

September 2014
The Picture Of Leadership

Dear Friend,

Last month we discovered how God's Word is layered with revelation knowledge, which we compared to a picture within a picture. The idea of a picture in a picture is that there is a "main image", such as a man's face, which stands out very clearly at first glance. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the features of the face are in fact smaller pictures arranged in such a way that they make up the whole face.

Similarly, the Word of God presents a "main image" at first glance, which contains layer upon layer of images only visible when revealed to us by the Holy Ghost. Until that revealing takes place all we can see are the more obvious images and are oblivious to the hidden images within. I live for those moments when the waters of the Word clarify and more of those hidden images are revealed.

That's how I felt when the Holy Ghost began to reveal to me some of these mysteries contained within the account of Israel's wilderness experience. I had known there was more to see just below the surface, and at times had even caught a few glimpses. But, it wasn't until the Holy Ghost began to unfold some of the depths of understanding to my spirit that I could see the actual spiritual applications.

Last month we looked at the "spiritual" images contained within the natural event of the **manna feeding Israel**. We saw how the natural manna was a type and shadow of our spiritual manna, **The Word of God**. As Israel partook daily of the natural manna, we are to partake daily of our spiritual manna, God's Word, for the growth and development of our human spirit. Can you see that an actual event was used to illustrate a deeper spiritual Truth?

Let's continue our observation of Israel in the wilderness and see what other valuable "spiritual" images we can uncover nestled within the natural events. This time we will be looking specifically at what God used to **lead** Israel through

the wilderness. Since God's leadership seems to be one of the most commonly prayed for issues by Christians, it's important for us to learn all that we can by examining the very vivid way God chose to lead Israel. (Exodus 13:21-22)

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. (22) He took not away the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”

The “natural” images God used to lead Israel were the pillar of cloud and fire. Imagine what they must have thought seeing those huge pillars appear for the first time. They were like nothing Israel had ever seen before. God had made the cloud and the fire so large that they were impossible to miss. In order to demonstrate the size and magnitude, notice how God used the cloud to block the Egyptians from capturing Israel before they could cross the Red Sea. (Exodus 14:19-20)

“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: (20) And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.”

This gives us a good idea of the immensity of the cloud. Keep in mind; those Egyptians weren't playing games in their pursuit of the children of Israel. Had there been any way at all to have avoided the cloud and to have captured Israel, undoubtedly they would have. But, the size of the cloud was such that Israel was out of reach to their enemy.

What an awesome experience it must have been to witness the physical manifestation of the cloud and fire and to have followed both across the desert. Although, Israel seemed to spend more time grumbling and complaining than they did thanking God for their deliverance. I think it is safe to say that God was more interested in Israel's success in entering the Promised Land than was Israel. Perhaps the same can be said of us today. The direction God desires for us to walk in may very well be beneficial for the Body of Christ as a whole, but not so enticing to us.

It's when we are faced with following Him into those less than desirable situations and we obey that we truly see just how far along in our maturing process we have come. It's also why His leadership generally isn't filled with a lot of **details**.

In fact, if the “natural” images of the cloud and fire are types and shadows of the “spiritual”, it seems pretty obvious that we **need not** expect many **details** at all.

For example, did Israel know how long the cloud and fire would move before stopping? **No**. Once they stopped, did Israel know how long they would be staying in that spot before proceeding? **No**. Did God give Israel every detail of their trip before entering the wilderness? **No**. In fact, if there’s any one spiritual lesson we should learn from watching God lead Israel across the wilderness it is that God’s leadership is not meant to satisfy all our soulish cravings for details.

Humans tend to be ruled by our souls and our soulish cravings for information. We often resemble the child in the back seat of the car asking, “Where are we going, dad?” every 5 minutes and God seems to be more like the parent that says, “You’ll find out when we get there.” Since this soulish domination is common for humans, it’s easy to see why Israel grumbled and complained in the wilderness having only a cloud to guide them. God was trying to teach them one main lesson, “**Trust Me.**”

God wanted Israel to know Him, depend on Him, rely on Him, have confidence in Him, and above all trust Him. In order to teach this to Israel, God led them into the wilderness without sufficient provisions and without a map or any details of their route. When it was time for them to proceed, there was no thundering voice from heaven saying where they were going next, how long they would travel, or even what direction they would be going in. Instead, the cloud would begin to move. Nothing more. How’s that for details?

Here’s all that God told Moses to tell the people about their journey.
(Exodus 3:17)

“And I have said, ‘I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.’ ”

Apparently, these are all the details God wanted Israel to know. He gave them a vague description of their destination, but nothing more. Nor did He bother telling Israel how they were going to take possession of the land, at least not at the beginning. Maybe they thought God would drive out the inhabitants while they watched. Nevertheless, nothing was said about them driving out the inhabitants before the trip. Why? God knew they would probably not have ever left Egypt had they known in advance what awaited them.

Maybe that's why God seems so unresponsive when we continue asking, "Where are we going next?" In fact, where did we ever get the idea that God was going to give us our "marching orders" in great detail before sending us out? Where in God's Word does He promise us this? The patterns set forth in the Bible rarely, if ever, show God leading people by giving them details up front. **The pattern is to begin walking by faith and for God to guide us along the way.**

It's our soul that hungers for more and more information, which drives us to keep going back to God and asking for more details. As far as God is concerned, He seems to be determined **not** to feed our soulish cravings. He wants that soul "dethroned" and the spirit to take control. The more the soul is catered to the less likely that change from soul domination to spirit-ruled will take place. That's the reason God used a, "voiceless", cloud to lead Israel instead of giving them a lot of information to appease their souls.

The question then is, "What does the leadership of the cloud and fire represent for us today?" Or, "What is the picture in the picture?" If the cloud and fire, "natural" images, are types and shadows, "spiritual" images, of the kind of leadership we should be receiving from God today, then how are we to receive it and where? Israel could actually see a visible cloud and fire manifested in front of them. What about us?

To answer that question let's start here in Proverbs. (Proverbs 20:27)

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly."

When a person is born again they receive a reborn human spirit, alive with the life of God. They also receive the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost within them. Their "candle is lit" and they are now able to directly contact God, spirit to Spirit. Immediately following their conversion should come the baptism in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. The ministry of the Holy Ghost as our Teacher is invaluable in aiding the development of our human spirit, helping us become more sensitive to God's leadership.

But, regardless of whether or not a person goes on to receive the baptism in the Holy Ghost, their "candle" has been lit and they are able to contact God, spirit to Spirit. With that in mind, let's refer back to the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire to understand the "spiritual" image this represents for us, and we will see how God intends to guide us today.

We will better understand the type and shadow of the cloud and fire by first looking at Israel's completion of the tabernacle in the wilderness. (Numbers 9:15 - 17)

“And on the day the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until morning. (16) So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. (17) And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.”

The Apostle Paul said that we are now the temple. (I Corinthians 3:16)

“Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.”

When we are born again we become the dwelling place of God the Holy Ghost, just as the tabernacle in the wilderness was the place where God's presence abided. Unlike the natural tabernacle, we don't have a cloud coming out the top of our heads or a pillar of fire. But, we do have a New Testament account of the time in the upper room when the arrival of the Holy Ghost into this world was marked by fire sitting upon the heads of every person there. (Acts 2:3)

“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”

Did you ever wonder why the last mention of the cloud, that led them, appearing on the tabernacle is just before Israel crossed the Jordan? (Deuteronomy 31:15) Israel's crossing of the Jordan is the type and shadow of our born again experience and the absence of the cloud indicates that the cloud and fire (God's leadership) moved inside of us the moment we were born again. **The pillar of fire has moved inside of us!**

With that in mind, let's see how Paul described the leadership we are now to receive through our reborn human spirit. (Romans 8:14,16)

“For as many as are led by the spirit (reborn human spirit) of God (meaning born of God) **they are the sons of God. (16) The Spirit** (The Holy Ghost) **itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”**

The leadership we now have as born again children of God is leadership that comes directly from the Holy Ghost “bearing witness” with our reborn human spirit. This “bearing witness” is our “spiritual” image of the “natural” image of the cloud and fire. It is leadership that **doesn’t require** details before willingly following God. God used the cloud and fire to lead Israel instead of giving them detailed information. He wanted Israel to learn to trust Him.

God isn’t any different today. He wants us to learn to trust Him and follow Him even if we have no more than just a peace in our hearts that the direction we are going in is correct. Our minds will always want more information, demanding specific, detailed instructions before stepping out. But, that’s not God’s ways because **faith** doesn’t demand to see something before stepping out. Besides that, God knew that we would need a guidance system that couldn’t be “hacked” by the enemy with false voices, so He gave us one that didn’t rely on words.

God’s guidance enables us to step out in faith with simply a “knowing” inside that this is the right direction. “But, Mark, that’s not enough for me. I want God to give me all the details first.” That’s not God’s ways. God’s ways are exemplified in the way He told Abram to leave everything behind and **go to a place that He would show him**. (Genesis 12:1) I have yet to find a promise in God’s Word telling us to expect detailed instructions from God before stepping out in faith.

“Mark, doesn’t the Bible say that He will show us things to come?” Certainly it does and we can see examples of that in Israel’s experience in the wilderness. **But, those few instances of God sharing future events were the exception and not the “rule”. The “rule” was that they follow the pillar of cloud and fire.** Yes, there will be times when you do receive those bits of advanced information, but those seem to be the exception.

Here’s the problem, there’s no easy way to describe the leadership given to us by the Holy Ghost to our human spirit and here’s why. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

Leadership by the inner witness is often called a “knowing” or an “unction”. This is the primary way God leads His sons. Rest assured that it is as supernatural as the cloud and the fire. Instead of looking for God’s guidance in some spectacular way we must learn to follow that supernatural guidance system, the inner witness, the still small voice of our spirit, and realize that the key to God’s

leadership is **getting to know God**. The closer you get to God your Father the less you will find yourself asking about every step along the way.

Maybe you've been expecting God to give you detailed instructions in advance. Could it be that in waiting on those detailed instructions you have missed the leadership of the inner witness that God has been trying to guide you with all along?

This picture within the picture should give us great confidence that His leadership within us should be as easy to follow as the cloud and fire were to Israel. As we get to know God the mystery of His future for us won't be such a mystery any longer. **The leadership moved inside!**

~ Grace be with you

Mark Jenkins

A corresponding audio message to this letter is ~ [The Fire Moved Inside \(RM\)](#)
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