

Set Apart, Sealed and Sent ~ part Two

Recently, I went for walk round our neighbourhood and, as He often does, the Lord directed my attention to something on the way in order to speak to me. There were a couple of leaves lying at my feet and I got the impression I should take a photograph of them. When I got home, I asked the Holy Spirit what He wanted to say about them. As I studied the photograph, I saw a line in tar with one dead leaf fragment below and a 3 pronged leaf on the line.



Then He said, "The 3-in-one God is drawing the line and summing up His handiwork in you, His vessels. It is all about His glory, not yours; His purposes, not your plans. You must be brought to a place of complete death to self. To step into His 3-fold purposes and become one of those leaves released from the tree of Life for the healing of the nations, 'I' must be replaced by 'You'! That's the bottom line."

The next photo I had taken as instructed was of piles of rubbish and cardboard boxes outside a house. They had obviously been cleaning out and discarding what was not needed. The Holy Spirit said, "Throw out all the rubbish in your understanding of who God is and how He works. Make space for further specific revelation to be downloaded. Do not let wrong understanding and lies clutter your storehouse". I knew He was teaching me about being streamlined and kitted out for the assignment ahead.

Much general 'clutter' of Christian teaching over the years would have to be discarded to make space for up to date revelation specifically for each individual assignment. I almost had the sense of a person storing each box from which a nourishing meal had been eaten over the years, so that the cupboards were overflowing with empty containers of food long ingested and digested and used to build muscle and bone. The storage of messages that have blessed one many months and years ago, whether in our memories or on electronic devices or hard copies, has sustained us for the past season, but now there is fresh sustenance from Heaven waiting to be delivered and we have to let go of anything that is being kept sentimentally, in order to make space for cutting edge vital information that the Spirit wants to download for each individual tried vessel. The supply of the manna of yesterday is to be replaced by the food of the Promised Land. Good food must make space for 'now' food. The past must be released in order to embrace the future. The general food of yesterday must be replaced by the Heavenly Dietician diet to provide nourishment and stamina for each specific assignment.

This apostolic company that is being separated from the crowd must be released fully equipped. So let us look at what this means. The Greek word for apostle is "apostolos". In ancient times, "apostolos" referred to a naval fleet carrying supplies that was sent out for a mission. It is significant that the "apostolos" took no initiative itself, nor did it authorize the mission. In addition, they were richly supplied to accomplish that

mission. The first apostles did not initiate their missions. All initiation and all power came from the One who sent them. In Eph. 1:1 Paul used the phrase, "an apostle of Christ Jesus." The Lord initiated the sending of Paul, and gave him all the power necessary to be an apostle. He will do the same for the apostolic company released in the year 5777.

A navy operates on the sea, not on the land. In the Bible, the sea spiritually signifies the nations. They were sent out to pioneer for the Lord's interest in places where darkness had previously held sway. It was in the midst of this darkness that the spiritual riches within the sent ones were poured out for others. The space that the general food of yesterday has taken up in our spiritual storehouses must make way for the riches of the revelation of Christ to be downloaded for our particular place in the big picture. The Word you have previously consumed and digested has now become flesh in you and you will not lose anything by letting go of any old packaging reminding you of those wonderful meals. Fresh food is of paramount importance in the hold when a vessel sets sail. The hold of the vessel contains not only nourishment to sustain the crew but also supplies to offload at the destination.

Let us separate the word "apostolos" into its two components, the Greek words "apo" and "stello", to understand more deeply what is taking place within and through us. "Apo" means "from", which implies that the sent one has a master. "Stello" has three meanings, which when looked, will show us the steps of the process we are going through.

1) Firstly, "stello" means "to set apart and to send", according to Thayer. Before he was sent, Paul was set apart by the Lord for a particular purpose. He was drawn out from among mankind in the sense of being "hand-picked" by the Lord. Paul spoke of God setting him apart from his mother's womb (Gal. 1:15). The Lord spoke to Paul and explained what was happening, "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness..." (Acts 26:16-18). Paul received his revelation personally given by Jesus Christ during a wilderness time and not from general teaching going on in the church circles of the time (Gal. 1:11-12, 15-17). All he had learnt before that through study and all his life experience formed the backdrop from which the main feature of the revelation of Christ would be displayed. When the time was ready and Paul was sufficiently equipped, then he was sent out by his Master.

I believe this is the prophetic pattern in which this end-time apostolic company will be equipped and made ready. They carry finishing revelation which has been kept for this specific time in the history of Kingdom purposes. It is fresh and not regurgitated nourishment from previous dispensations.

2) The second meaning of "stello" is "to set in order, to arrange, to fit out, to prepare, to equip, and to prepare one's self" (Thayer). Before being sent out, Paul was trained, furnished, equipped, and prepared by the Holy Spirit, so that he could be of use to the Lord. This is the building and then, finally after the receiving the building inspector's seal of approval that this vessel is seaworthy, the filling of the hold of the vessel takes

place. The building is meticulous and can take a long period of time. The vessel must be strong enough to withstand stormy seas and demonic winds.

Then the cargo on board must be loaded and checked. So often, one can feel ready and 'fully loaded' with riches and ready to go, but only the supply room of Heaven knows what is on the inventory list for your particular cargo. You cannot afford to set sail without the full load of revelation set apart and held in Heaven for you. You will need every small bit of it on the journey the Father has appointed you. You do not want to come face to face with someone at your destination and realise that tiny space at the top of the cupboard in your hold was intended to bring them life-changing truth and impartation - but you could not wait and sailed without receiving it!

3)The third meaning of "stello" is "to cease to exist, to remove one's self, withdraw one's self, to depart and to abstain from familiar interaction with one" (Thayer). Here, we refer back to my photograph of the dead leaf below the line in the tar. The word for tar or pitch in Hebrew means 'redemption price'. There was a price paid to redeem you for the express purpose of fulfilling a part in God's Kingdom purpose.

As I said before, it's no longer about you. It's about the full manifestation of Christ in you. We talk about it theoretically but to come to the actual living manifestation of 'it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me' is another story. Paul had to remove himself from whatever was from his old life and his old world. Everything that he had considered to be gains in his life before Christ, he now considered as loss on account of Christ (Phil. 3:5-11). Paul was crucified, terminated (Gal. 2:20; 1 Cor. 15:10). It was not about him. His wishes, his personal plans had to cease to exist. In the same way, we have withdraw ourselves from 'self'. It is no longer what we will, but what He wills that counts. This is consistent with the divine ways of God. As those who follow the Lord, everything of our old life and old world has to go. Then everything of God must be brought for us to be reconstituted. This is God's way with all of us, but it is especially and particularly true of those whom He is setting apart as part of this end-time apostolic company. There must be a leaving and a cleaving. The rending precedes the sending.

Some time ago, I sent out a message called the Transition Bridge, in which I described 3 parts of the process of traversing this bridge. They line up very clearly with what we have been learning about being set apart and sent:

- 1)DISORIENTATION - a moving away from what one was joined to before; a leaving and setting apart from,
- 2)RECALIBRATION - a setting in order, equipping and preparing of oneself, which requires an emptying in order for a filling to take place
- 3)REORIENTATION - a leaving of oneself and saying goodbye to who you used to be; a turning towards what lies ahead with fixed purpose, no turning back. A cleaving and setting apart to.

We see this whole process in the lives of Jesus' 12 disciples. They were set apart from the unbelieving rabble and walked with Him, being fed daily with truth, seeing miracles and hearing Him share His heart. They were recalibrated and had their understanding adjusted concerning the Old Testament Scriptures. However during these 3&1/2 years, there were many things that they didn't understand. They had a general understanding of what being a disciple meant. Then they became completely disorientated by the crucifixion of the Lord. Only after the resurrection, when they received 40 days of teaching on the Kingdom, did they get the full picture and became kitted out with the necessary Truth to carry to their apostolic destinations. One would have thought that this was enough and they could set off right away. However, they had to again go through separation as Jesus ascended and they were set apart from all they had experienced before and told to wait in the upper room. Here, during prayer and fasting and worship, specific revelation was given for completion and once they had been obedient and Matthias was added to the number and Heaven's perfect time had fully come, they were filled and empowered and quickly poured out onto the street. Here they affected the local community for some time afterwards, until persecution scattered them to their individual assignments in other parts of the world. During the time in Jerusalem, the Spirit was working deep within each individual vessel, imparting specific heavenly downloads into each one's hold in preparation for the coming assignments. And finally the moment of separating, sealing and sending came for each one. And so too, will it come for you - when the time has fully come and your hold is completely full! Be at peace with the pace of the process. The Holy Spirit knows what He is doing. Your moment of pushing off from the shore and waving the last chapter of your life goodbye will be here sooner than you realise.

Selah