

## **The Chess Tournament**

Have you ever felt your "gifting" was not as valuable or as important as someone else's? Were you jealous of their abilities and talents? Did you feel your contributions insignificant and unnecessary?

Once upon a time, there was a man who heard about a chess tournament to be held in his town. All were invited to participate, even those who had never played before, because it was going to be a training clinic for novices as well as a tournament for experienced players. The man had never played before, but he decided he would like to learn, so made plans to attend.

As the man entered the room, he was handed a beautiful hand-carved ivory chess set by the facilitator called Giving. Then the facilitator called Organization took over and led him to the table. He showed him how to sit in his chair so he wouldn't get tired, where to place his hands so they wouldn't be in the way, and especially where to place the chess pieces on the board. Then he left and the Teacher came over to explain to him the purpose, rules, and strategy of the game.

The game began. With all the tension, the man began to get thirsty and perspiration stood out on his forehead. The facilitator called Helping appeared with a refreshing drink of ice water and a cloth to mop his brow. He also picked up a piece which had accidentally been knocked on the floor.

The man was doing pretty well, when suddenly, he began to make foolish mistakes. Maybe he doesn't understand and needs more instruction. Maybe he is distracted by thirst and needs another drink. Just then, the Prophet glanced over at the table and immediately spotted the cause of the problem. The man's hat had slipped down over his eyes, blocking his vision and he could see only part of the board. The choices of moves he made seemed logical enough considering the part he could see, but were foolish considering the whole board. The Prophet helped him to pull his hat up, all the while wanting to remove it completely, but when he suggested it, the man became very upset and defensive and clung to it saying, "It's my good luck cap. I can't play without it."

This was frustrating to the Prophet who now had to keep a constant eye on him because whenever things grew tense, the man would lean forward and so intent was he on the game that he didn't notice his hat also falling forward over his eyes again. Fortunately, however, after he made a few very foolish

moves which cost him dearly, he realized the hat as being the source of his problem and allowed the Prophet to remove it. The game now proceeded much better without this hindrance.

But sometimes, he was unsure of a move and the Teacher would be called to give further instruction on the principles involved and how the game worked. The Exhorter also was called and he explained what would likely happen if the man chose this or that move, what his opponent would likely do, and advised as to what would be a wise choice. Sometimes he felt he knew what he should do, but the risk was too great and he was afraid. Mercy was called to come and stand by and said, "It's OK if you mess up. We'll help you to recover. It will be OK. We're all here with you." Often that was enough encouragement to help him make a bold and daring move that sent his enemy back quite a bit. Finally, the game was over and the man had won.

Which facilitator was most responsible for the man's winning? Each one was the most necessary in the situation for which he was called.

Eph. 4:11-16  
Rom 12:3-8  
Icor 12:4-31