

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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By the Mouth of Two Witnesses

(Dt 17:1-7)

There are times when I become discouraged because things are not going well, or, like I think they should. It may be that I have slipped and displayed anger, lack of patience, or, even ate something that I consider unhealthy and would like to stop. The point is that when things pile up, sometimes I become discouraged. My thoughts can even go so far as to think that God might abandon me, or, that I may not be faithful to the end. Recently, I was having one of those days when a friend called. The result of that phone call so encouraged me that I wanted to share it.

During the phone call that I mentioned above, the topic of discussion was about many recorded incidents in the Bible where two or three angels or men were involved, and what might be their message or their witness. Some examples are three men met Abraham; two angels went to Sodom to visit Lot; Moses and Elijah appeared to Christ; two angels appeared at the tomb of Jesus; and Jesus sent the disciples by twos to teach, just to name a few. The number two can be seen in dozens of places and can present a shade of meaning for that context. An example is that the house of Israel was built by Rachel and Leah, Jacob's wives (Ruth 4:11).

Concept of two witnesses: **Dt 17:1-7:** 1. *"YOU SHALL not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep in which is a blemish, any defect whatever; for that is an abomination to the Lord your God.*

2. *"If there is found among you, within any of your towns which the Lord your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, in transgressing his covenant,*

3. *and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden,*

4. *and it is told you and you hear of it; then you shall inquire diligently, and if it is true and certain that such an abominable thing has been done in Israel,*

5. *then you shall bring forth to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones.*

6. *On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses he that is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.*

7. *The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you. (RSV)*

It requires two or more witnesses in order to put a person to death. Thus, we have the spiritual concept of why there are two phases of the Son's life emphasized; two piles of bread on the table, two tables of stones, etc. etc. Each of these things recorded are for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. No one can die to self by keeping only the commandments on one stone, nor can they by studying only one aspect of the Son's life (eat from one pile of bread). Now, look at some of the verses:

1. *"YOU SHALL not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep in which is a blemish, any defect whatever; for that is an abomination to the Lord your God.* Able was a keeper of sheep but Cain was a tiller of the earth. For an offering, Able brought from the firstborn of his flock, but Cain brought from the fruit of the

earth (Gen 4:2-5). Jesus Christ is teaching and giving each of us an understanding of spiritual things (oxen, sheep). To bring a sacrifice to God is to live according to the understanding you are receiving. It cannot in any way be tainted by the flesh. If there is any error in what we are believing or doing, God will correct it in due time, either directly, or through others.

2. *"If there is found among you, within any of your towns (cities) which the Lord your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, in transgressing his covenant,*
3. *and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden,*
4. *and it is told you and you hear of it; then you shall inquire diligently, and if it is true and certain that such an abominable thing has been done in Israel,*

Remember, a town or city is a mind-set (new Jerusalem is opposite to Babylon), a man or woman represents your thoughts which also give birth to other thoughts (children). The sun, moon and stars are similar, only presented as sources of light. The point is that whenever the Lord reveals a point in your thinking that is in error, you are to inquire diligently of the Lord, via scriptures or another whom you trust to help with spiritual things, in order to help correct the error in your thinking. Animals are also symbols of thoughts, so taking an unblemished sacrifice to God is when He convinces your heart that the particular thought is pure.

5. *then you shall bring forth to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones.*
6. *On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses he that is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.*
7. *The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.*

Why bring them to the gate of the city? The gate was where business was conducted and decisions were made (Ruth 4:1). You have seven gates into your mind, which are your eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth, all of which help you make decisions. When something evil you have said or done comes to your attention, focus on getting rid of it. A stone represents a spiritual concept. The most prominent two witnesses that bring death to self is the written word (Bible) and the spoken word (God's voice in the conscience). You cannot die to self with only one of those witnesses. First the hands of the witnesses, then the hands of all the people - First the works of letter (Bible) and the spirit (2 Cor 3:6), then the works of all in your fellowship group. Contained in the Bible are two testaments, written by many writers. Practically speaking, two witnesses come to you, or can be done by you, in many forms. Write a letter, or email, pick up the phone and call a friend, or stop by for a visit, and the Lord will be there (Mt 18:20).

This friend did not call specifically to encourage me. They did not even know that anything was wrong. But the questions asked caused me to look at the scriptures, and then, the Lord spoke through the scriptures and encouraged me. Here is the story through which God spoke: **Gen 19:1: THE TWO angels came to Sodom in the evening; and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed himself with his face to the earth,** (RSV). When Abraham and Lot split, Lot settled in the area of Sodom and Gomorrah. Because of Abraham's intercession, the Lord sent two messengers to deliver Lot and his family from the destruction about to occur.

Here is the sin of Sodom - think about it inwardly: **Eze 16:49-50: 49. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she**

strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me:... Your wife is the belief to which you are married, and your offspring are the resulting thoughts. Everyone one of us began our spiritual journey at the gate of Sodom. By sitting in the gate, Lot was making a decision to stay in that place, even though he was vexed by wicked thinking (2 Pet 2:7). No matter where we are in our thinking, we consider it at the time to be an important place. However, we must also guard against thinking that we are okay where we are resting at the time, and refuse to budge from that spot.

When I was sitting in the darkness of my self-pity, a friend called, and the Lord said, go to the scriptures and help them. The next morning, the Lord spoke to me: **Gen 19:15-16: 15.** *And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. 16. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.*

When morning dawned, when the light came on, I realized that no matter what, God, being merciful to me, has already taken me by the hand, and is leading me, urging me to take the next step, urging me to make a solid commitment. Yes, there are times when I slip, or fail in my attempts. Often my words are misunderstood, mainly because I am running ahead of the Lord and trying to accomplish things myself. But God has not given up on me, nor will He. The only person that can cause me to be lost is ME!

Some refer to Jeremiah as the “weeping prophet”, and what he wrote to the people of Judah was hardly popular with the majority. At one point, he was cast into a dungeon with no water, and he sunk into the miry mud of the earth (Jer 38:6; think spiritual). Yet, early in his ministry, the Lord had told him, *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.* (Jer 1:4-5) Each and everyone of us have a calling and a gift, or gifts. Seek the Lord for discernment, and utilize your gift to minister to others. Some are isolated so that the main contact is only by phone or the Internet, and all of us are busy with daily tasks, and perhaps forget about fellowship, except once a week. So, you, take the initiative to call, write or visit your friends and family, even if it is only to say hello. At least they will know that you thought about them. And, who knows, what you say may lift them from the mucky, miry dungeon of life that they may have fallen into at that time, or encourage them to step away from the gate of Sodom. Let your contact be a witness, so that the spirit of God might also be a witness. God bless, and remember- God loves you! Amen..