

## Week Eight

# **Authority, Rebellion, the Vindication of Delegated Authority, and a Proper Representative of God**

RK Hymns: 984

Scripture Reading: Num. 12:1-15; 16:1—17:13; 20:2-13, 24;  
27:12-14; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10

## Outline

### Day 1

- I. **God is the supreme authority; He has all authority—Rom. 9:21-22:**
  - A. **God's authority represents God Himself; God's power only represents God's works—Acts 17:24.**
  - B. **God's authority is actually God Himself; authority issues out from God's own being—Rev. 22:1.**
  - C. **All authority—spiritual, positional, and governmental—derives from God—2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; John 19:10-11; Gen. 9:6.**
  - D. **When we touch God's authority, we touch God Himself—Isa. 6:1-5:**
    1. Meeting God's authority is the same as meeting God—Amos 4:12.
    2. Offending God's authority is the same as offending God Himself.
  - E. **In our relationship with God, nothing is more important than touching authority—Acts 9:5; Matt. 11:25.**
  - F. **Knowing authority is an inward revelation rather than an**

**outward teaching—Acts 22:6-16.**

## **Day 2**

- G. Only God is the direct authority to man; all other authorities are indirect authorities—delegated authorities, deputy authorities, appointed by God—Dan. 4:32, 34-37:**
1. Only when we meet God's authority can we submit to the delegated authority whom God appoints—Matt. 28:18; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5.
  2. God requires that we submit not only to Him but to all delegated authorities—Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; Heb. 13:17.
  3. Those who do not submit to God's indirect authority cannot submit to God's direct authority.
  4. God wants us to submit to indirect authority—delegated authorities—so that we may receive spiritual supply.
- H. We all must meet authority, be restricted by God, and be led by His delegated authority—Isa. 37:16; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 13:17.**

## **Day 3**

**II. There are two great principles in the universe—God's authority and Satan's rebellion; the unique controversy between God and Satan concerns authority and rebellion—Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13:**

- A. Rebellion is the denial of God's authority and the rejection of God's rule:**
1. Satan was originally an archangel created by God, but due to his pride he uplifted himself, violated God's sovereignty, rebelled against God, became God's adversary, and established his own kingdom—Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:2-19; Matt. 12:26.
  2. When man sinned, he rebelled against God, denied God's authority, and rejected God's rule; at Babel men rebelled collectively against God to abolish God's authority from the earth—Gen. 3:1-6; 11:1-9.

- B. Although Satan rebelled against God’s authority and although man violates His authority by rebelling against Him, God will not let this rebellion continue; He will establish His kingdom on the earth—Rev. 11:15.**
- C. The center of dispute in the universe relates to who has authority—4:2-3:**
  - 1. We must contend with Satan by asserting that authority is with God—Acts 17:24, 30.
  - 2. We need to set ourselves to submit to God’s authority and uphold God’s authority—Matt. 11:25.
- D. The sin of rebellion is more serious than any other kind of sin—1 Sam. 15:23.**

## **Day 4**

### **III. Chapters 12 and 16 of Numbers speak of rebellion against God’s delegated authority:**

- A. In speaking against Moses, Miriam and Aaron were speaking against the deputy authority of God—12:1-15:**
  - 1. God had appointed Moses to be His deputy authority, His representative authority on earth; the authority that Moses represented was the authority of God—Exo. 3:10-18a; 7:1.
  - 2. According to God’s governmental administration, Miriam and Aaron should have submitted themselves to Moses, but they rebelled—Num. 12:1-2.
  - 3. Neither Aaron nor Miriam knew authority; instead, they fostered a rebellious heart—vv. 1-2.
  - 4. The words of rebellion ascended upward and were heard by God—v. 2b:
    - a. When Miriam and Aaron offended Moses, they offended God in Moses; therefore, God became angry.
    - b. Once a person touches delegated authority, he touches God in that delegated authority.

- c. To offend the delegated authority is to offend God—vv. 4-10.
- 5. Miriam’s becoming leprous was God’s governmental dealing—v. 10.
- B. The rebellion recorded in chapter 16 was a corporate rebellion:**
  - 1. The rebellion in this chapter was a widespread, universal rebellion among God’s people—v. 19a.
  - 2. Numbers 16:3, 9, and 10 show that the root of this rebellion was ambition, the struggle for power and for a higher position:
    - a. Ambition undermines God’s plan and damages His people.
    - b. Throughout the centuries many problems among Christians have been caused by ambition—cf. Matt. 20:20-28; 3 John 9-11.
  - 3. Although Moses was humble in falling on his face (Num. 16:4), he did not give up his God-given position as God’s deputy authority (vv. 3-11, 16-18):
    - a. Moses did not fight back; rather, he brought the rebels and the ones against whom they rebelled to God—v. 5.
    - b. As God’s deputy, or delegated, authority, Moses referred this case to God as the highest authority, for His speaking, exposing, and judging—vv. 6-35.
    - c. In a struggle for power, the only One who can judge and expose the real situation is God Himself—vv. 30-33.
  - 4. The murmuring of the people against Moses and Aaron proves that their rebellious nature had not been subdued—v. 41.

## **Day 5**

- IV. Numbers 16 speaks of man’s rebellion against God’s deputy authority and how man opposed God’s deputy authority; chapter 17 speaks of God’s vindication of His appointed authority:**
  - A. God vindicated to everyone that deputy authority is according to His appointment—v. 5.**
  - B. Since the rebellion of Korah and his company was related to the**

**priesthood (16:3, 8-10), the budding of Aaron's rod was a vindication indicating that Aaron was the one accepted by God as having authority in the God-given ministry of the priesthood (17:2-10).**

**C. The budding rod of Aaron typifies the resurrected Christ—the budding, blossoming, and fruit-bearing Christ—who imparts life to others—v. 8:**

1. Christ, the greatest budding rod in the universe, imparts life to others; He always flows out life to enliven others—John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3.
2. Today Christ is still budding, and we are the fruit, the almonds, of His budding.

**D. In typology a rod signifies authority—cf. 1 Cor. 4:21:**

1. In Numbers 17 the rods represented the leaders of the twelve tribes (v. 2), and Aaron's rod represented the tribe of Levi (v. 3).
2. It was God's intention that the budding of a dead rod would cause the murmurings of the people to cease.
3. Through the budding of the rod, God spoke to the Israelites and also to Aaron—v. 8.

**E. The budding rod signifies our experience of Christ in His resurrection as our authority in the God-given ministry—Heb. 9:4; Num. 17:1-10:**

1. The budding, blossoming, fruit-yielding rod signifies the resurrection life of Christ with its authority—v. 8; John 11:25.
2. Resurrection is the basis of authority—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 10:8; 13:4, 10:
  - a. The budding rod indicates that authority is based on resurrection—Num. 17:8.
  - b. The basis of God's appointment of authority is resurrection—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 10:8; 13:10.
  - c. The basis of God's vindication of His appointed authority is resurrection—Num. 17:5, 8.

## Day 6

- V. One who has been appointed by God to be a deputy authority must be a proper representative of God—12:3-8; 16:1-5, 28; 2 Cor. 5:20:**
- A. In Exodus and in Numbers 12 and 16, Moses represented God in a proper way.**
- B. We need to learn a serious lesson from the one time that Moses failed to represent God—20:2-13:**
1. In striking the rock twice and in calling the people rebels, Moses did not sanctify God in the sight of the people of Israel—vv. 10-12:
    - a. To sanctify God is to make Him holy, that is, separate from all the false gods; to fail to sanctify God is to make Him common—v. 12.
    - b. In being angry with the people and in wrongly striking the rock twice, Moses failed to sanctify God—vv. 10-11.
    - c. In being angry when God was not angry, Moses failed to represent God rightly in His holy nature, and in striking the rock twice, he did not keep God's word in His economy—vv. 10-12.
    - d. Moses offended both God's holy nature and His divine economy; he condemned the people as rebels, but he was the one who rebelled against God's word—vv. 10, 24; 27:12-14.
  2. In all that we say and do concerning God's people, our attitude must be according to God's holy nature, and our actions must be according to His divine economy.
- C. The apostle Paul was an ambassador of Christ, representing God—2 Cor. 5:20:**
1. A new covenant minister is one who has been authorized with the heavenly authority to represent the highest authority—3:6; 5:20.
  2. Paul exercised his apostolic authority not for ruling over the believers but for building them up—10:8; 13:10; 1:24.
  3. Paul exercised the authority inherent in his apostleship by teaching, by engaging in spiritual warfare, by moving within the measure of God's rule,

and by his jealousy for Christ over the believers—1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor. 10:3-4, 13; 11:2.

- D. A person who represents God rightly must submit to authority (Matt. 8:8-9), realize that in himself he has no authority (28:18; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10), and be a person in resurrection, living in the resurrection life of Christ (1:9; 4:14; Num. 17:1-10).**





## **WEEK 8 – DAY 1**

### **Morning Nourishment**

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rom. 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

All authority is from God because everything is ordered by God. If we trace any authority upward, we eventually will come to God. God is above all authorities, and every authority is under Him. Once we touch God's authority, we touch God Himself Basically, God's work is not carried out by power, but by authority.... Creation came about through the word of His authority. His word is His authority. We do not know how God's authority works. But we know that God accomplishes everything through His authority. The centurion whose servant was sick knew that there was an authority above him to which he should submit, inasmuch as there were those under him who submitted to him. Therefore, he only needed the Lord to say one word, and he believed that the matter would then be taken care of. He knew that all authority was in the Lord's hand; he believed in the Lord's authority. This is why the Lord said that He had found no faith greater than this. Meeting God's authority is the same as meeting God. Today God appoints authorities everywhere in the universe....Offending God's authority is the same as offending God Himself. A Christian should submit to authority. (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," pp. 119-120)

### **Today's Reading**

We who are involved in the Lord's work are the servants of God. As such, the first thing we touch is the matter of authority. Touching authority is as real as the matter of touching salvation. For us this is a deeper lesson. We must be touched and smitten at least once by authority. Only then can

we work the work of God. In our relationship with God, nothing is more important....Once we touch [authority], we will see it wherever we turn. Only then can we be restricted by God, and only then can we begin to be used by God.

There are two principles in the universe—God’s authority and Satan’s rebellion....Although a rebellious person can preach, Satan will laugh, because the principle of Satan is there in the preaching. Service is ever attendant to authority....We who serve God must gain this basic understanding at some time. It is like touching electricity. Once one touches it, he will never be careless with it. In the same way, once a man meets God’s authority and is smitten by it, his eyes will be enlightened.

When the rebellious ones spoke against Moses for not leading them into the land flowing with milk and honey, and for not giving them the inheritance of fields and vineyards, their words were somewhat true....Please note that whenever men act and judge according to doctrine or according to what they see with their physical eyes, they are taking the way of reason. But those who submit to authority will enter Canaan by faith. The way of the spirit can never be taken by those who argue and reason. Those who by faith take the leading of the pillars of cloud and of fire and take the leading of Moses, the deputy authority, will enjoy the fullness of the Spirit. The earth opens its mouth for the rebellious ones. This is the way of death leading them quickly to Hades. Those who do not submit to authority have clear eyes, but they only see the desolation in the wilderness. Only those who are apparently blind, who probe forward by faith, ignoring the present desolation, can enter into Canaan. Those on the spiritual pathway see the future promise of blessing by the eyes of faith. Therefore, one must meet authority, be restricted by God, and be led by His deputy authority. If a man sees only his father, brothers, or sisters, he does not know what authority is, and has not yet met God. In any case, the matter of authority is an inward revelation rather than an outward teaching. (CWWN, vol. 47, "Authority and Submission," pp. 114-115, 133-134)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 47, "Authority and Submission," chs. 1-3, 6-8, 12-15, 17-18; CWL, 1957, vol. 2, "What the Kingdom Is to the Believers," chs. 2-3

## **WEEK 8 — DAY 2**

### **Morning Nourishment**

Heb. 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

1 Pet. 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

No one dares to say that he would not submit to the Lord's authority. But there is also the authority of the members in coordination that we have to submit to. We have to realize that all the members are joined together....Sometimes the Lord uses one member directly. At other times, the Lord uses a member to supply another member. When the head directs the eyes to see, the whole body takes the seeing of the eyes as its own seeing because when the eyes see, the whole body sees. This delegated function, which is deputy authority, is also the authority of the Head. If any other members think that they can see for themselves, they are in rebellion. We cannot be so foolish as to think that we are almighty.

Never forget that we are just members. We need to receive the function of the other members. When we submit to the authority of the seeing function, we will have no barrier with the Head, because the supply is in the authority. Whoever has the gift has that ministry; and whoever has the ministry has the authority. No one else can see except the eyes. If we want to see, we have to submit to the authority of the eyes and receive their supply. God's appointed ministry is His authority. No one should reject it. Everyone wants to receive God's direct authority. But God wants us to submit to indirect authorities (i.e., deputy authorities) so that we may receive spiritual supply. (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," p. 175)

### **Today's Reading**

Other than God Himself, everyone, including the Lord Jesus, has to submit to authority on earth. We should see authority everywhere....Some never realize who their authority is. They have never submitted to anyone.... If you know who you have to submit to, you will spontaneously know what position you should occupy in the Body, and you will stand in your proper position....Submission is the first lesson for those who work. It is actually the major part of their work. (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," p. 120)

In the universe, only God is the direct authority to man. Other than God, all authorities are delegated. The parents represent God as the children's authority, and the husbands represent God as the wives' authority. The civil officers represent God as the citizens' authority, and even the teachers in the schools, the managers in the offices, and the policemen on the streets are all delegated authorities. The elders in the church also represent God as authority. Today while living on earth, seldom do we live under God's direct authority. Almost all the authorities that we submit to are delegated authorities....There are not many cases where God acts directly as authority. In almost all circumstances, God's authority is delegated.

It is easy today for man to submit to God's direct authority, but it is not easy to submit to the delegated authority God has appointed. The reason for this is that you may not consider the delegated authority better or stronger than you are....When you come to a local church, the elders there may not have been saved as long ago as you were. They may not be as spiritual as you are, may not have received as much education as you have received, and may not be as capable as you are. But when you are there, you have to accept that delegated authority and submit to it. (CWWL, 1960, vol. 2,"The Elders' Management of the Church," p. 141)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1960, vol. 2,"The Elders' Management of the Church," chs. 5-6; CWWL, 1989, vol. 4,"The Apostles' Teaching and the New Testament Leadership," ch. 2; CWWL, 1956, vol. 2,"Three Aspects of the Church, Book 3: The Organization of the Church," chs. 2-9

## **WEEK 8 — DAY 3**

### **Morning Nourishment**

Rev. 4:2 ...Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting.

Matt. 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth...

1 Sam. 15:23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and insubordination is like idolatry...

The center of dispute in the whole universe relates to who has the authority. We have to contend with Satan by asserting that authority is with God. We have to set ourselves to submit to God's authority and to uphold God's authority.

Before Paul realized authority, he wanted to eradicate the church from the earth. But after he met the Lord on the way to Damascus, he realized that it was difficult to kick against the goads (God's authority) with his feet (man's energy). He immediately fell down, acknowledged Jesus as Lord, and submitted to the instruction of Ananias in Damascus. Paul met God's authority. At his conversion, Paul was brought not only into a realization of God's salvation, but also into a realization of God's authority. (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," p. 111)

### **Today's Reading**

Paul was an intelligent and capable man, while Ananias was a very insignificant, small brother. The Bible refers to him only once. If Paul had not met God's authority, how could he possibly have listened to the words of Ananias?...This shows us that anyone who has met authority will deal with the authority alone; he will not deal with the person involved. We should only think of the authority, not of the person, because our submission is not to a person but to God's authority in that person.... If we touch the matter of authority first and then submit to the person, irrespective of who he is, we are on the right path.

God has only one goal in the church, which is to manifest His authority in the universe. We can see God's authority from the coordination in the church. God exercises the utmost of His strength to uphold His authority. His authority is stronger than anything else. We who are so self-confident, but who are in reality so blind, have to come face-to-face at least once with God's authority. Only when we are broken can we come into submission....Only when a man meets God's authority will he submit to the deputy authority whom God appoints.

In Numbers 16 there are two rebellions. In verses 1 through 40 we have the rebellion of the leaders, whereas in verses 41 through 50 we have the rebellion of the whole assembly. A spirit of rebellion is contagious.... [The whole assembly] saw with their own eyes fire coming forth from God to consume the two hundred fifty incense burners. Yet they still rebelled. They even accused Moses of killing them. Moses and Aaron could not open the earth; it was God who opened it. Moses could not consume people with fire; it was the fire that proceeded from Jehovah God that judged the people. Some men only see through their own eyes.... Such people are very bold; they are not afraid even when they see judgment, because they do not have the knowledge of authority. This is a very dangerous matter. When the whole assembly attacked Moses and Aaron, the glory of God appeared, proving that authority is from God. God came forth to judge. A plague broke out, and 14,700 died. Moses was quick in his spiritual sensation; he immediately ordered Aaron to take the censer, put fire in it, and place incense on it to make propitiation for the assembly. Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

God can bear His people's ten murmurings in the wilderness. But He cannot bear His authority being offended. God can bear many sins and can even pardon them. Once rebellion appears, however, God cannot tolerate it, for rebellion is according to the principle of death. It is according to the principle of Satan. For this reason, the sin of rebellion is more serious than any other kind of sin. Whenever someone opposes authority, God immediately comes in to judge. How solemn a matter this is! (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," pp. 111-112, 134-135)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," chs. 1-3

## **WEEK 8 — DAY 4**

### **Morning Nourishment**

Num. 16:5 ...In the morning Jehovah will make known who is His and who is holy;...the one whom He will choose He will bring near to Himself.

Matt. 20:25-27 ...The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave.

Ambition for position and power is always a problem to God's people. Ambition is a "gopher" that undermines God's plan and damages His people. When I was with Watchman Nee on the mainland of China, I saw him attacked a number of times. He never did anything or said anything to vindicate himself, and he never complained against others. As he told me, because he was the target, it was difficult for him to say anything concerning himself without vindicating, and it was difficult to say anything about others without condemning. So the best way, he said, was not to say anything. (Life-study of Numbers, p. 172)

### **Today's Reading**

The ambition for power and the struggle for power are in our blood. This ambition and struggle can be found not only among males but also among females. The rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against Moses proves this. I believe that this rebellion was instigated by Miriam....We all need to be careful to guard against the "gopher" of ambition within us.

The first generation of Christ's followers was troubled by the struggle for power. At a very crucial time, when the Lord Jesus was going to Jerusalem to be crucified, He told His followers what would happen to Him (Matt. 20:17-19). They heard Him, but they neither listened to what He said nor cared about it. While He was telling them about His death, they were struggling for power. The mother of James and John (Jesus' aunt) even brought her two sons to the Lord, begging Him to put one on His right and

one on His left in the kingdom (Matt. 20:20-28). The other disciples were indignant toward these two brothers. This indicates that there was a power struggle among the disciples.

If you read through the Acts and the Epistles, you will see that this struggle for power was there from the beginning of the church life. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-4) were a couple who lied to God. Actually, their lying was a struggle for power. They wanted to be more important, to elevate themselves in the eyes of others. At the end of the Epistles, John mentioned one who was struggling for power, Diotrephes (3 John 9-11). The history of Christianity is a history of the struggle for power. This struggle is within each one of us. You may not realize it, but it is hidden inside you. Eventually, the church life will be a test to our real situation. As long as we are in the church life, sooner or later we will be tested and exposed.

Consider the rebels among the children of Israel in Numbers. Some rebels were on the border of the camp, some were with the mixed multitude, and some were very close to Moses, the leading one. Now, in Numbers 16, two hundred fifty leaders rebelled. In view of all this, we must believe that the struggle for power was in every one of the sons of Israel.

In chapter 16, Moses was bold and faithful in confronting a large-scale rebellion, a rebellion of two hundred fifty leaders. Although he fell on his face, he still did something. He brought this matter openly to God, to let God come in to speak, to judge, and to vindicate.

In such a rebellious situation, it is better not to do anything. The Lord is still living. He is still on the throne and is still sovereign. He is the sovereign Lord and the highest authority. He is the Head of the Body today. Thus, we must always refer these things to Him and let Him be what He is. This is all we can do, and this is what we must do. (Life-study of Numbers, pp. 172-174)

Further Reading: Life-study of Numbers, msgs. 19, 23-24; CWWL, 1960, vol. 1, "Synopsis of Numbers," chs. 21-22



## **WEEK 8 — DAY 5**

### **Morning Nourishment**

**Num. 17:8** And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.

**John 11:25** Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live.

God commanded the twelve leaders to take twelve rods according to the twelve tribes of Israel, and put them in the Tent of Meeting before the Ark. Then He said, "And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud" (Num. 17:5). A rod is a piece of wood. It is a branch that has been stripped of its leaves and roots. It once was living but now has become dead. It once derived its sap from the tree, being able to blossom and bear fruit, but now has become dead. All twelve rods were leafless, rootless, dry, and dead. Whichever one budded was the one that was chosen by God. Here we see that resurrection is the basis of God's selection. It is also the basis of authority. (CWWN, vol. 47, "Authority and Submission," p. 243)

### **Today's Reading**

Numbers 16 speaks of man's rebellion against God's deputy authority and how man opposed God's appointed authority. Chapter 17 speaks of God's vindication of His appointed authority. The basis of God's vindication of His appointed authority is resurrection. By resurrection He stopped man's murmuring. Man, of course, has no right to question God in the first place, but God condescended Himself to tell man the reason and basis for His appointment of authority. The basis for His appointment of authority is resurrection. This shut the mouth of the Israelites.

Both Aaron and the Israelites were descendants of Adam and both were fleshly. By nature and according to their natural disposition, they were both sons of wrath; there was no difference between them. All twelve rods were the same. They were all leafless and rootless rods, dead and

lifeless. This shows us that the basis of service is something apart from our natural life. It is the resurrection life we receive from God that gives us authority. Authority has nothing to do with man but with the resurrection that is manifested through man. Aaron was no different than all the other persons. His distinction was in God's choosing and the resurrection life which God granted him. From this we see that the basis of authority is resurrection.

A rod signifies human position, while budding signifies the resurrection life. As far as position is concerned, the twelve leaders of the twelve tribes occupied a position of leadership. Aaron represented the tribe of Levi and was no different than the others in his representation of his own tribe. Aaron could not serve God based on his position, because his position was the same as all the others. In fact, this was why the other tribes objected to his leadership....Resurrection is the mark that God recognizes. He only recognizes those who have passed through death and resurrection as His servants. Hence, the mark of ministry is resurrection. A man cannot base his service to God on his position. He must base it on God's selection. After God caused Aaron's rod to bud, blossom, and bear fruit, the tribes saw it, and they had nothing more to say.

If there is any authority in us, this authority comes from God, not from us....Whenever we trust in the Lord, we see authority. Whenever we express the natural life, we become the same as everyone else, and there is no authority in us whatsoever. Only that which issues from resurrection results in authority. Authority is based on resurrection, not on ourselves. No ordinary rod can be placed before God. Only a rod of resurrection can be placed before Him. Furthermore, resurrection is found in the budding rod. It is not a general resurrection but a full resurrection. It is not just a faint expression of the resurrection life but a life that has budded, blossomed, and brought forth fruit. This is resurrection life in maturity. Only one matured in resurrection life can act as God's deputy authority. The more resurrection life is expressed through us, the more authority we will have. (CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," pp. 243-245, 251-252)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 47,"Authority and Submission," ch. 15

## **WEEK 8 — DAY 6**

### **Morning Nourishment**

2 Cor. 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.

10:13 But we will not boast beyond our measure but according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure has apportioned to us, to reach even as far as you.

The apostle Paul was an ambassador of Christ. An ambassador is one who represents the highest authority....The highest authority in this universe is God, and God has given all authority in heaven and on earth to Christ (Matt. 28:18). God has appointed Christ to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14). Today Jesus is the Christ, the Lord of all, the highest authority. For this highest authority there is the need of some ambassadors on this earth who are qualified to represent Him. The Lord's ministry is not a matter of merely being a preacher or a teacher but of being one who is authorized with the heavenly authority, representing the highest authority in the whole universe. First, we need to be captured by Christ, and eventually, we need to become a representative of Christ on this earth to deal with the earthly nations as an ambassador. (CWWL, 1967, vol. 2,"An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," p. 171)

### **Today's Reading**

Second Corinthians 10:8 indicates that in the past Paul did say something to the Corinthians concerning his apostolic authority. Apostolic authority is not for ruling over the believers, as in the natural sense, but for building them up.

[In verse 13], the apostle is bold, but he is not bold without limit. This shows that he is under the restriction of the Lord. His boasting is according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure, the ruling God, has apportioned to him. Paul's ministry to the Gentile world, including Corinth, was according to the measure of God (Eph. 3:1-2, 8; Gal. 2:8). Hence, his

boast is also within this limit, not without measure.

We should not think that Paul was so spiritual that he was altogether different from us. Even he had to learn to take the Lord's restriction. For example, Paul wanted to go to Rome, but he did not expect to go there in bonds. Furthermore, he told the believers at Rome that he expected to go to Spain by way of them (Rom. 15:24). Paul never went to Spain, and he arrived in Rome in bonds. Those bonds were the Lord's measure, His limitation.... God led him there as a prisoner...God is sovereign, and whatever happened to Paul was under God's sovereignty. This means that Paul's bonds and imprisonment were God's sovereign restriction. Paul was willing to be subject to God's measuring. He neither transgressed this restriction nor rebelled against it.

In the church service we need to realize that God has only measured out so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves. We need to know our limitation, our jurisdiction, and not go beyond it into others' territory. Like Paul, we should move and act according to our rule, that is, according to how much God has measured to us.

Paul knew from the Macedonian call he received that Corinth was under his rule, his measure. We know from Acts 16 that Paul became clear that God had called him to Europe. He came to Achaia with the gospel of Christ according to God's ruling. Both Macedonia and Achaia were under Paul's rule. Thus, the Judaizers should not have come into this territory to cause trouble. This was the feeling deep within Paul as he was writing these verses.

In this section of 2 Corinthians Paul is vindicating his apostolic authority. This authority is related to jurisdiction. If Paul did not have any jurisdiction, what would be his authority? In his vindication of his apostolic authority, Paul conducted himself so as not to overstep the boundary of his measure. He is a good example of a person fully under God's restriction. (Life-study of 2 Corinthians, pp. 445-447, 451-453)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msgs. 50-57; CWWL, 1967, vol. 2,"An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," ch. 6

<< **WEEK 8 — HYMN** >>

**Hymns, #942 God's Kingdom on the earth is now**

The Kingdom — Its Inner Reign

**1 God's Kingdom on the earth is now**

**His sovereign government within;  
'Tis Christ Himself in us to live  
As Lord and King to rule and reign.**

**2 His life with His authority**

**Enthrones Him now within our hearts  
To govern all our words and deeds  
And regulate our inward parts.**

**3 The Lord enthroned within our hearts**

**His Kingdom doth establish there,  
Assuring His full right to reign  
And for God's purpose to prepare.**

**4 'Tis by His reign within our hearts**

**That life to us He e'er supplies;  
When taking Him as Lord and King,  
His wealth our being satisfies.**

**5 'Tis by His ruling from within**

**His fulness vast is testified;  
'Tis when His inner kingdom rules  
His Body's blessed and edified.**

**6 'Tis by His heav'nly rule within**

**As heav'nly citizens we live;**

**'Tis by submission to His rule  
Expression of His reign we give.  
7 Here in this heav'nly realm we live,  
And with this heav'nly pow'r possessed  
We walk and fight in heav'nly light  
Until the Kingdom's manifest.**