

GLEANINGS — March 8, A.D. 2015  
Clothed with Humility

A girl who was born in Senegal, west Africa c. A.D. 1753 was sold into slavery at the age of about seven years and transported to North America. The Wheatleys, residents of Boston, purchased her. They named her Phillis and educated her. She soon mastered Latin and Greek, and began writing poetry, eventually becoming celebrated internationally for her literary achievements. This is one of her poems...

On Being Brought from Africa to America

'Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,  
Taught my benighted soul to understand  
That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too:  
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.  
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,  
"Their colour is a diabolic die."  
Remember, Christians, Negros, black as Cain,  
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

In our society there is no end of people talking about how PROUD they are about this, how PROUD they are about their ethnic heritage, how PROUD they are about that. Some are bursting with PRIDE in their own achievements or those of their children and grandchildren.

Some use the expression "I'M PROUD OF \_\_\_\_ " when they really mean something like, "I'm pleased that God to Whom alone all glory is due has given these blessings and talents to me or my loved ones."

Some glory in their shame, literally parading their hideous PRIDE. Others in more private ways bring great harm to themselves and others because of their unyielding, unreasonable, intractable **PRIDE**.

In sweet Phillis' poem we have something far better exemplified. And that is...drum roll...HUMILITY!

She was evidently familiar with the inspired testimonies of the wisest earthly king and that of two apostles who had been taught directly by One wiser than that king:

"Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble." (Proverbs 3:34)

"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (from James 4:6)

"Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility for 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble'." (1 Peter 5:5)

Phillis Wheatley's God is the sovereign God of Joseph son of Jacob, that young man who was sold INTO Africa (specifically Egypt) as a slave, was educated in an alien culture, and went on to do great things under the all-guiding hand of El Shaddai Who ever brings good out of evil.

*One of Wheatley's earliest works (A.D. 1770) was titled: An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that Celebrated Divine, and Eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, the Reverend and Learned George Whitefield*