30-1999 edition, the BUSINESSWEEK magazine lists the spirit of nationalism as the second of twenty-one "spirit of the new millennium" that will shape events in the 21st century, (religion was number 6).

Back home in Nigeria, the Vanguard of 3rd December 1999 quoted from international Economic Intelligence Unit (E.I.U) forecast report on Nigeria for 2000, released in November 1999. Inter alia, the E.I.U. report asks Nigerians "To watch (out for) a mix of ethnic, religious and regional tensions (which) have the potentials to destabilize the (Obasanjo) government and bring the army back into play" p 14). Beyond the social, the political and the economic lays a more fundamental spiritual (historical) origin and force behind the resurgence of ancient kingdoms, and its attendant tension and violence. The BUSINESSWEEK report comes close to recognizing an historical and spiritual origin of these ethnic nationalism when it talks of "...ancient loyalties and grievances... which stirs the blood among people whose allegiances are local and tribal"; noting that "too often in 21st century, the birth of nations will be violent" (p 44). It is in this light we understand the spirit behind resurgence of ancient kingdoms. While all other thrones rise and wane, it is only the throne of David that has God's covenant of an everlasting dynasty (Psalm 89:28-37, Jer. 33:17-21). Even when Jeroboam usurped the throne of David, David's descendant Jeroboam still has two tribes "for the sake of David" (! King 11:29-39, 12:20). The real "Son of the Ancient King" reigns over the everlasting dynasty of David. He is the root of Jesse, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Luke 1:27-23, Daniel 7:9-14, 27)."

3.4 CONCLUSION

As Nigerian Christians called into a common spiritual nation of Christ, we must eschew and rise above our narrow tribal loyalties, forging unity across tribes, in the body of Christ. That is the hope for the country, as we bear in mind that is God Himself who brought the various tribes in Nigeria to be her at this time for His divine purpose.(Acts17;26). Amen.

May God find you to use as one of the craftsmen (blacksmith) he will use to break and scatter these tribal horns (Zech 3), so that as a country we may fulfill divine purpose. Amen

3.5 LET US PRAY

- 1 Set your face daily and root out, pull down, destroy and throw down, every ancient throne, spirit and kingdom causing ethnic strife in Nigeria.
- 2 Ask that the Lord will silence the roar and break the teeth of the fierce ethnic lions and their young (Job 4:10).
- 3 Prophecy that their old (ancient) lions will perish (die) for lack of prey, and all their children be scattered (Job 4:11). And that only the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevail and reign over Nigeria and her people Rev. 5:5-14, Gen 49:9-10. Amen.

3.6 BENEDICTION

“... And behold one like the son of man ...came to the Ancient of Days.... To Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom. That all peoples nations and languages may serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion...” Daniel 7:13.

4.0 THE GOD OF MERCY

“Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnants of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because he delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old. Micah 7:18-20. Also Psalm 103.

4.1 STATE OF THE NATION - A Prophecy

A message received on the 7th of February 2002 by Pastor Kayode Ojo, of the Gethsamane Prayer Ministry Ibadan.

The nation Nigeria is a chosen nation that should fulfil my purpose in this last generation. A nation plagued with evil and calamity because of two things:

- 1 Her hands are full of iniquities and sin. Her hands are full of blood and as a result, evil is determined over her. Because she has shed blood, her land shall go into captivity and become desolate unless my people cry for the abomination thereof and bring repentance before me.
- 2 She does not know her time of visitation. I have purposed to use her for my glory all over the world at this time. How will she be awakened from her slumber and see my move and my glory.

Let my people arise and shine for her light has come. Let my people rise from slumber. Let them awake out of their sleep and cry that the land go not into slavery and captivity and become desolate. For evil is determined over her because of her sins and abominations that lead to desolation.

Behold the plague has begun. Where are my people that will stand in the gap, where are those that will stand for my people? I the Lord delights in mercy and I will cry aloud and speak. Restrain not thyself to declare my words unto my people. I will do a new thing in the land if my people called by my name shall humble themselves and seek my face. Arise my son, declare unto Jacob her transgression and to Israel her iniquities for the sins of my people have come before me and there is a cry for judgement. Arise that your land go not into captivity and become desolate says the Spirit of the Lord.

4.2 FOR THE CHURCH

Jezebel has adored herself seeking for those she might bring down. She has adored herself. She has adored herself. Beware and watch my people, for many have already falling into her hand. Beware my ministers for you are the target of the spirit of whoredom. Cry against her my son, for she has adore herself that my people might fall and become useless for my purpose and my move. I the Lord will judge her and bring her glory down with as many have joined her and I will kill her children. Arise and cry against the abomination that speaks desolation among my people says the Lord.

4.3 FLESH EATING AND BLOOD-SUCKING PASTORS

A pastor of a local assembly in Ibadan received the prophecy below. The words are applicable to the larger body of Christ. I saw a man, a leader of men. He took a knife and began to cut some flesh from all his

subjects. As he collected pieces of flesh from his subjects, he gave them to his wife who fried it (and made a meal out of them). The man also took a cup and extracted some blood from his subjects. He turned the extracted blood into thick, rich milk. The man sat down in this office, chewing the flesh (which had been turned into meat) and washing it down with the blood that had been turned into milk. He fed himself on these things until he became (very) fat.

Meanwhile, you can see suffering, pain and anguish on the faces of the (dehumanized) subjects. They were suffering and in great pains as a result of the deep cut he (the leader) had inflicted upon them. They all had blood shortage. Some were collapsing. Many were very weak and all of them were filled with pains. The man, their leader, now summoned a meeting of those he had so mistreated. He had a plate of the meat (he made from their flesh) before him. Then, he put one piece of meat in his month and kept chewing as he addressed the people. He also had a cupful of their blood he had turned into milk, from which he sipped continually to wash down the "meat" he was chewing.

Then, he said to the: "I am sorry. I have eaten your flesh. I have drunk your blood. I repent of it". And he took another sip from the blood milk to wash down the meat in his mouth. Now, judge it. Thus says the Lord: "I made you a leader over my people, to nurture, train and strengthen them, but you have turned back, collected their flesh and have eaten the same. You have also got yourself drunk with their blood. You have pierced them with thorns and briers. You have grown (very) fat as a consequence, fatter than your appearance because you are living in pretence. And you have done more to provoke me with your Saulish repentance. I have desired your thorough repentance, but you have continued to play pranks and deception. I am about to give your flesh to them that will fry and chew as you did and your blood to them that will drink it as you have done. You did it secretly, but I will do it publicly and a great shame will come on you, like a full-grown man, mature, sensible and respected, walking naked in the daytime in the market place.

Repent, as you know it to be. Return what you have stolen. Do as Zaccheus do (Luke 19:8, Isaiah. 1:16-18 and I will accept you. Else, my anger is already hanging on you and your household", says the Lord.

This is a text of the prophecy that was received by PASTOR SEGUN ADEDIRAN and read before the Congregation at Ibadan on Sunday, January 13, 2002.

5.0 MOLECH ON GAD'S TERRITORY

...Where are the men of Israel? Is there no one to defend his or her land? Why have they let the people who worship Molech take the territory of the tribe of Gad and settle there? (Jer. 49:1, Good News Bible).

"...Thus says the Lord" Has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why then does Milcom inherit Gad and his people dwell in his cities (NKJV).

"...The people of Israel have plenty of children to inherit their lands. So why have you worshippers of the god Milcom taken over towns and land belonging to the Gad tribe?"

The tribe of Gad was one of the first 21/2 tribes that got their land east of the Jordan before they crossed over (Number 32). When Leah's gave birth to Gad, she exclaimed "How fortunately am I, here comes a troop! (Gen. 30:11 NKJV). According to Cruden's Concordance, Gad means a band, or happy or armed and prepared. In both of Jacob and Moses' prophecies on the 12 tribes of Israel, Gad is referred to in combative mood, as a triumphant troop, a lion enlarging its territory (Gen. 49:19, Deut. 33:20). In I Chronicles. 12:8, reference is made to some Gadites who joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness as mighty men of valour, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the gazelles on the mountains.

With these prophecies and antecedents, how come that by the time of the prophet Jeremiah, the tribe of Gad had lost its territory in the east side of Jordan to the neighboring Ammonites? The Ammonites had even set up altars to their national God Milcolm (Molech), in place of the altar of witness of the Lord God, which the children of Gad raised up earlier by the Jordan (Joshua 22:10, 34). In the quest to enlarge their territory, the Ammonite even ripped open women with child in the land of Gad, to ensure that Gad indeed had no heir (Amos 1:13).

The fate of the children of Gad is instructive to God's children in every age. When, despite prophecies and ancestral antecedents of valour, we do not teach and train our children for battle and to war, one day we shall lament "Has Israel no sons, has he no heirs...?" The Lord's controversy with the Ammonites over the territory of Gad, is applicable to our situation in Nigeria. For us in Nigeria, we must train our children for war and battle. Else, altars to Allah, to Egbesu, to Oodua and other imported and indigenous tribal gods, will be raised over Nigeria, in place of God, despite God's promise and prophesy to the church.

6.0 BENIN, VODOO AND THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Twice in November 2001 and once in December 2001, I was in neighboring Republic of Benin for Professional and Missionary purposes respectively. My first trip on the 1st of November coincided with All Saints Day, a catholic public holiday used to remember the dead. As reported in the press, that day is a celebration of revelry, sex and booze in many catholic nations. In Benin, All Saints Day was celebrated in a manner typical of African Ancestral Worship. Benin is known to be Africa's Voodoo headquarters. Indeed, the promotion of Voodooism is entrenched in the country's constitution as a state obligation. According to some authorities, Voodoo is a corruption of (an unstated) Yoruba word for god. It evolved in Haiti in the 16th century, when African (Yoruba) slaves found themselves in the tiny Island, first with Spanish catholic overlords and later French ones (See comments below).

Voodooism is described as a blend of African Traditional Religion (ATR), Roman Catholicism and a dose of Indian Mysticism (The Two-headed Dragon, Josiah Publications, USA, Page 259). Today Voodooism is the national religion of the ex-African slave countries of Haiti, Cuba and Brazil, as it is in neighboring Benin Republic. The blend of ATR and Roman Catholicism is typified in the Afro-American religion known as SANTERIA, where Yoruba idols assume names of catholic saints. Thus in Santeria, the Yoruba idol Obatala becomes St. Benedict, Ogun becomes St. Peter and the goddess Yemoja becomes Our Lady of Fatima?(See BBC Focus on Faith 6/8/99; The two-headed dragon). Judith Gleason in her book Orisha:The Gods of Yoruba land (Athenaeum Publishers, 1971 New York), describes Yemoja as the 'mother of the water and all orishas' who gave birth to sixteen (16) orishas including Olokun, Osun, Ogun, Shango and Oya.. What Yemoja is in Yoruba mythology, the Bible in Jeremiah 7:18 and 44:17-25 calls the Queen of Heaven. The deity is likewise referred to as Asheroth (Judges 2:13, 10:6, I Sam 7:3-4 etc), Isis (Egypt), Venus/Jupiter (Rome), Semiramis (Babylon) and Madonna, the mother-and -wife of Nimrod (Gen.10; 9). Informed opinion declare that Yemoja was formally personified as the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus, by Emperor Constantinople, in his strategic move to merge church and state into one.

The French pride itself as the first daughter of the Catholic Church. Hence every catholic colony has a veneer of Roman Catholicism, underneath of which is core ATR. About 70% of Republic of Benin is ATR and some 25% Muslim (mainly indigenous Yoruba, many of whom are settlers from Nigeria). Only some 5% are born again Christian.

Republic of Benin is thus a veritable mission field that needs strategic prayer warfare, missions and evangelism. We should not wait till Satan invade Nigeria (Yoruba land) through Republic of Benin, importing ATR (Voodooist) and Islam to Nigeria while a complacent church is not vigilant or mission-minded.

The time for action is NOW.

Comments by Pastor Moses Gbenu

Voodoo did not originate from Haiti. The slaves from African coasts, especially, Dahomey (now Rep of Benin) to Haiti etc, are the ones that brought that name to Haiti. They took the word from their homeland. The actual word is 'vodun', pronounced /vothun/. It simply means 'idol'. The 'voodooism' as is practiced in Haiti is a mixture of the African mysticism and Roman Catholic idolatry. I know the languages and culture of the Benin people very well, and I wrote to correct Mitchell who wrote "THE TWO HEADED DRAGON OF AFRICA". Its is a very serious resource book on Islam and Roman Catholicism, however, which every African Christian should read. - Moses Gbenu

7.0 OCCULTIC POLITICS OF YORUBALAND

Political events in the Southwest of Nigeria over the few months indicate that there are intense activities going on in the spiritual over the southwest, and by extension Nigeria. The totality of these activities is two-fold, one an imminent judgement of the gods and political overlords of the southwest by the Almighty, and a concomitant intensified effort by satanic strongholds to maintain the spiritual and political status quo.

That the political turmoil has gravitated and centered on Ile-Ife, the ancestral spiritual headquarters of Yoruba land, and that Ige's murder took place in Ibadan, the political headquarters of the Southwest are ominous and instructive. For long, the spiritual and political overlord of the southwest has been in the hands of personalities and principalities whose loyalty is occultist and satanic. The present and historical idolatrous renown of Ile-Ife as the worldwide source of idolatry is well documented. The recent renunciation of the title of Oluaye by the Oni could be seen as God preparing avenue for mercy when He begins His judgement.

Less emphasis is placed on the fact that Yoruba political leaders- from Awolowo and Adetokubo Ademola of old, to the Bola Iges (of the Afeniferefe) and Adewale Thompsons (of the Yoruba Council of Elders) of today are deeply immersed in occultism- Rosicrucian's and Oogboni cult etc, despite their Christian confessions. (The touted membership of Olusegun Obasanjo in the Oogboni cult was one of the planks on which Falae's abortive legal challenge to Obasanjo's election as President was placed in 1999).

Tragically, the church, whether of the orthodox or Pentecostal variety, is also deeply involved in ecclesiastical occultism and witchcraft. The Pastor Chris Okotie versus Pastors Chris Oyakhilome and Joshua Temitope imbrigo only brought the matter to the public arena.

The time for the Church to break the occultist control of the politics of Yorubaland is now. Amen.

8.0 JAAZANIAH AND PELITIAH - Ezekiel. 11:1-3

Strategically located by thrones and influencing thrones negatively and by diabolic or antichrist influences, are various men and institutions. At the Federal level, the man Chief Tony Aneneih, Minister of Works and Housing, stands out. In the East, one Emeka Offor stands out. In the west, the Awolowo-Afenifere spirit holds sway. In the North, the Caliphate and Ibrahim Babangida still pervade. Use scriptures such as Isaiah 47, Ezekiel 11:1-12 and Psalm 2 to cut off such men and influences from the thrones of Nigeria.

4th August 2001.

9.0 THE GOODNESS OF JEZEBEL

What would you say of a woman, who in the time of severe famine, got together four hundred prophets and fed/provided for them daily for three and a half years? A Missions - supporter? A generous-giver? Whatever anyone else might say of Jezebel, to the four hundred and fifty prophets of Asherah (and their families), she was God-sent, a very good, tender, loving and merciful woman. (Whatever anyone might say of Sani Abacha, to Chief Anthony Ani, Tom Ikimi, Ali Kokoma, Hamza Mustapha, Wada Nas and those that benefited from the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), Sani Abacha was God sent!). Doesn't Prov. 19:12 admonish us that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel?"

Every Jezebel has a "good" side. But do not be taken in by their sophistry. Prov. 23:1-8 counsels us not to desire the delicacies and deceptive food of a miserly ruler, and not to waste our pleasant words to bless such. Watch the life and behaviour of that supporter of yours. Watch his/her home marriage and family life. Does she maintain divine order at home? She might be good to you, but watch out for what wickedness she does to others. If she can kill Naboth for his vineyard, she will not hesitate to crush you if she has to. Evil proceeds from evildoers, wickedness from the wicked. Do not deceive yourself that you are not the object of her wickedness. When she finishes with the smaller fries, even the anointed Elijah will not be spared her wickedness.

10.0 THE COMING CONFLAGRATION

"For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle" I Cor. 14:8.

Two events during this week (August, 2001) spurred this letter. A brother here in Ibadan, an intercessor with a calling to the Muslim World, shared with me a word of knowledge delivered in a church last Sunday. The minister, a brother from Barbados, reportedly shared a vision of bloody attacks on Christians by Jihadists who infiltrated from the North/North Africa of Nigeria. As he shared, I remembered the advertorial of this week's edition (Vol 17, No 8; 27 August 2001) of The News magazine titled "The Jihadists Invasion: How foreign Fundamentalists wreck Havoc in the North". I later bought a copy. My wife also reminded me of a prophesy they had received from the Wailing Women Intercessory group asking for prayers against attacks on Christians, and Christians running helter-skelter in the month of August.

In The News Report, Moslem rebels from Chad and Niger Republic and their Nigerian pro-Shariah fighters wearing turbans and Yasset Arafat-like Kafiyehs, attacked and killed not only Christians in Tafawa Balewa LGA in Bauchi State, they even attacked a police anti-riot helicopter from the air, with machine-guns. These events took place between 7th and 13th August last year, following earlier skirmishes in June. The report stated on that "Notwithstanding the international hostility against Islamic zealot, they find refuge in Nigeria because of the cultural and religious traits they share with the people of the North". Subscribers will remember that this issue was the topic of Bulletin no 13 "The Armies of the Aliens"

The News further reported 'that the death of Napoleon Ovie Igbuku-Otu, a patriot environmentalist, was linked to his foray into Niger Republic where "some religions fanatics who wanted to hide under Islam to train an armed guard who would take on Olusegun Obasanjo's government". The Armed guards allegedly solicited the help of ex-Iraqi officers who were against President Saddam Hussein, and were experts at chemical warfare. As contained in a document written by Igbuku-Otu before his death, some Islamic Jihadists had established training camps in Northern Nigeria and were recruiting Sudanese Muslims and smuggling them through Niger Republic into Maiduguri, Kano and Kaduna for conflict. Igbuku-Otu claimed that the brain behind the movement was Sheik Omar Bakriz who was, for 10 years, the head of Hez

Bothariah, an Islamic group which advocates Sharia against democracy. Sheikh Omar operated at No 305, Ashley Road, London where Igbuku-Otu visited before his death.”

In Lampstand Letters No 19 (February 2000) titled “The Horse and Its Rider,” we have attempted to traced an historical perspective to the Arab Connection of Nigerian Ishmaelite. “The political ambition of the Caliphate Fulani to rule is not dead and will not die” thus reported an intelligence report some seventy years ago. Also, the Maguni (old Bornu El-Kanemi kingdom) though scattered since 1810 from Yemen to the Atlantic have never ceased hoping to regain their Bornu kingdom. Thus the Caliphate Fulani and Bornu Kanuri up to date believe they are “born to rule” and draw active support from their kinsmen and supporters from North Africa up to Saudi Arabia.

Writing in 1924, the progenitor of the Sanusshi - Tarrika Islamic political propaganda sect, Sidi Ahmed wrote, “our purpose is to obtain the sovereignty of all the land between Egypt and Malawi”. Even though the British defeated the Caliphate in 1902, the colonialists “favoured Islam, often consciously, to the detriment of Christianity” (see Boer 1988). But the Caliphate has controlled every regime in Nigeria except the present one. That is the political aspect of the present situation.

“The Preacher” (www.thepreacher.ca) No 238 October - December 2000 also contained a bit under the section “The Sound of Battle”, citing an Internet report of the Tempo Newspapers dated September 22 2000 titled “Muslim leader calls for Anti-Obasanjo Revolt ...”. At a rally at the Katsina Central Mosque grounds on August 19 2000, Alhaji Datti Ahmed called on Northern Muslims to rise up against President Olusegun Obasanjo. Speaking in Hausa (like General Buhari reportedly did recently on BBC while calling on Muslims not to vote for non-Muslims), Alhaji Datti Ahmed was quoted as urging “...from places of worship, and many other occasions, I am repeating again that we must prepare. From bush exercise to training, we must prepare fully. I swear that we are forming Islamic Suicide Squad. Wallahi...Wallahi... it is better for me to become a martyr (advising his hearers not to) refuse to die by sword in pursuance of a cause”.

Although this instigation was directed at President Olusegun Obasanjo, the target is the church. I am concerned that President Olusegun Obasanjo, Vice-President Atiku and Defense Minister Theophilus Danjuma could be hacked to death on the throne by Islamic Jihadists.

If they did a similar thing against Ironsi in 1966, they are ready to repeat it in 2001. The difference this time around is that their actions will not be in the name of the North, but in the name of Islam. And the result, like the Nigeria Civil War of 1967 - 1970, will be horrendous for Nigeria and Christians in Nigeria.

The Bible in Psalm 116: 15 declares: “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His Saints” (NKJV) How painful it is to the LORD when one of His people dies (GNB) ‘You are deeply concerned when one of your loyal people faces death” (Contemporary English Version) Psalm 102: 19-20 declares that “... From heaven the LORD viewed the earth... To release those appointed to death”. Let’s pray and intercede that the Lord will preserve President Obasanjo and his colleagues. Amen.

How then do we respond to the matters arising? II Cor. 10:4-5 tells us clearly that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. See also Zechariah 4:6. The following biblical principles constitute strategic warfare in dealing with the horse and its rider: -

1. Evangelism and Missions: the declaration of the Prince of Peace to all men. Zechariah 9:9-10 and Isaiah 9:2-7 link the cutting off of the chariot the horse and battle bow with the declaration of the Prince of Peace.

2. Related to above are continual prophetic prayers declaring the Lordship of Christ over the nations. Psalm 2, Psalm 24, Psalm 76, Psalm 110, and Micah Chapter 1, among others are relevant in this regards.
3. The next major strategy is to “contend with the horses” (Jer. 12:5a) in sustained prayers and intercessions to provoke God by His Spirit to rise against the horse and its riders through;
 - a) Striking every horse with confusion and its riders with madness. Zech 12:4
 - b) Dealing with them as He did to Pharaoh’s host Exodus 14:4-9, 24:25, Isaiah 43:17
 - c) Breaking/Cutting off the battle bow and weapons of war by His rebuke Ps. 46:9, 76:2-6.
 - d) Shaking Islam like He shook communism by natural and supernatural means Haggai 2:21-22.
Amen.

10.1 CONCLUSION

Christians should not see the Muslim or the Fulani as the enemies. However, they should not be surprised that the spirit of the horse described in Job 39:19-25 and of the wild donkey (Gen. 16:12) will turn the Muslim or the Fulani into murdering and destructive arsonist when matters of the faith are involved. While government is taking legal and political measures, our response as Christians should be spiritual as we strike the underbelly (weak point) of the horse like Ehud did (Judges 5:21-22). May the feet of clay of the kingdom of Ishmael crumble in Jesus name (Dan. 2:31-35). Amen.

10.2 LET US PRAY

- 1 Ask that the church in Nigeria will be like Dan: “a serpent by the way, a viper by the path that bites the horse’s heels, so that its rider falls backwards” (Gen. 49:17), as we deal with the horse and its rider in strategic prophetic prayer and evangelism.
- 2 Commit yourself and the Church to strategically deal with the issue at hand as highlighted in Section 7.0 above.
- 3 Prophecy that the gates of Northern Nigeria, North Africa, the Middle East and of Islam will lift up their heads so that the King of Glory may enter Ps. 24 and Isaiah 19:23-25. Joel 2:1 asks us to “Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound the alarm in my holy mountains”.

Please give this bulletin a wide circulation. Forward it and print to as many Christians as possible especially our Northern brethren.

Please read the whole of Joel chapter 2 and act on it.

“But I will remove far from you the Northern Army, and drive him away into a barren and desolate land (desert Sahara), with his face towards the Eastern (dead) sea, and his back towards the Western sea; His stench shall come up, and his foul Odor will rise, because he has done monstrous thing”. Fear not O land, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord (will do) marvelous things Amen. Joel 2: 20-21. Amen.

11.0 DEFENCE MINISTER ALERTS ON THREAT TO CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA.

By Lekan Otufodunrin (<lotufodunrin@hotmail.com>) Nigeria Online Christian News (Reporting Nigerian Christian Communities)

April 23, 2002

Nigeria’s defence Minister, Theophilus Danjuma has raised an alarm on an alleged plot to wipe out Christianity in northern parts of the country. Speaking at a on-day conference on “Social, Economic and

political Status of Christians in Northern states of Nigeria” last Saturday, April 20, retired General Danjuma said it is regrettable that Christianity was under a great assault in northern states of the country.

Like in most Northern African countries, where there used to be a considerable number of Christians before being overrun by Muslims, Danjuma stated that there is a gradual plan to wipe out Christianity in Nigeria.” If concerted efforts are not made by Christians, Christianity will cease to exist first in the northern states and gradually in all parts of the country” Danjuma warned. Noting that the last two years witnessed a mass exodus of non-Christians from Sharia states following religious disturbance and persecution, Danjuma suggested that courts and other constitutional means should be explored to solve the problem. He called for indigenization of clergy in the northern states by all denominations to ensure that “Christians in the Sharia states do not wither and just die”. “The solution will only come when people from interior northern states are made clergies, like the Anglican Church is doing. They will not leave their people despite any persecution or threat, but stay back in entrenching their religion” Danjuma advised. The one-day conference was organized by the Northern States Christian Elders Forum during which other leaders spoke on the challenges facing Christians in the north and how to solve the problems.

11.1 Comments by the Publisher

One has to continue to intercede for the protection of the lives of Gen. Danjuma and other Christians in government like the President himself, Prof. Jerry Gana, the Senate President Pius Anyim and the Justice Minister Agabi Kanu. I have expressed concern about the possibility of Islamic fundamentalists killing the President on the throne, (like they used Danjuma to do to Aguiyi Ironsi in 1966, under the guise of avenging Ahmadu Bello’s death in the earlier coup of 1966). See the article “The coming conflagration”

We also remember the intense witchcraft and manipulation against the same Danjuma early in this administration, which actually affected his mental balance and cause him to attempt to leave the Obasanjo government.

Secondly, we have to go back to the basic command of the scriptures for missions and indigenous disciple making of all tribes, especially the unreached tribes so prevalent in the north. There is room for prosperity etc but when the crunch of persecution comes, such concepts are of little use. As Gen Danjuma alluded to, only indigenous disciples (note not just church-goers or even ordinary converts), can stay and withstand persecution. The challenge is not only for the Anglican church, but for the whole church especially the rich and affluent Pentecostal and charismatic groups who are endowed with men, materials and money to do missions. Now is the time to act, NOW!

12.0 TESTIMONY

This edition of Lampstand Letters was already being typeset when Armed Robbers visited our street and house in the early hours of Thursday 11th April. They disposed me of nearly Seventy thousand naira (N70, 000.00) including the sum of twenty five thousand naira only (N25, 000.00) which a supporter had just sent as tithes for production of the Lampstand Letters. The leader of the Armed Robbers, an ex-convict, was caught in Lagos weeks later and paraded over Television Stations in Ibadan and the front page of The News magazine Vol. 18. No 21. 27 May 2002. From the accounts, we learnt that he released in January 2002 after nine (9) years in jail for Armed Robbery and had executed over twenty burglaries in South West Nigeria between January and April 2002, allegedly killing many policemen in the process. To God is the glory for sparing my life and those of the members of my family.

As a result of the financial loss and some other production problems, the first quarter of the Lampstand Letters could not come out. This enlarged edition thus covers January to June, 2002.

Also, the e-mail version <list-LampstandLetters@skannet.com> has experienced serious spiritual and technical problems since the beginning of the year. First for about 4 weeks in January/February, and

completely off since March ending. We are considering an alternative ISP. Please send your e-mail address to me if you wish to be put on the new e-mail list serve.

Dr Tayo Babalobi,

Publisher. 2nd June, 2002.

13.0 BENONI AND BENJAMIN

In allowing the incidents of Gen 35:18 to be recorded in the scriptures, the Holy Spirit teaches us that curses (cursed names) should and can be reversed by a blessing (blessed name). We see how an innocent child, born to Rachael, could have been doomed to a life of sorrow by virtue of the cursed name (Benoni = son of my sorrow) given by his mother, had the father not come in immediately to change the curse into a blessing (Benjamin = son of my favoured right hand of power).

Rachael was the beautiful daughter of the manipulative Laban, who Jacob spent another seven years of hard labour to marry, after Laban has deceived him to have the elder sister Leah. Beautiful though she was, Rachael was a nag (Gen. 30:1), contentious (Gen. 30:8), a thief/idolater (Gen. 31:19), deceptive and (Gen. 31:34-35). But worse of all, she was of such a wicked heart that at the point of death, she sentenced her innocent baby to a life of curse, naming him Benoni, a son of sorrow. Was the innocent baby responsible for Rachael's death? I do not think so. By her words to her husband Jacob in Gen. 30:1 "...Give me children or else I die", she had sentenced herself to death. No man can give children; only God does, so since Jacob could not have given her children, the only option remaining according to her words was to die. And so God gave her, not just a child, but children, and immediately she died! May we not be ensnared by our own words. Amen.

Thank God for Jacob who immediately reversed Rachael's deathbed curse. Parents, when a partner curses, let the other immediately bless. Otherwise, the effects might linger on the child like it did on Jabez, before he in his adult age, cried out to God.

By the Lampstand. January, 2002

14.0 JABEZ'S MOTHER

What type of mother, will look at her child and because "she bore him in pain" prophesy into his life a curse by calling him Jabez i.e. "He will cause pain"? Jabez's mother (I Chronicles. 4:9) was one, and Rachael before her (Gen. 35:18) was another. What type of pain could Jabez have caused his mother at birth. Was he conceived as a result of a rape or sexual assault? Was he always kicking in the womb? Did he not allow her to sleep well during the pregnancy? Did she spend all the pregnancy on bed rest in hospital? Did he come out in a breech presentation? Was the delivery long and tedious, like that of Benjamin (Gen 35:18). Whatever the pain he might have caused, there was no justification for the curse and the name she placed on him.

Today, Christian mothers still habitually curse their babies, infant, and adolescent children. Whatever the misbehavior of our children, we are not justified to curse them. We are called to bless not to curse, even when our children "persecute" us (Rom. 12:14, I Cor. 4:12, Matt. 5:44 etc.). Mothers (and fathers), let us be like Rebecca, who rather took upon her the curse her child was liable to (Gen. 27:12-13). Let us remember to be merciful. Amen.

By the Lampstand. January, 2002

15.0 ENEMIES AND ADVERSARIES

Recently I was watching the CNN at a friend's and heard a promotional from the Olympics Sports Movement. In the friendly but competitive spirit of the Olympics, one sportsman was saying to another something like "you are my adversary but not my enemy ... you stretch me to my competitive limit" etc.

An adversary is a rival, an opponent, a competitor; one who puts obstacles on one's way or distract without the malicious intent to harm or destroy (although some adversaries do these). An adversary therefore is someone one has to overcome, for whom one has to keep fit and be able to contend with and win against in a competitive exercise. One who keeps one on his toes, and stretches us to our competitive limit. An enemy on the other hand is one who has a destructive ill will against you. The enemy wants to kill, steal or destroy. A destroyer, not a competitor, one not bound by the rules of fair play. One who wants to finish you off?

In Numbers 22:22-32, God stood as an adversary against the apostate Balaam to stand against him and oppose. Hannah's rival co-wife was an adversary who provoked her life to make her miserable. Jesus counseled us to make peace and agree with our adversary (or accuser/opponent) before we get to the place of judgement. Haman was both an enemy and adversary (Esther 7:6). Sanballat and Tobiah were adversaries and enemies to Nehemiah and the Jews. In Exodus 23:22, God promised His obedient servants that He would be an enemy to their enemies, and an adversary to their adversaries. He vowed in Isaiah. 1:24 to rid Himself (on be relieved) of his adversaries and take vengeance on His enemies. God allows adversaries to remain, to teach our hands to war and our fingers to battle. But he himself avenge and exact retribution on our enemies.

Man's chief adversary is Satan, whose name simply means Adversary, the Accuser of the brethren. In Zechariah chapter 3, he opposed and accused the High Priest Joshua (and by extension the whole Israel) before God, but the Lord rebuked him. He accused Job, provoked David to sin against God tempted Jesus, misled Judas Iscariot and tested Simon Peter. He seeks to devour (I Peter 5:8). Why does God permit adversaries along our ways? Because he wants to train us for battle and war. The kingdom of God suffered violence, and one has to learn to become violent to be able to take it by force. For these reason he did not exterminate all the enemies of Israel in Canaan, so that every generation is taught to know war (Judges 3:1-4). It is given to us to learn to contend with and overcome our adversaries. But is left to God to deal with our enemies.

God does not want us to make enemies of any persons. Yes, men may decide to rise to be our enemies. But God wants to spare us the ill will and the male violence that comes from making someone an enemy. Rather he commands us to love and pray for our enemies by so doing heaping coals of fire on his head. We are called not to avenge ourselves, but rather give place for God's wrath on our enemies. Because to God belongs vengeance, the dealing with our enemies. (Rom 12:19-21). To us who have God's spirit's, it is better to allow God to avenge us, rather than allowing the Satanic spirit of malevolence and ill-will take control of us, as we seek to avenge ourselves of our enemies. Amen

By the Lampstand. January, 2002

16.0 THE SHULAMITE AND HER BROTHERS

Songs of Solomon 8:8-10 record a conversation between a teenage girl and her older brothers on the virtue of chastity and the vice of promiscuity; "We have a little sister, and she has no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for. If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver and if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar".

A wall is built to deliberately fence out intruders and protect the occupants. A door is an entrance through which any person could enter. A wall keeps out, a door lets in. In the conversation, the brothers watched

over the life of their teenage sister. They honored her for successfully keeping her chastity by resisting unworthy men who came calling to defile her in the days of her youth. If she tended to yield and give in to promiscuity, they rally round to protect and strengthen the resolve for good (verse 9).

“I am a wall...” proudly declares the Shulamite girl. Thank God the Shulamite was a wall. For maintaining her chastity and purity to the maturity of adulthood, she became in the eyes of he who married her, a pleasure, as one who finds peace and contentment (verse 10). A chaste girl is a garden enclosed, a private spring, a fountain closed to others (S.O.S. 4:12). An immoral one is like a vineyard whose hedges, are broken down, so that all who pass by the way pluck for fruits, including boars and wild beasts (Ps. 80:12-13). Like a beautiful woman without self-control, a pearled sow (Pro. 11:22). What are you dear sister: a wall or a door, a private spring or a public river? And you brother, do you aspire to fence in and protect our honorable sisters, or you strive to break the wall, enter the open door or pollute the waters? “...He that breaks through a wall, a serpent shall bite” (Ecc. 10:8). Amen.

17.0 PROVIDING FOR THINGS HONEST (2 COR. 8:21)

Sometime in late January, my car had developed some engine problems after a mission field trip. I was with a Pastor friend trying to find solution to the fault when he hailed a youngman who strings for a Christian TV producing outfit based in Ibadan. As the young man made to go after the customary greetings, he gave my friend a complimentary copy of his latest 4 -page bulletin. A caption on the back page of the bulletin caught my attention, and on close examination, I discovered that it was a verbatim lifting of the introductory part of the article on Ecclesiastical Witchcraft and Manipulation which appeared in Lampstand Letters No 24 July to Sept., 2000. The bulletin promised to continue the article in next edition, without any form of acknowledgement of its source, creating a false impression that it was an original article.

I called back the young man as he made to cross the road, and asked him if he knew about the Lampstand Letters. He replied in the affirmative. I asked if the article in his bulletin was lifted from the Lampstand Letters. He replied with a nod. At this stage, my pastor friend introduced me as the Publisher of the Lampstand Letters. I did not add any word; neither did the young man who then left. I have had cause to counsel brethren who lift articles from the Lampstand Letters about how to go about it in the article “Copyright = Right to copy?” (Lampstand letters No 27 April to June 2001). Paul also counseled that to prevent men finding fault with him in the discharge of ministerial duties, he strove to “provide things honorable not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men. (2 Cor. 8:20-21).

Reproducing a work not originally ones and presenting it as ours, without due acknowledgement, is dishonorable and both a spiritual and intellectual fraud. By all means exercise your right to copy, but for conscience and integrity sake, please acknowledge your source.

Amen

“O house of Jacob, Come and let us walk in the light of the Lord” Isaiah 2:5

By the Lampstand. No. 29 Ibadan. June 2002

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