

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God..."

e-book

Echoes From Eden

By J. Preston Eby

Table of Contents

Chapter /Title

- 1 The Garden
- 2.In the Midst of the Garden
- 3.In the Midst of the Garden (cont.)
- 4.The Tree of Life
- 5.The Tree of Life (cont.)
- 6.Three Trees in the Garden
- 7.Three Trees in the Garden (cont.)
- 8.A River out of Eden
- 9.A River out of Eden (cont.)
- 10.A River out of Eden (cont.)
- 11.A River out of Eden (cont.)
- 12.A River out of Eden (cont.)
- 13.Dressing the Garden
- 14.Dressing the Garden (cont.)
- 15.Dressing the Garden (cont.)
- 16.Dressing the Garden (cont.)

Chapter 1

THE GARDEN

The Book of Genesis is probably the most important book ever written. The Bible is unquestionably the one Book that has exerted the greatest influence on history of any book ever produced. The Bible, however, is actually a compilation of sixty-six books, and the Book of Genesis is the foundation of them all. If the Book of Genesis were somehow removed, the Bible would appear absurd and incomprehensible. It would be like a building without a foundation, or a bridge with no support. The books of the Old Testament, narrating God's dealings with His ancient people of Israel, would be bigoted and racist, were they not set in the context of the progressive development of God's wise and gracious purposes for all mankind as laid down in the early chapters of Genesis. The New Testament is, if anything, even more dependent on Genesis than the Old. There are at least 165 passages in Genesis that are either directly quoted or clearly referred to in the New Testament by Jesus and the apostles, having to do with the redemptive purposes of God and the principles of His Kingdom. I do not hesitate to say that the writings of the New Testament, describing the execution and implementation of God's wonderful redemptive purposes in Jesus Christ, is completely unintelligible except in the light of the magnificent revelation of God's great and glorious plan of the ages, as established in the record of man's beginnings, recorded only in Genesis.

The word "genesis" of course means "origin" or "beginning," and the Book of Genesis gives the only true and reliable account of the basic entities and conditions of the universe and of life. Genesis yields vital information concerning the origin of ALL THINGS – and therefore the meaning of ALL THINGS! Let every man know that in the whole of the universe there is no greater truth than this one sublime truth that THE FUTURE IS BOUND UP IN THE PAST. A man's belief concerning his origin will inevitably determine his belief about his purpose on earth and his eternal destiny.

T Russell wrote: "The incomprehensible darkened and utterly deluded mind of the evolutionist believes that out of the warm slime along the shore of some primordial sea, spontaneously and without cause or guidance, protoplasm arranged itself and evolved into a microbe, or maggot, which squirmed and twisted and reproduced its own species, and then finding use for a tail, developed one. Later on, one of its still more intelligent offspring concluded that oars, or fins, would be useful, and developed them. Another, later on, got chased by a hungry brother and, jumping clear of the water, got the idea that the fins further developed would be wings, and liked the new style, so that he stayed out of the water, and then decided that legs and toes would be a convenience and developed them. Others of the family followed other 'notions,' of which they

seemingly had an inexhaustible supply, as evidenced by the great variety of animals we see about us. However, in due time one of these descendants of the first maggot which had reached the monkey degree of development, got a noble idea before his mind – he said to himself, I will discard my tail, and cease using my hands as feet, and will shed my coat of hair, and will develop a nose and a forehead and a brain with moral and reflective organs. I will wear tailor-made clothing and a high silk hat, and call myself Charles Darwin, LL. D., and write a record of my evolution!” The fact is, however, that the probability of life originating from accident or by spontaneous generation is comparable to the probability of an unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing plant.

A naturalistic, animalistic concept of beginnings specifies a naturalistic, animalistic program for the FUTURE. But an origin at the hands of an omnipotent, holy, loving God, on the other hand, necessarily predicts a divine purpose in history and an assurance of the ultimate consummation of that purpose. A revelatory understanding of the Book of Genesis is therefore prerequisite to an understanding of God and His meaning to the human race – His dealings and purposes in OUR LIVES! Let me say it again: THE FUTURE IS BOUND UP IN THE PAST! If man had his beginnings by accident as a product of the slime of earth, then his eternal end is in the silent and lifeless dust of the ground. But if man’s past is linked to the God of omniscience and omnipotence, then his future is to be discovered in the eternal purposes of the all-wise, all-powerful and all-loving Creator!

Life does exist. No one questions this fact! No one, that is, except a few philosophers who for the sake of an argument will contend that the world might be an illusion, just a dream; and that there is really nothing that does exist.” How would one know?” they ask in idle speculation. These silly dreamers never stop to realize that it takes SOMETHING to even think the deep thoughts they think – except for the fact that they themselves DO EXIST they would be unable to even dream about the so-called “illusion,” or question the world’s existence! The real problem is this: Life exists. Just where, when, and how did it come into being? The Bible begins with the most simple but sublime of statements, “In the beginning God created...” And Paul tells us that “He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Col 1:17). Although it is impossible for us to comprehend fully this concept of an eternal, transcendent God, the only alternative is the concept of an eternal self-existing universe; and this concept is also incomprehensible, Eternal God or eternal matter – that is the choice! The latter is an utter impossibility by the scientific law of cause and effect, since random particles of matter could not by themselves generate a complex, orderly, intelligible universe, not to mention living persons capable of applying intelligence to the understanding of the complex order of the universe. A personal God, an omniscient Mind, and omnipotent Power, a transcendent Architect, is the only adequate cause to produce such effects. Your life, my friend, is an effect – therefore God’s life is the Cause! It cannot be otherwise.

Paul saw that there was an allegorical teaching in the book of Genesis that paralleled the experience of spiritual birth in the earth. He stated that “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts...” (II Cor 4:6). Just as God commanded light to shine out of darkness – God has shined in our hearts. What has He radiated into our minds and hearts? The “light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Just as light shined in darkness, so has the invisible, unknowable, unsearchable, unapproachable, unreachable, hidden God shined in our hearts. And what has He shined? The light of the knowledge. All knowledge is not light. But this knowledge has given us light in a dark world. And you cannot know your complete identity in Christ without knowing the origin of that identity in its beginning. Go back to the beginning, for the end is the same as the beginning. We want to explore the mystery of our beginning upon this planet. When Jesus walked upon this earth, we will never understand His supernal reality apart from the understanding of the origin and true nature of all things. God is a spirit, Jesus taught.

In the beginning God proclaimed, “Let us make man in our image and after our likeness” (Gen 1:26). This wonderful purpose of God to make man in His own image had been settled in the divine councils of God from eternity. The blessed Lamb had, in the determination of these councils, been slain before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8); the names of all the redeemed of earth had been written in His book of life before the foundation of the world (Rev 17:8); and all the blessed sons of God, predestinated to be holy and without blame before Him in love, predestined to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD, were selected and chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-5). This is a profound and mysterious truth, impossible to fully comprehend apart from the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. The carnal minds of men cannot even begin to imagine in their wildest dreams and hopes the ineffable glory that is determined for man IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. Those appointed to the obtaining of this glory have been chosen “in Him” because Jesus Christ Himself is “the outshining of God’s glory, and the express image of His Person” (Heb 1:3).

The glorious Son of God is the One in whom the unapproachable and utterly incomprehensible glory of God is made manifest. As we only know the sun by the light that shines from it, so is Christ THE OUTSHINING, the revelation OF GOD’S GLORY. As the light that shines from the sun is of one nature with it, so the Son is of one nature with the Father and is Himself called “the everlasting Father.” As the light that shines from the sun is of one substance with it, so the Son is THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS SUBSTANCE and is Himself called “the Mighty God.” Someone may be tempted to think that these are mysteries too deep for the ordinary Christian, and not needful for our walk in God. And they are inclined to ask, of what importance it can be to a believer to know all this. My brother, think not thus. It is all important that we know the glory of Jesus. The more the soul is filled with that glory, the more it will see with what confidence it can count upon Him to do a divine and supernatural work within us, and to lead

us to an actual living out of the glory of the Son in our lives. Oh, let us not be so selfish and mean as to be content with the hope that Jesus saves us, while we are careless of laying hold upon the great and gracious PURPOSE for which He has saved us – that we may be CONFORMED INTO HIS IMAGE. If not for our sake, then for God's sake, for the sake of His infinite love and grace, let us seek to know aright this blessed Son whom the Father has given us. Let us turn away from earth, that in the knowing of Him our own lives may be transformed, until He, who is the outshining of the divine glory, shines into our very heart, and He, to whom the Father has given such a place as Creator and Upholder and Heir of all, take that place within us too, and be to us the beginning and the center and the end of all; until He who IS THE IMAGE OF GOD so possesses our beings that we become the outshining of God's glory and the express image of His Person.

“Let us make man in our image,” said the Lord, whose purposes stand forever and whose hand shall never cease from man until the very last vestige of the image of Self and of Satan has been obliterated from the universe. There is neither time nor space to enlarge on this truth at present, but hear briefly the hope God has in store when He has completed the creation of man in His image. Paul wrote to the Romans, “In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the Sons of God coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited – yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!” (Rom 8:18-21, Phillips). Jesus Christ is the beginning of the creation of God. His perfection as a man was completed two thousand years ago. He is the image of the Father. Next in order come the younger sons of God, the extension and increase of the second Adam race of New Creation men. Our redemption draweth nigh and perfection in His image is even now near at hand, bless His wonderful name! And then, in due time, dear ones, the matchless and glorious image of God shall shine throughout the whole of the universe until there shall be no more night anywhere forevermore.

The glory of God is the IMAGE OF CHRIST, and we shall be fully satisfied when we awake in His likeness. Oh that the eyes of men might be opened to clearly see that back of all things and before all things, yea, in the beginning of all things, standeth God – eternal, immortal, invisible, almighty, omniscient, immutable, holy, loving, and greatest and most glorious of all, FULL OF PURPOSE! In the beginning...GOD!

Genesis means, as we have stated, “origin” or “beginning,” and this, the first book of the Bible, reveals how ALL THINGS and ALL CONDITIONS and STATES OF BEING came into existence. Genesis 1:1 reads: “In the beginning God created...” There is no doubt in my mind but that this marked the beginning

of everything that now exists in all the unbounded heavens except God Himself who is before all things and by whom all things consist. The verse should be read, "By beginnings, God created the heavens and the earth." Farrar Fenton, in his translation of the Bible, attempts to express this truth and renders the passage, "By periods God created..." And, lest any one should question this, in the New Testament in Hebrews 1:10, it has the word "beginning" in the Greek in the plural. Anyone who knows Greek will see this, although the Bible translators fail to reflect it. It, also, should read, "and, Thou, Lord, according to beginnings didst lay the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the words of thy hands." There were many things begun all at the same time, as the manifold wisdom of God found expression in innumerable ways to bring forth into the realm of visibility the majestic purposes of God. It was the beginning of the UNIVERSE and of TIME (Heb 1:2). It was the beginning of every existing life-form, even unto the principalities and powers of the heavens, referred to in the Scriptures as THE HOST OF HEAVEN." Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all THE HOST OF THEM" (Gen 2:1). "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and ALL THE HOST OF HEAVEN standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him" (I Kings 22:19-22). "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of THE HEAVENLY HOST... and it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them..." (Lk 2:13-15). It was the beginning of MAN (Gen 1:26). It was the beginning of SATAN (Gen 3:1, Jn 8:44; I Jn 3:8). It was the beginning of SIN, of CONSCIENCE, and the whole realm of DUALITY – "good and evil" (Gen 1:26). It was the beginning of the REDEMPTIVE purposes of God in Christ Jesus (Rev 13:8). It was the beginning of the outworking of God's eternal purpose to reveal the fullness of Himself, through the body of Christ, the sons of God, unto the entirety of the creation (Eph 3:9-11; 2:6-7). There is neither time nor space to enumerate all that is included within the scope of the "beginnings" in Genesis 1:1, but surely it can be summed up in just two words – ALL THINGS." For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col 1:16-17).

The first several chapters of the Book of Genesis lay a ground-plan for the entire revelation of God's purposes. As a piece of literature the story is sublime; magnificent in range, in profundity of design, and the unparalleled heights of spiritual understanding which it attains. Here in these chapters is the visual prophecy and seed-plot of the whole plan of creation and redemption. I can confidently say that every revelation of Himself and His purpose that God has ever given from the foundation of the world is contained in these opening chapters of Genesis. There is absolutely no revelation of the Scriptures, spoken by prophets or apostles, or revealed in the depths of the spirits of worshipping men who have come into holy contact with the presence and power of God, which cannot be found in SEED FORM, as type, shadow, parable, or allegory in the Book of Genesis. The entire plan of the ages is there portrayed. Each and

every experience, situation, condition, capacity, potential and destiny of mankind, with all the principles and processes by which God shall bring man to perfection, in the image of God, is there set forth in awe-inspiring wonder. And nowhere is this more obviously true than in the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:8-9).

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is the greatest parable in the Bible. It is supremely important because it explains the real nature of our life here on earth. It tells us about ourselves, about our state of being, and how we bring about the conditions in which we live. It is the blueprint of man’s experience on earth and his destiny in God. When you thoroughly understand the Garden of Eden you will understand the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of Satan. This parable is placed at the beginning of human history, because it is the foundation upon which the whole plan of purpose of God is built. The entire revelation of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, assumes an understanding of the great principles and characteristics in the Garden of Eden.

Don’t let it disturb you that I call the Garden of Eden a parable. What is a parable? Your dictionary or Bible Concordance will tell you that a parable places one thing alongside another for a variety of reasons. There are quite a number of English words which sound a little like parable; in fact they all start with the same four letters, P-A-R-A. This prefix “para” means “by the side of.” One word I would like you to think of is the very common word parallel. It’s a word they use a great many times in school. In the Art Department, in the Geography Department, in the Mathematics Department, even in the Music Department, as music is written on five parallel lines, and, of course, in the English Department. If you look at the edges of this paper you’ll find they are parallel with each other. If you are sitting at a table it is most likely to have parallel sides. The edges to the door of your room should be parallel; the floor and ceiling ought to be parallel; the edges of the window frames should be parallel, too! So now I’ve got you thinking about this word parallel perhaps it would help if we wrote the two words down like this:

P A R A B L E

P A R A L L E L

Now we can ask another question: If a parable is only a story, why not call it a story? Why use an unusual word like parable, if an ordinary word like story will do? The answer is simple: A parable is more than a story. It is a story plus, it

has a bonus added to the story. It has two things that run side by side – the lesson and the reality!

So that's where a parable is different; it's more than a story – it has a story line and then a parallel line – a new idea, concept, or meaning to comprehend! Also – parables may be based upon actual events. For instance, when Jesus begins His parable by saying, "A sower went forth to sow..." if there were no such things as actual farmers, soil, and seed we would miss His point altogether. The natural and outward corresponds in principle to the spiritual and inward – the one is set along side the other. That's just what makes it a parable! So do not be distressed by the representation of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden as a parable!

There is one thing about which God's people must be perfectly clear. The Bible is not primarily intended to teach history or biography. It is intended to teach THE PURPOSES OF GOD and SPIRITUAL REALITIES. It deals primarily with states of being and the laws of spiritual activity; and anything else is only incidental. Each of the principal characters in the Bible represents a kind of nature, character, or state of being that any of us may experience and walk in; and the events that happen to the various characters illustrate the consequences to us of walking in such realms of nature and character, either good or bad. Some of the Bible characters, such as Adam and Eve, Moses, Elijah, and Paul, are indeed historical figures. They were real people who lived on earth and did the deeds attributed to them; nonetheless they represent kinds of natures and states of being revealed in their varying hues as their lives unfolded. Other Bible characters, such as the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, or the Great Harlot in Revelation are, of course, fictional and never lived on earth as actual persons; but as parables and allegories they express inner conditions and states of being too, and always in a most effective and graphic manner.

You cannot with brush and canvas paint a picture of fear for instance; but you can paint a picture of a human being, and create terror on his countenance. You cannot take a pencil and draw sensuality, rebellion, hatred, or spiritual bondage as such; but you can take a pen and write about great crises in men's lives, about the emotional trauma, inner torment, and excruciating pain caused by tyranny, brutality, hatred, bigotry, immoral conduct, hopelessness, despair, darkness, and death men execute and perpetrate upon one another. You can describe the righteous judgments of God brought into men's lives by all these evils, as does the Bible, with the symbolic term "hell fire." And the carnal mind and natural understanding is certain to think that you mean a literal human body being tortured in a physical flame! On the other hand, you cannot picture a soul abiding in the perfect peace, joy and harmony of the glorious presence of God, adoring and worshipful; but you can speak of a great choir of rapturous beings playing music upon perfectly tuned harps, and again the carnally minded people will think that redeemed souls are to spend eternity literally playing harps! The Spirit of God uses this method to impart understanding to our minds and hearts.

The Spirit uses outer concrete things to express inner spiritual realities. As Paul says, "These things are an allegory" (Gal 4:24).

In the Garden of Eden many people seem to think that Eve symbolizes woman as a sex and that Adam somehow stands for man as a sex. The truth goes far beyond this! Adam and Eve in the Garden represent the whole of humanity in the first Adam. They represent you and me and every man and woman who has ever lived or shall live. What happened to him happens to us. What he was we are. His experience is our experience. His destiny is our destiny. May the mighty spirit of wisdom and revelation from God give enlightenment to the eyes of your understanding that you may see and know of a truth that what was happening to Adam in the Garden speaks of spiritual realities even in the beginning of history, before history, beyond history and yet in history; it is we ourselves of whom the Garden speaks, it is we ourselves who are confronted, intended, addressed, accused, expelled, instructed, and redeemed.

GOD HIMSELF is the One who blesses and curses. It is our pre-history, truly our own. It is the beginning, innocence, guilt, redemption and perfection of every one of us. What happened to Adam there is what is happening to us here! Adam and Eve stand for what man is, how man is, why man is. They stand for man as we know him, with all his capacities and potentials, under the gracious hand of God, being brought from innocence to sin, from sin to salvation, and from salvation to THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Memories of Eden, exquisite as dreams, weave their threads of light into the traditions of all peoples. There is not a nation under heaven which does not date the beginning of our race from some distant period of purity, peace, and concord with nature and with God. The hieroglyphics of Egypt, the clay tablets of Assyria, the Edda of Scandinavia, the legends of Tibet, and the bas-relief of Rome, tell the same story of primitive blessedness. All go to prove the truth of the statement that the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and put there the man whom He had formed.

When we come to the Garden of Eden it is evident that this is more than merely a piece of real estate somewhere over in Mesopotamia! No such place has ever been found, neither the angel with the flaming sword to keep men out. No wonder that men have sought for it, but they have sought it in vain. The Garden of God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is a higher existence for man than this cursed state we find ourselves in by physical birth. It is the state of being that man was in when he was first brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed here upon earth. It represents man – in the presence of God! Man with the incorruptible life of God available to him! Man as master and lord over all things! Man living above sin, sickness, pain or death! Blessed realities, one and all! And yet – the Garden also represents man together with all the factors and conditions, both internal and external, of being and environment, which ultimately were to lead to his ruin and alienation from God. In one sense, man was the Garden, and yet,

man was in the Garden. The Bible reveals it as a “Garden within a Garden.” Man both in a state of being and an environment – the two corresponding. All the conditions that surrounded man were also obvious realities within the heart of man. The original man with his nature, characteristics, capabilities and potentials is what we see in the Garden of Eden. The external conditions of man’s environment corresponded precisely with man’s inward nature for either good or evil, life or death. This was man in the Garden! It is a Garden within a Garden, a world within a world.” And the Lord God planted a Garden eastward in Eden (a pleasant land).”

Some years ago Gene Edwards ministered a beautiful word on Adam and the Garden of Eden with which I heartily concur. I will share to the best of my ability the concept he shared.

In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did a most incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched - entering into union with one another. The area where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before - not heavenly and not earthly - the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time or space. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything upon this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.

Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there - just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. Out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being.

That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being. All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a "breath of life" - the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's "breath of life" is not air - it is the Spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding - intelligence and wisdom! Only the light that God IS was more glorious than this exquisite creature - man in God's image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can't peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm - no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God's image. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by anything or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm He is at home with who he is and who they are He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth He is the only creature which has ever been, is now, or ever shall be that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

Consider with me, precious friend of mine, What is the natural habitat of man? He is spirit - his natural habitat is the heavens! He is dust - his natural habitat is the earth! Both? No! Neither? Yes! Neither. And yet, in some strange, mystical way - both. This glorious creature God created - where is his "home"? Ah - God prepared the place for man as soon as He created man. He created a place that corresponds to man's true state for man to inhabit. The earth, dear one, contrary to all that you may have been taught, is not the natural habitat of man. And neither are the heavens the natural habitat of man! The Garden - and only the Garden - and no place but the Garden is your natural habitat. That's where you belong - that is your true world, your homeland, your motherland - that unique realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle - the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The Garden was not heaven, neither was it earth. It was a realm where God could walk, and where man could walk and talk with God. It was the dimension of the spiritual body - spirit and body, heaven and earth, visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial, blended into one. The greatest of the glories of heaven was in that Garden - the tree of life was there. And that was man's habitat. It was not merely where man was - it was what he was.

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God - which City we are (Rev 21:9-11; Isa 60:2,14). "And I saw the New Jerusalem having the glory of God: and her

light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever (Rev 21:10-11; 22:1-5).

How do you suppose the tree of life was transferred from the Garden of God to the City of God? The simple truth is - it wasn't! The Garden still exists. The Garden is in the City. The Garden IS the City. In this City two realms interface once more - the new heavens and the new earth - not two separate entities, but that place where heaven and earth are joined, the Land of the Interface! This is where righteousness dwells - the new mind and the new body. That is your world, my beloved. You and I belong to an interface. We are an interface. We are part heavenly and part earthly; part spiritual and part physical; part visible and part invisible. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place of union with God in the interface where heaven and earth overlap. We are a colony from the heavens inhabiting the earthlies. We belong to neither and we belong to both. We are of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are in the Lord Jesus Christ. He, more than any other man, is an interface of these two realms. He is the second man, the last Adam. He reveals in Himself the true purpose of God in man. Only in Christ can one understand the true nature of all things. He is of both these realms and He is in both of these realms. He is in both and He is in neither. It is a great mystery. Oh, the wonder of it! He is a MAN seated in the higher than all heavens! We who have been born of water and the spirit are of His species. We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, life of His life. We belong to His realm. We walk with Him today in the Garden of God, in the City of God, in the LAND OF THE INTERFACE, for it is the only place where we can comfortably move in both realms. And yet it is not both realms - nor is it either realm - it is a combination, a union of the two - a NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! That's what you are! You are spirit and you are body. That is our destiny - to be both in union in one! That is our habitat. And redemption progressively brings us into our inheritance in this blessed Land of the Interface. The salvation of the soul, the redemption of the body, will complete the work. Let us press on, saints of God! The full splendor and bountifulness of this precious Land lies just before us! As the crab lives in two elements - water and land - so the New Creation Man lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens!

There is, however, a significant difference between Eden and the New Jerusalem that we do well to understand. Eden is a representation of the "beginnings" of God's purposes while the City is the representation of the ultimate accomplishment of those purposes. In the book of Revelation all the dropped threads of history and type and prophecy and promise, that lie scattered

throughout the earlier scriptures, are taken up and traced to their appointed consummation. That principle alone could produce untold volumes of books, but let us note in passing that even in the opening sections of the Revelation the successive promises to “him that overcometh” make cryptic reference to all the past. In Ephesus the “overcomer” shares with unfallen Adam the right to “the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” In Pergamas he partakes with Moses of the hidden manna. In Thyatira he exercises kingly rule with the great king David. There are some contrasts, too. In Eden there is a serpent, and through the cunning of that serpent man was cast out. In the New Jerusalem there is no serpent, for through the dominion of Christ in man the serpent is cast out! In Eden there is the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the City there is only the tree of life! Eden is man on trial. The City is man purified and perfected. Eden is man faced with the processings of God through choices and experience, through testings and dealings, for his own learning and development. The City is man established in the MIND OF CHRIST having overcome all things. It is the long and tedious route between these two points with which we are presently concerned in the dealings of God in this momentous hour!

FROM GARDEN TO GARDEN

God placed Adam the first in the Garden of Eden, a place of light and beauty, where was “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” It was in this Garden that he listened to the tempter and transgressed, dragging the whole human race down with him into sin and death.

How interesting, then, to read in John 19:41, “Now in the place where He (Jesus) was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid. There then because of the Jew’s preparation (for the tomb was nigh at hand) they laid Jesus.” Of this “garden tomb” we further read, “When even was come, there came a rich man from Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus’ disciple; this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded it to be given up. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed” (Mat 27:57-60).

We find by the Word of God, that in the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden belonging to a rich man named Joseph. That this garden was carefully tended is implied by Mary Magdalene mistaking Jesus for the gardener. In this garden, according to a custom of those days, Joseph had hewn out for himself a tomb in the rock; and in this tomb, upon a bed of spices most fragrant and costly, Joseph laid the body of our precious Lord. Let all men take note that

it was in a GARDEN, overshadowed by darkness that covered the whole land, amid the quaking of the earth and the rending of the rocks, that Jesus Christ, the second man, the last Adam, died. It was amid the opening of tombs, from which rose many of the saints who had fallen asleep, that He ROSE FROM THE DEAD! And I can declare to you that when He arose on that glad morning He brought up with Him out of spiritual death all who would believe on His Name throughout all ages; and He gave unto them eternal life. Death came through the first Adam in the Garden of Eden, and eternal life came through the second Adam in the Garden of the Cross and of the Tomb.

In order to open the way into the greater Garden of the Lord, or the Kingdom of Heaven, our Lord went through two gardens. The first was the Garden of Gethsemane, in which He chose concerning the last garden, which is the Garden of the Cross and the Tomb. In the last, He finished the work which would open the Kingdom of Heaven to all who would believe on His Name. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that He chose that the will of the Father should be done and naught else." My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Mat 26:39). We sometimes think because He came to die, that there was no choice presented to Him on earth. It is unmistakable that there was a choice, and that it was made with great suffering and agony. Would He beseech God the Father to let the cup pass from Him (at the same time, choosing God's will) if there were no choices? Would He sweat great drops of blood if there were no suffering?

The word Gethsemane means "oil press." What a contrast – Eden the garden of beauty, pleasure, and perfection, Gethsemane the garden of the oil press! It was essential that the second man, the last Adam should pass through Gethsemane, that He might be perfected through suffering, and thus win for man the right once more to enter into the garden where blooms the tree of life. Now it became the master Himself to enter into that awful pressure, until the last vestige of man's will had been dealt with, opening the way back into the Eden of God!

The second garden through which Jesus passed was the Garden where He was crucified and buried, the Garden of death, burial and resurrection. Truly much eternal fruit came up out of the Garden of the Tomb. It was not Jesus alone that came out of that tomb, but He brought with Him EVERY SOUL WHICH SHALL EVER RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE through Him. He passed through two gardens to open up the Greater Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in these "Gardens within a Garden" He shall plant such pleasant plants as shall bring forth glory and honor to God. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is a Garden enclosed; Salvation is the walls thereof and Christ is the door. Only through Him can any enter this Garden that Christ has set up on earth, and which will have its full fruition in that glorious age which is now at hand. It is to those that enter this Great Garden and became a part of it by being planted therein, that God gives "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, THE PLANTING OF THE LORD, that He might be glorified" (Isa 61:3).

Let us read what the Spirit said through the prophet in Isaiah 51:3. "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Of course you know that apples cannot sing, grapes cannot show forth gladness, nor can orange trees rejoice in the Lord! He is talking here about His people, a people that is being comforted while in a wilderness state as waste places, and eventually brought back to a life or existence known as EDEN, the GARDEN OF THE LORD.

Look at what the Song of Solomon says about the Garden of the Lord." A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (S of S 4:12). In the Hebrew, the word "is" is omitted, and therefore is given in italics in the King James version indicating that it is a word supplied by the translators. A better translation is: "A garden shut up, my sister, my bride." This implies that His Beloved is distinct from the "garden" in this verse, although in other portions she is spoken of as being a part of it. A garden means in itself a girded place, an enclosure, and the word that we render here "enclosed" properly signifies barred, locked or shut up. It is in fact the exact word that is used in the remainder of the same verse, "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." We all know that the Garden of God was "enclosed," "shut up," "locked," and "barred" when once the cherubim were placed before the gate in that long ago. The vision of the verse is that the King is calling His Beloved that she might come to look out upon the "garden" that He has prepared. This Garden is the same as Canaan, the Promised Land." A land of hills and valleys and drinketh water of the rain of Heaven, a land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut 11:11-12). The spiritual meaning is the Kingdom of Heaven opened up for us by King Jesus. It is Eden reopened!

Man began in a Garden. He sinned in a Garden. He died in a Garden. He was driven forth from the Garden. Jesus came. He passed through two Gardens. He opened up the third Garden. The third Garden is the first Garden. As the first Adam died in the Garden (of Eden), so the last Adam entered into death in the Garden (of the Cross and Tomb). The first Adam brought forth death out of life in the Garden while the last Adam brought forth life out of death in the Garden. But further, the last Adam now accomplishes the outworking and manifestation of His triumph over the realm of sin and death IN THE GREATER GARDEN OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN where we, the men of the Garden, have been planted as "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified" (Isa. 61:3). Jesus arose triumphant over the power of death from the Garden of the Tomb, but now, blessed be His name! He is rising up triumphant over sin and death within the New Creation men of the Greater Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven!

It is into the Garden of OUR DEATH that He has come. Therefore we read in Hebrews 2:14-15, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and

blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It is of great importance that we see how Jesus Himself entered this valley of the shadow of death on our behalf. He became obedient unto death (Phil 2:8), and walked its dismal valley for thirty-three years, finally ending it on the cross and passing again into life. As He knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death (Heb 5:7), His prayer was not that He might be saved from the death of the cross alone, but that He might be saved from the WHOLE REALM OF DEATH into which He entered for us. His dread was not simply that He would die, for He endured the cross with joy; but the terror that beset Him was the awful possibility that in some way He might miss the perfect obedience of a Son and so REMAIN IN THIS DREADFUL REALM OF DEATH and outer darkness. He had left His heavenly glory. He had humbled Himself, had taken upon Himself the form of sinful flesh. He descended from the high and holy realm of the Eternal God into the depth of totality of the human condition, into the depth of what man IS, into an identification and participation with the whole dreadful realm of darkness and death into which mankind has fallen. The death that came in Eden was far greater in magnitude than the death of a physical body. This realm of death that pertains to man includes the entire experience of man in his alienation from the life that is in God. This death is a CONDITION, a state of being. The power of death is sin, says the Word. Out of man's sin has arisen all the horrible reality of a realm of death in which is contained every sorrow, tragedy, pain, trouble, sickness, hatred, strife, heartache, rebellion, ignorance, fear and torment known to man. Jesus came and made this CONDITION His own and the only terror it held for Him was that He might not pass out of it. Thank God, His prayer was heard in that He feared, and by the cross His death was completed and by it He was delivered out of the realm of death into which He had willingly entered.

Surely now we can see plainly why it was so necessary for Jesus to come into this realm of death, for all nature teaches us that, except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. When a kernel of wheat dies, ITS LIFE IS RELEASED into the body of the plant. Therefore Jesus died and, in dying, HIS LIFE WAS RELEASED that all who believe might freely partake of it and in that life BECOME THE PLANTING OF THE LORD to bring forth in the Garden of God the precious fruit of HIS OWN IMAGE.

The quality and power of this indwelling life of Christ is spoken of in Hebrews 7:15-17."And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizadek there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE. For He testifieth, Thou are a priest forever after the order of Melchizadek." The wonderful Priesthood of Jesus is after the power of an ENDLESS life. We now come to what is implied by the word "endless." This is the Greek word "akatalutos" which means indissoluble or permanent. The power of an endless life is the power of an

indestructible life – eternal life. To understand what kind of life this is we must connect it to God, the eternal One. Eternity is an attribute of God and His divine life and has its true existence only in fellowship with God's life which is the life of eternity.

It is a great and blessed fact that God is the eternal God. Transition, adjustments, change – these words seem to be constantly with us, until we faint would grasp for something that seems to be stable, solid, enduring. Much of the inner drive for change is simple evidence that man is not satisfied, has not found his completeness in Christ, for “beloved NOW are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear WHAT WE SHALL BE: but we know that when HE shall appear, we SHALL (then) BE LIKE HIM for we shall see HIM AS HE IS” (I Jn 3:2). Here is stability – immutability – the quality of His nature remains the same, HE IS THE ETERNAL! And this is the nature of which we would be a partaker, the fullness of which we find in Christ, and through union with Him with which we shall be changed until we become changeless in the absoluteness of that which He is. He who is eternal cannot be influenced, affected, moved, changed, altered, damaged or destroyed in any way. He cannot grow tired or old. The character of God is eternal, changeless, unaffected. The love, joy, peace, righteousness and power of God do not rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. Matters not what happens or what men or devils say or do, the love of God, the purpose of God, and the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, unaffected, without fluctuation. The eternal existence of God is certain for He is the source of all life. Death cannot touch Him for He is not dependent upon the sustaining power of another. He is Yahweh, the SELF-EXISTENT ONE.

In God there is no change, or aging, or fading; He is all that He is in an ever-fresh, never changing youth. The eternal life is that which always remains the same, because it is always IN GOD. And when God speaks to His Son, saying, Thou are a Priest forever, it not only means that the Priesthood will never cease, but it points to what is the root and cause of this; it roots in the life and strength of God. Christ is become a Priest after the POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE. He is not a Priest in the House of God in some far-off heaven somewhere, but a Priest in the House of God WHICH WE ARE. His Priesthood acts as an inner life within us, lifting us up, not in theory or thought but in Spirit and in Truth, into a vital knowing of God. He breathes His own life in us. And He works it in as the power of life, a life that is pure and holy, full of vitality and strength, because it is His life.

The sole object of this indwelling and inworking life is that God may reveal His Son in us so that we know and reverence and love and serve the Father, even as does the firstborn of this family of sons. And so the one thing required of all Sons is that they bow themselves and abide and live in deep dependence and humility before the Father. However clearly we see by the eye of revelation and faith the truth of the glory of this realm of Sonship to God, however earnestly we desire it, however firmly we think we grasp it by faith, all will not avail – GOD HIMSELF MUST DO IT! God Himself must admit us to His presence, and make

His face to shine upon us. And as the path to Sonship, God Himself must write His law in our hearts, give us the new divine nature in such power of the Holy Spirit, that it is HE that works WITHIN US both to will and to do.

God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so shed abroad His love in our hearts, that to love becomes as natural to us as it is for the dove to be gentle. God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so fill us with the nature of righteousness that to be righteous becomes as natural to us as breathing. God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so clothe us with the mind of Christ, that to think the thoughts of God becomes as natural to us as are self-serving thoughts and desires to the unregenerate man.

Consider, dear brother, sister, is it not GOD HIMSELF who has faithfully directed all your steps, who has initiated every circumstance of your life, who has opened your blinded eyes and caused you to behold the majesty of His kingdom and glory? Is it not GOD HIMSELF who has led you out of the blinding traditions and bondages of Babylonian religion and has nurtured you and brought you to the stature in which you stand in Christ today? Truly do I declare to you that it was when we were without strength that God apprehended us and lifted us out of the miry pit and set our feet upon a rock. No more than you can SAVE YOURSELF can you make yourself an overcomer, bring yourself to perfection, or of yourself enter into the glorious victory of the life of Sonship.

What man by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature? What part by self-effort does a man take in secretion, in digestion of food, in the reflex actions of the body? Men need only reflect on the automatic processes of their natural body to discover that this is the universal law of Life. What does any man consciously do, for instance, in the matter of breathing? What part does he take in the circulating of the blood, in keeping up the rhythm of his heart? What control has he over growth or the biological changes producing maturity? How could any of us heal a wound, or mend a broken bone? Could we consciously direct conception, cell growth and division and instruct the developing fetus how to construct an eye or a hand or a brain cell? What man even came into the world by his own will? In point of fact man is born by the will of another, every organ of his body given him, every function arranged for him, brain and nerve, thought and sensation, will and conscience, all provided for him ready made. And yet he turns to his spiritual life AND WISHES TO ORGANIZE THAT HIMSELF! Oh preposterous and vain man, thou who couldest not make a fingernail of thy body, thinkest thou to fashion this wonderful, mysterious, subtle soul of thine after the ineffable Image? Wilt thou ever permit thyself TO BE conformed to the Image of the Son? Wilt thou, who canst not add a cubit to thy stature, submit TO BE raised by the Divine Life within thee to the perfect stature of Christ?

If any yet think that they can by thought add a cubit to their spiritual stature, let them observe the passive voice in these revelations of the Word of God: "Begotten of God;" "The new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image

of Him that created him;” or this, “We are changed into the same image;” or this, “Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son;” or again, “Until Christ be formed in you;” or “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;” “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” There is one outstanding verse which seems at first sight to contradict all this: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;” but as one reads on he finds, as if the writer dreaded the very thought that any might misapply his statement, in the very next verse he adds: “FOR IT IS GOD which worketh IN YOU both to WILL and to DO of HIS GOOD PLEASURE!” (Phil 2:12-13).

“Let us go on to perfection.” “Put off the old man.” “Put on the new man.” “I would be a Son indeed.” “I press toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.” All these are valid testimonies, but it is of great consequence that the heart should be led to see that at the back of all our believing, our desiring, hoping, walking, pressing, entering, laying hold upon, and all the rest, there is God’s almighty power doing its work – inspiring our will, taking possession of us, and carrying out its own purpose in bringing us into the image of God “Let US MAKE MAN in our image,” is the proper order.

As the child of God enters into this, the divine side of the purposes of God, he will learn to praise and to worship with new exultation, and to rejoice more than ever in the divineness of that salvation he has been made partaker of. At each step he takes, in retrospect he will sing, “This is THE LORD’S DOING” – Divine Omnipotence working out what Eternal Love has devised. This celestial song of praise will lead him even further and higher, even to the depths of eternity.” Whom HE did predestinate, them HE also called; and whom HE called, them HE also justified: and whom HE justified, them HE also glorified” (Rom 8:30). The calling in time is the manifestation of the purpose in eternity. Ere the world was, God had fixed the eye of His sovereign love on you, my beloved friends, and chosen you to Sonship in Christ. That you know yourself to now be in Christ, is the stepping-stone by which you rise to understand in its full meaning the word, “Let US MAKE MAN in our image and after our likeness.” With the prophet your language will be, “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me: yes, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I DRAWN THEE” (Jer 31:3). And you will recognize your own salvation and apprehension to the purpose of God as a part of that “mystery of HIS WILL, according to the good pleasure of HIS WILL which He purposed in Himself,” and join with the whole body of the redeemed Sons of God as these say, “In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph 1:9-10). Nothing in the whole universe will more exalt the grace and power of God, and make man bow very low before it, than this knowledge of the mystery “OF GOD in Christ.”

There is a valid reason why salvation is of THE LORD. It could not be otherwise! Man did not even choose to be. It was God who said, “Let us make man.” It was God that placed man in Eden. It was God who arranged all the

circumstances and choices in Eden. It was God who planted the tree of life, but it was also God who planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! It was God who created the serpent, and drew him into the Garden. It was God who placed man under the law "Thou shalt not eat of it." When man sinned, it was God that drove him out from the Garden!" According to the purpose of Him who worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will." I have no intention of detracting one iota from the awfulness of man's sin, and the absolute horribleness of the transgression is evidenced in all the sorrow and tragedy which have plagued mankind for lo, these six dark and frightful millenniums. Although man sinned, was it not GOD WHO DROVE MAN OUT OF THE GARDEN AND SHUT HIM UP FROM LIFE?" And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden" (Gen 3:22-23).

This is why salvation MUST BE OF THE LORD! Since God drove man from the Garden, from life, it can only be GOD HIMSELF who opens up the way for man to enter back into Eden to be made a partaker of the divine life! No man may dare approach unto that blessed Domain to either enter or put forth his hand to take of the tree of life, for to do so would be presumption of the grossest kind. How true the words uttered by Jesus: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me DRAW HIM" (Jn 6:44). Again, "And I, if I be lifted up (on the cross) from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn 12:32).

When you would falter, beloved ones, in your own strength and effort to attain to the glorious life of Sonship, remember, and allow the Spirit of God to burn this truth indelibly upon the tables of your heart and mind: He who drove you out of Eden is He who now ushers you in! The initiative is on His part, therefore it must be accomplished in HIS STRENGTH and victory. Would to God that saints would cease looking at their old nature, the flesh, the circumstances, the problems, and complaining of their weakness, as if God called them to what they were unfitted for! Would that they would believingly and joyfully accept the wondrous revelation of how God, in uniting them to Christ, has made Himself chargeable for their spiritual growth and development! How all sickly hesitancy and sloth would disappear, and under the influence of this mighty motive – the faith in the faithfulness of Him of whom they are in Christ – their whole nature would rise to accept and fulfill their glorious destiny!

Oh my soul! Yield yourself to the mighty influence of this word: "It is GOD which worketh IN YOU both to will and to do." Take time to meditate and to worship, until the glorious light that comes from the throne of God has shone into you, and you have seen that the perfecting of the image of God in your life is indeed the work of the Almighty Father. Take time, day after day, and let, in all your life, with all it has of demands and duties, of needs and desires, of pressures and claims, let, I say, GOD BE EVERYTHING. Although the work is of God, yet there is one small requirement laid upon man. We have seen that it is God who has birthed us and who is chargeable for our growth into Sonship. And yet, we find in

looking at nature, that in maintaining this natural, physical life Nature has the greater share, but man has one small share. By far the larger part is done for us – the breathing, the secreting, the circulating of the blood, the building up of the organism. And although the part that man plays is a minor part, yet, strange to say, it is not less essential to the well-being, and even to the being, of the whole. Man has to take food. He has nothing to do with it after he has once taken it, for the moment it passes his lips it is taken in hand by reflex actions and handed on from one organ to another, his control over it, in the natural course of things, being completely lost. But the initial act was his! And without that nothing could have been done. This indicates that in the spiritual life man also has this one small part to play: Let him choose Life; let him daily nourish that New Creation which he is by feeding it on Hidden Manna; let him forever starve the old life, the will of the flesh, the carnal mind; let him abide in complete yieldedness as a living branch in the Vine, and the True-Vine Life will flow into his soul and body, assimilating, renewing, conforming to the image of Christ. The secret to life is in eating of the tree of life. That is the glory of the power of Eden. Hear Jesus as He speaks to you, “Abide in Me,” while pointing upwards and saying, “MY FATHER IS THE HUSBANDMAN.” And let your answer be, Amen, Lord! So be it. From eternity Christ and I were ordained for each other; inseparably we belong to each other; it is God’s will; I shall abide in Him and eat of Him as my tree of Life. And God Himself shall do all the rest! Hallelujah!

“Come unto Me!” Abide in Me!” These are the Words of the Voice that ECHOES FROM EDEN.

Chapter 2

In The Midst Of The Garden

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:8-9).

The Bible begins with a garden – The Garden of Eden. In the morning of the world, “the Lord God planted a garden...” How exciting that statement is to all who love a garden. Come with me into a garden of luxuriant loveliness with dells of delight and paths of pleasantness. A garden planned in the mind of omniscience, prepared and planted by the hand of God. As we visit the garden together, I beseech you to walk with reverent heart and spiritual awe for the place whereon we tread is holy ground.

This is the Lord’s paradise. This is man’s first and perfect home. A holy environment of righteousness, peace and joy divinely ordained. This is the Garden of Eden where flowers never fade, where leaves never fall, where living streams never fail, where creatures never fear; without thorns or thistles, weeds or wickedness; without desolation, decay or death; where every prospect pleases and where there is no guile. God dipped His brush in the pot of colors and touched the flowers with a beauty outshining the glory of Solomon. And man walked there – in life and light and love – man in the image and likeness of the Lord God Almighty. God and man walked together in the same spirit, so they had sweet fellowship. Eden is God’s picture of His plan for man. Eden was a prophecy in miniature. The word genesis means beginning. Thus the book of Genesis is the book of beginning. Therefore the inspired record of things that transpired all through that wonderful book concern the beginnings of God’s plan. In Genesis we see in the form of a tiny seed what God’s plan was to be in the age of innocence, but the depth of the meaning of things written there are revealed to those who seek as the light of the ages unfolds its mysteries. All the world was to be a Garden of Eden. To that end God gave Adam and Eve dominion over all things with the commission to subdue them – to gather all together into God! God and man were to live together in sweetest, most intimate fellowship. The family is God’s ideal for us, with its home in a garden, and Himself as Father – Mother in the midst; its atmosphere, love; its music, the rhythm of our wills one with His, our purpose and work the extension of His. With the growth of the God-family the garden becomes a city, but it is a Garden-city, and finally the city becomes a kingdom, and it is a garden-kingdom where “the wolf and the lion shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little

child shall lead them” (Isa 11:6). “The lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain (kingdom), says the Lord” (Isa 65:25). Truly these conditions are prophetic of that glorious age when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” It is even now true in those who are made one in Him. The prophet Isaiah tells how the Lord will comfort Zion and all her waste places. He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody (Isa 51:3). O that men might see the whole plan of creation and redemption as a celestial harmony, hymning its beautiful refrain from the sun-kissed heights of the Garden of Eden to the glistening gates of the new Heavens and new Earth and spreading its mighty wings in loving care from the moment God said, “Let us make man in our image,” until that glad day when all things are subdued unto Him and God becomes all-in-all – everything to everyone everywhere. All mankind will be in the image of God, death will be destroyed, the ages will be no more, for time as we have known it will vanish away and we will be found to be inhabitants of the eternal realm.

In Genesis, as I have previously stated, we have the book of beginnings. To its first three chapters we are especially indebted for a divine light shining on many questions to which human wisdom never could find an answer. And yet it is the wisdom of God revealed in a mystery. There are two kinds of mysteries in the world, make-believe mysteries and real mysteries. A make-believe mystery is one that depends on its concealment; it is shrouded in secrecy. Such a mystery relies on darkness and the unknown. So long as it remains hidden, it arouses interest, but when it is revealed, the mystery vanishes and the secret loses its fascination. Such is the secret of the trickster and the charlatan, the stage magician and the mystagogue; their spell lies in the undisclosed, the mysterious maneuvers. When the secret to the trick becomes apparent, the magic disappears. Such is not the case with a real mystery. A real mystery can be opened and apparent to everyone. All can see the matter clearly and examine it from all sides. Nevertheless, the more it is looked at and examined, the more mysterious it becomes, deep, profound and insoluble. The story in the first part of the book of Genesis is very well-known – and still it remains a mystery. And the more the extremely simple words of the Bible text are studied, the more numerous the aspects of the riddle and mystery. As greater illumination is shed upon it, new facets of inscrutability become apparent. As we approach this wonderful scene our hearts can only cry out with the great apostle, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” (Rom 11:33). Every revelation birthed within our spirit from the lines of these inspired passages of God’s Word lead but to another intersection from which innumerable paths branch out, paths which a person can continue to tread all the days of His life. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

“Let us make man in our image and after our likeness,” was the proclamation of the Lord, and having so proclaimed His intention, the Father set in motion a plan that would span millenniums before the first Son of man, the first begotten Son of God would emerge from the inky darkness and be presented perfected and faultless as the Captain of our salvation and the Redeemer of us all. Then, after perfecting the first Son, other thousands of years would roll by while “He who has begun a good work in US” would complete and consummate it and thereby bring “many sons to glory.” “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren” “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him”.

The Father has a desire to the work of His hands, and I rejoice to be one small part of the work of His hands. In that long ago beginning Adam, the type and prophecy of man in God’s image, was brought forth from the hands of God on the sixth day of the Lord’s creative process. Why was the creation of man saved for last? Because it was the culmination of all that preceded it. Into that man God breathed the breath of life. God breathed! Although all living things have a “breath of life,” man was the only being who received his breath of life directly from God. Man’s “breath of life” is not the air of earth’s atmosphere. The breath of God is the Spirit of God – for breath and spirit are the same word in Hebrew. God breathed – God infused into man His very own life. This set man apart from the animal kingdom, for man was endowed with divine life and was fashioned in the image and likeness of God. There is great purpose here! Let me ask – was the creation of mankind an incidental event, or was it the event around which all else revolves? I believe we are perfectly safe and on God’s ground to say that the creation of man is the event around which all else revolves. Man was made in the image of God and given dominion over all things and commissioned to subdue and subject all things. That dominion is to the extent over all the works of the Creator’s hands and that includes, according to Psalm 8:3, the heavens, the moon and the stars. Can we not see by this that our earth, yea, our galaxy, is the launching pad for God’s creative, redemptive, reconstructive program on behalf of the whole creation? Let us UNDERSTAND! In man, and in man alone, was blended the reality of both the Creator and the creation! God is invisible – spirit. Creation is visible – material. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground – earth; and God breathed into him the breath of life – spirit. Man in his spirit was from God and heaven, while in his body he was from earth. Ever since man has been, he has been made to live for the one purpose of giving revelation and manifestation to God, and to be ruler for God. The invisible God desired to be known by His visible creation – but then existence was on two different planes. So God put His spirit and His image into Adam, that in the visible could be seen and known the invisible. Adam is thus the connecting link between the upper and lower worlds – between Creator and creation. Man was created for the specific purpose of becoming the bridge between the celestial heights of the spiritual realm and the lowest depths of the physical world, that God might be

known, experienced, fellowshiped. Man is thus the channel through which the Creator's grace and glory and blessing and power flow from the high realm of the spirit to the corporeal world.

Scientists are probing into two unseen worlds. One is a world too vast and far away to be seen by the eye and the other is a world too small to be observed by the eye. I want to give you three words in this connection, together with their meanings. First, we find the word MICROCOSM. This word means a little world: anything regarded as a world in miniature: man, viewed as an epitome of the universe. This word comes from two words in the Greek. One is MIKROS which means little or miniature. The other is KOSMOS meaning world. Thus we have the meaning of LITTLE WORLD. The word MACROCOSM, on the other hand, means the great world, or the universe. It also comes from two words. One is MACROS meaning great and the other is KOSMOS meaning the world. We noted above that the word MIKROS carried the meaning of "man viewed as an epitome of the universe." This word EPITOME means, among other things, A CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of something. The word MICROCOSM then gives us the meaning that man is a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of all the universe or man is all the universe in miniature. After the original creation, God then began to move to bring the whole vast creation into fellowship and harmony with Himself. In order to accomplish this God made man in the image of the creation, but also in the image of Himself. Man is therefore the bridge or connecting link between God in His spiritual existence and the creation in its visible and material constitution. God put both Himself and the whole universe into man in miniature – a microcosm of the macrocosm! His purpose is that by and through man all things shall be brought into subjection to the mind of the Lord. We read in Hebrews that we do not as yet see all things put into subjection to man, but WE DO SEE JESUS who was, we may safely say, as the second man and the last Adam, a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of God, the universe, and all mankind. In other words, what was done in and through the singular Man, Jesus the Christ, will also be done in and through corporate man, but on an enlarged scale, for Jesus said we would do even greater works than He did. There is no stagnation in God, for He continually moves ahead. And as He moves we move with Him, advancing according to His pre-determined plan What wonders lie ahead of us in this majestic pathway! Adam in the Garden of Eden was the type and prophecy of man as God intends him to be, and Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's purpose in man. All men in Christ will be the consummation of God's purpose – man in the image of God.

Would God that I had the tongue of angels and wisdom that could unfold to every spiritual mind an understanding of those supernal glories that pertain to the Garden of God! One thing is abundantly clear. God's people are His garden, that which brings forth His fruit. The Bridegroom speaks in the Song of Solomon and says, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits;

camphor, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.” (S of S 4:12-15). To which the Shulamite replies, “Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.” (S of S 4:16). The soul is here likened to a garden. What a beautiful analogy! This is not the only place in the scriptures where this description is used, for in Jeremiah 31:12 we read, “Their soul shall be as a watered garden.” And the apostle Paul expresses it on this wise: “Ye are God’s husbandry,” which is another way of saying, “you are God’s garden.” Jesus testified, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit” (Jn 15:1-2). The body of Christ – the Garden of God! If we constitute God’s garden, then nothing shall prevent the great Husbandman from bringing His heritage to abundance and fruition. It is His responsibility to look after it, and to see that it brings forth a harvest for His glory.

Corporately we all make up God’s garden, while individually we are each a garden within. The garden often becomes a beautiful type of the “inner part” of our being, and it can be traced all the way through the scriptures, beginning with the charge that was given to Adam to “keep” or “guard” his garden. In the beginning God created the earth. The “earth” is often a symbol of man, for man was taken from the earth and formed into a physical and soulful being.” The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Cor 15:47-49). But now I would draw your attention beyond that “earth” which man is. Within the earth there was a smaller, but very important place called “Eden.” Eden was the region in which God prepared a still smaller entity called the “Garden.” In the midst or middle of the Garden He planted two important trees. And above all we must notice that it was in the Garden area that the voice of God was heard. May the Spirit of the living God lay His finger of inspiration upon this scene that we may see clearly that in order to commune with God we are to enter into the deepest part of us inside of us, which the scriptures often call the “spirit.” This is where He communes with us.” The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit...” (Jn 4:27). “In the spirit” – that is where we walk in the cool of the day and commune with our heavenly Father.

Now then, since a garden is a beautiful and fragrant and fruitful place, an attractive spot, it naturally follows that the child of God should be the same. The radiance of heaven should shine from our countenances, the fragrance of Christ should emanate from our souls – the life of God should flow out from our spirit. Just as folk are attracted to a lovely flower garden, because of its inherent beauty, and look upon it with an, “Ah!” and an “Oh!” – completely enthralled with God’s creative ability – so we, as members of Christ’s body, are to be shining

examples of the grace and glory of God, “living epistles” known and read of all men, a sweet fragrance of Christ unto all. So I would ask you to take a tour of your garden today and ask yourself this question: How many flowers can I discover? How much fruit is there on the trees? If your heart is, indeed, the garden of the Lord, then you are not growing thorns, briars, or stinkweeds; but you are producing exquisite blooms of rich and varied hues, pleasing to the eye, and fruits which have an exciting aesthetic quality, delicious to the taste and nourishing to the life.

May the garden of my heart, O lovely Christ
Be fragrant with the odors of thy grace;
May sweet perfume of blooming flowers
Make pleasant, Lord, Thy dwelling place.

May fruitful vines and trees abound,
Lest tares spring up to spoil or mar;
For the beauty of Thy fruitful garden
Must waft its perfume near and far.

Send heavenly mercy drops of rain
To water oft its flowers and trees
That birds and bloom shed forth perfume
With every south wind's gentle breeze.

Oh let the cold north wind blow, too
That fiercer blasts may have their part
Within Thy fenced-in dwelling place
The garden, Lord, of mine heart.
- Eldora E. Taylor

IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, saying, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil... the fruit of the tree which is IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN... ye shall not eat of it, lest ye die” (Gen 2:8-9, 16-17; 3:3).

Against the background of this picture of the Garden of Eden it is related how man was put into this Garden in order to live in it and how two trees stood in the middle of the Garden: one the tree of life, the other the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And upon these two trees IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GARDEN the destiny of man was to be decided. There were, indeed, three kinds of trees in the

Garden. There was the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and then all those other trees denoted as “all the trees of the garden.” Man began his sojourn upon earth living in the realm of “all the trees of the garden.” But man’s future experience and destiny were to be decided by his relationship to the two trees in the middle.

Two trees in the middle. First of all there is the tree of life. It is clear from the context that man was not forbidden to eat of it. It was there, revealed, offered, and available. LIFE, abundant, immortal, incorruptible, eternal! For this reason the tree of life is mentioned very casually in Genesis 2:8-9. It was IN THE MIDDLE – that is all that is said about it! It was right there in man’s consciousness, in man’s nature. The life that comes forth from God is in the middle. This means that God, the source of life, is in the middle In the middle of the world which is at Adam’s disposal and over which he has been given dominion is not Adam himself but the tree of God’s eternal and incorruptible life. Adam’s life was to come from the middle which was not Adam in his self-consciousness, but in his God-consciousness. This means that with God as his center man would have life. It means that man was created and formed with the wonderful capacity to LIVE IN THE SPIRIT and WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT. “For ... to be SPIRITUALLY MINDED is life and peace” (Rom 8:6). One of man’s inherent potentials was to know God within as the source and center of his life.

But, like the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil also stands in the middle of the Garden! To this tree is attached the command not to eat of it upon penalty of death. Death in the middle. Within. In man’s very nature. Thus is it declared with unquestionable certainty that man was formed with the capacity to LIVE IN THE FLESH and WALK AFTER THE FLESH.” For to be CARNALLY MINDED is death” (Rom 8:6). One of man’s inherent potentials was to know Self as the source and center of his life. But alas! Self would not bring life, it would bring death. Man could make the world of appearances, the physical realm, mortal consciousness, the bodily senses and appetites his center but death would be found to dwell in that center. Life and death were in the middle. Two trees, two realities IN THE MIDST of the Garden of man’s experience and being. Both realities are in the middle – within man. One or the other is every man’s center, the plane of his consciousness, the sphere of his existence. But mark it well – both cannot be the center of any man’s life! He who eats of the tree of life will find that the death realm will come to have no more dominion over him. And he who eats of the tree of death will discover that he becomes alienated from the tree of life. Thus, both trees, both realities are in the center of man’s life but both cannot be the center of his life!” For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Rom 8:13). “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh” (Gal 5:16). How simple! God would at once be the limit and the middle of our existence.

But how could Adam grasp these mighty realities? How could Adam, living as he did in the “soul realm” of “all the trees of the Garden” understand what divine

life is when he had not yet tasted of the tree of life? How could Adam comprehend what death is when he had never yet experienced anything of its dread power? How could Adam even know what difference there is between life, good, evil, sin, and death, living as he did in the unblemished innocence of his child-like beginning? As well explain the mysteries of biology or astronomy to a new-born infant! Could all of this really mean anything more to Adam than empty words? No, Adam could not be expected to understand such awesome things, but under the gracious and skillful hand of God he would be instructed and taught. To this end man was placed on earth in a Garden with two trees in the middle – and with both God and a Serpent walking and talking with him!

THE TWO ENVIRONMENTS

It will help us in our understanding of the two trees in the middle of the garden, and man's relation to them, to look at the order of life and death in the realm of nature. Every day in the year, about 200,000 babies are born in the world. All have tiny faces and usually the same number of ears, fingers, arms, legs, and toes. All are little humans, quite alike in size, and with the same needs for food, love, protection and learning. Each also has his or her own special features. Each is like every other baby and also unlike any other baby born on that day, or on any other day in history. Now, if these same 200,000 people were to meet on their 25th birthday, their specialness would be even more obvious than at birth. Some would be very tall, some very short, and the rest would be somewhere in between. They would vary from very fat to very thin. Skin color would be yellow, brown, white, reddish, black, and all kinds in between. Equally different would be the many types of personalities, mental abilities, talents, and life-styles in these 200,000 people. All were born on the same day and at that time were similar in many ways. Within 25 years, each had grown up into an individual who is like other human beings, but who is also very different from other humans. Some would like Mexican food, others American food, and others Chinese food. Some would speak English, others French, and others Russian. They would dress differently, think and act differently.

There are two strong forces in nature which influence human life and determine what a person will be. These two forces are HEREDITY and ENVIRONMENT. Neither alone is sufficient to mold a full and useful human life. Heredity is a word used to mean the way in which certain inherent characteristics are passed from parents to children, generation after generation. Because of heredity, each baby is born with human characteristics which make him distinctly human. Environment is a word used to stand for all the external conditions and influences which become a part of a person's life and affect his development. Included in a person's Environment are the food he eats, the liquids he drinks, the air he breathes, the place he lives, the home he is brought up in, the diseases he may have, and the ideas, people, and education he is exposed to. Thus it can be seen that Environment is altogether as important a factor in what a person will be as is heredity. Perhaps even more so!

It needs to be very clear in our minds that the NATURE of man is received through HEREDITY, but the sustenance and development of that nature depends entirely upon the ENVIRONMENT. The first and primary purpose of our Environment is to sustain life. The Environment is that in which we live, and move, and have our being. Without it we would neither live nor move nor have any being. Within every living organism is contained the principle and power of life; but in the Environment is the power to SUSTAIN AND DEVELOP that life, the CONDITIONS of life. Every living thing normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, water, and food. When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and when we further bear in mind that the food-supply is contributed by the Environment, we shall realize at once the importance of the meaning and the truth that without Environment there can be no life! Almost three-quarters of the human body is water. Other important substances in the body are calcium, phosphorus, and carbon. These substances are called “elements” – they are among the hundred or so basic substances of which everything in the visible universe is made! Your physical body is composed of some of the same elements as is the world around you, and only by being in harmony with that world, only by intermingling what it is, with what you are, do you have life. For instance, through the pores of your skin two pounds of water are evaporated daily from every healthy adult. That water has to be replaced. And from where does it come? From the Environment! Meanwhile you are breathing, taking in air you can use and sending out air you cannot use. From the air you breathe in, your lungs take oxygen. You must have it to live. Matters not how much life you have in you, you must assimilate your Environment to live! The Environment is really AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. We and it must be one. We and it are one. Life depends upon that UNION – the organism united with its Environment. An organism in itself is but a part; its Environment is its complement. Alone, cut off from its Environment, it is not. Alone, cut off from my Environment, I am not. Without food, I am not. Without air, I am not. Without water, I am not. I continue as I receive. My Environment may change me, but first it has to sustain me. Its secret transforming power is directly molding body and mind and is sustaining the very life itself.

This is a great truth in the physical world. It is but a wonderful picture of the (GREATER) REALITIES in the SPIRITUAL WORLD!

This is a truth of so great importance in the Spiritual World that we shall not mispend our time in pursuing it. In the Spiritual World he will be among the enlightened and wise who understands this one great truth: Without Environment there can be no life! I speak of course of the spiritual Environment of the Spiritual Realm of the Kingdom of God. What does this amount to in the Spiritual World of God and His Sons? Is it not simply the grand and glorious truth spoken by the first-born of the New Creation when He said, “Without ME ye can do nothing” (Jn 15:5). Through the mighty work of regeneration we have been birthed into the Kingdom Realm of God as SPIRITUAL ORGANISMS, spirit beings, begotten of God, the off-spring of our heavenly Father. There is now

within us a new principle and power of life – God’s very own divine life, the life of heaven. But let every man consider this that I now propose: even in this, our New Creation Life, we require A SECOND FACTOR, a something IN WHICH to live and move and have our being – an ENVIRONMENT! The Kingdom of God has an Environment. The Spiritual World has an Environment. The whole universe is a type and shadow of this glorious truth. Every star has its gravity. Every planet has its Environment. Every living organism has its Environment. Without the Environment of the Spiritual World we cannot live divinely as Sons of God or move or have any spiritual being. Without the Spiritual Environment of the Kingdom of God the life of sonship within us is like the body without air, the fish without water, the eagle without its nest.

The great Pattern Son, Jesus, walked in the full and enlightened consciousness of this inter-relationship between Organism and Environment. He did not live independent of that Spiritual Environment which surrounds and envelops the sons of God. Jesus declared, “Believe Me that I AM IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME” (Jn 14:11). It was not only the Father IN THE SON, it was also the SON IN THE FATHER. The Father was the CENTER of Jesus’ life. That blessed Christ also prayed for the younger sons who were to afterward follow in His steps, saying, “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, are in Me, and I IN THEE, that they also may be one IN US; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me” (Jn 17:11,21). Christ knew that as a son He was the Organism and His Father was the Environment. The Father was that IN WHICH THE SON LIVED AND MOVED AND HAD HIS BEING. And what is the Environment of the sons of God? It is God in Christ. God in Christ is our Environment in whom we live and move and have our being!

Multiplied thousands of God’s precious elect saints have been lifted into new and wonderful realms of understanding and experience as the great truth of “Christ in you” has been quickened to their believing hearts; but I declare to you today that altogether magnificent is the marvelous fact of our being “in Christ.” To know “Christ in you” is to know the reality of your inward spiritual life, but to know yourself as being “in Christ” is to know the reality of Christ as your Environment, your sphere to existence. By translation into the Kingdom of the Son we have been raised up into a new and altogether different Environment in the heavenlies of which Jesus spoke when He said: “As the Father hath loved Me, so I have loved you. ABIDE IN MY LOVE, even as I ABIDE IN MY FATHER’S LOVE” (Jn 15:9-10). In the light of Christ’s union with the Father, our union with Him becomes clear. His life in the Father is the law of our life in Him

Our present thought is a very simple one. We seek to show the boundless range and scope of one brief phrase of two or three short words: in Christ, or, in Christ Jesus. These three short words are, without doubt, the most important ever written, even by an inspired pen, to express the relationship between the sons of God and God in Christ. This term appears over one hundred and thirty times in the New Testament. When, in the Word of God, a phrase like this occurs so

often, and with such manifold applications, it can not be a matter of small importance; there is a deep design. God's Spirit is bringing a truth of the highest importance before us, compelling us to give heed that the Spirit of revelation may unfold its marvels to our believing hearts. Paul wrote that if any man be in Christ Jesus He is a NEW CREATION. The things, the Environment of the old creation have passed away and ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. The New Creation is IN CHRIST JESUS. Every created thing has its Environment. Every created organism has to live and move and have its being in its particular Environment. The Environment of the NEW CREATION is CHRIST! A new life living in Christ. Jesus Himself clearly and forcibly expressed it in John 15:4: "Abide IN ME and I in you." The organism is composed of the very same elements as its Environment, but it cannot live in separation from its Environment!

This phrase "in Christ Jesus" means that He is to the true believer THE SPHERE OF THIS NEW LIFE OR BEING. Let me emphasize – a sphere rather than a circle. A circle surrounds us, but only on one plane; but a sphere encompasses, envelopes us, surrounding us in every direction and on every plane. If you draw a circle on the floor, and step within its circumference, you are within it only on the level of the floor. But, if that circle could become a sphere, and you be within it, it would on every side surround you – above, below, before, behind, on the right hand and on the left. Moreover, the sphere that surrounds you also separates you from whatever is outside of it. This is ENVIRONMENT! Again, in proportion as such a sphere is strong it also protects whatever is within it from all that is without, even as our atmosphere protects us from the deadly rays in space. And yet again, it supplies, to whomsoever is within it, whatever it contains, as our atmosphere supplies all that is needed for our physical life.

Christ is here presented as THE SPHERE OF OUR LIFE AND BEING, and in this truth are included these conditions: First, Christ surrounds us in His own life; second, He separates us in Himself from all hostile influences; third, He protects us from all perils and foes to the new creation life; fourth, He provides and supplies in Himself all that is needful for us sons of God. Without Christ as our Environment, therefore, there is no life, no thought, no energy, nothing – "Without ME ye can do nothing!"

The most common error in the lives of many of the Lord's people is the attempt to live without knowing Christ as their Environment, failing to make HIM the absolute CENTER of their existence, the SPHERE of their life. We have seen that any organism contains within itself only one half of what is essential to life; the second half is in the Environment. It follows that the one supreme condition for life is UNION BETWEEN THE ORGANISM AND ITS ENVIRONMENT. No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me" (Jn 15:4). The word here, it will be observed is cannot. It is the irrevocable law. Fruit-bearing without Christ is not an improbability, but an impossibility As well expect the natural fruit to flourish without air and heat, without soil and sunshine. God is our refuge and strength. "He that eateth My

flesh, and drinketh My blood, DWELLETH IN ME, and I in Him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live BY THE FATHER: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me” (Jn 6:56-57).

As the natural man must have sustenance from his Environment, so the spiritual man. The spiritual man must come to know how to live by his Environment. After he has got life you must give him food. Now, what food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with doctrines, or with experiences? No; there is a rarer nutriment than all these – so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich, that they who have will never live on other fare again. It is this: “My meat IS TO DO THE WILL of Him that sent Me” (Jn 4:34). To do God’s will! That is what a son lives for: but it is also what he lives on. MEAT. Meat is strength, support, nourishment. The strength of the life of sonship is drawn from the Father’s will. Man has a strong will. But God’s will is everlasting strength – Almighty strength. Such strength he who lives by the will of the Father receives. He grows by it, he assimilates it – it is his life.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of God” (Mt 4:4). Nothing can satisfy the son’s appetite but this – he hungers to do God’s will. Nothing else will fill him. Every one knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. It has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. It has pleasures, and gaiety, and excitement; but there is no food there for the immortal craving of the spirit. It has the theatre and worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate flesh and soul.

The Church-world is hungry too. Starving, in fact. Oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has rituals, and stirring programs, and impressive ceremonies, and external ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and incense, and temples and cathedrals, and priests and preachers, and organization, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved “in the work,” and committed “to the work,” and “giving to the work.” They do and do but in all this something other than CHRIST has become the central factor. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the ministry, or the experience, or the method, or the personality or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate, and millions of Christians are drunk with them and in their distorted hilarity think they know the living Christ. There is no SUBSTANCE in them! So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing.” My meat is to do the Father’s will.” To do God’s will! No possibility of starving or suffering malnutrition on this fare. God’s will is eternal. It is eternal food the sons of God live upon. In spring-time it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. Oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

The truth of these words is simply this: the strength of life for a Son of God is to do God's will. Now that is a great and surprising revelation to many. No man ever found that out. It has been before the world these two thousand years, yet few have even found it out today. One will tell you that life is in keeping the commandments, another that life is in attending meetings, another that life is in taking communion, another that life is in winning souls, another that life is in water baptism, another that life is in speaking in tongues. One will tell you it is to do good, another that it is to get good, another that it is to be good. But life is none of these things. It is more than all. Life is not to have an experience, or do this, or that, or the other – just to do what God wills, whether that be working or waiting, or winning or losing, or suffering or recovering, or living or dying.

We feel helpless beside a truth so great and eternal. God must teach us these things. Like little children we must sit at His feet and learn. If Adam would have realized even this, he would never have touched of death. There, at the very outset is the key to life. Any one of us can tell in a moment whether we are living by this Environment of God's will. Are we doing God's will? We do not mean, Are we doing God's work? - preaching, or teaching, or prophesying, or collecting money, or winning souls, or healing the sick – but God's WILL. A man may think he is doing God's work when he is not even doing God's will. And a man may be doing God's work and God's will as much by hewing stones, or sweeping streets, as by preaching or prophesying. So the question just means this – Are we working out our common every-day life on the great lines of God's will? Is no THING the CENTER of our lives, nothing but CHRIST. This is the tree of life in the middle of our garden, Christ our sphere of life. In this living union with Christ is brought to naught every work, every religious activity, every tradition and commandment of men, that only that which springs from the Spirit of God shall be wrought out, be it much or nothing.

There is another tree in the middle of our garden, the tree of death. Another potential center other than Christ. This is where the second kind of Environment enters in. Let it be perfectly clear to all who read these lines that the tree of death in Eden is nothing more nor less than the whole bestial system of this physical, temporal world, the entire fleshly realm of soul and body with its roots in the CARNAL MIND. The word "carnal" is the Greek adjective "sarx" meaning "fleshly." Therefore when the Bible speaks of the carnal mind, it simply means the fleshly mind, or the mind of the body realm and the vanity of the world which it touches. The carnal mind is never concerned with the things of God or the things of the Spirit. The carnal mind is always concerned and only concerned with the things of the flesh and the world. It is always working to satisfy the physical flesh man or the ego of the soul. It is ever planning some unspiritual thing that it can lavish on the SELF. It is significant, then, that Paul begins his list of THE WORKS OF THE FLESH with the words adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred etc for, these being the cravings of the physical body and the ego of SELF, the carnal or fleshly mind seeks to satisfy its every desire and fancy.

Also listed are rivalry, factions, heresies...How much of this we see in the so-called church-world! Churches competing against one another, who can have the most in Sunday School, who can build the most impressive building, who can win the most souls, what evangelist can draw the biggest crowds, each one pointing to the success or importance of their ministry, glorying in the size of the outreach or work, stressing how much more could be accomplished with MORE MONEY, advertising personalities WITH POPULAR (fleshly) APPEAL: a Spirit-filled millionaire, Spirit-filled entertainer, Spirit-filled Senator, Converted member of the Mafia, Catholic Priest, or perhaps a Prophet or Miracle Worker! Brethren must watch how they advertise and announce their meetings and ministries, lest the promotion of the ministry become the promotion of SELF rather than Christ. Selfishness is the nature of Self and there can be a selfish and hence a sinful ambition to attain even great spirituality. Are we furthering "our ministry" or simply doing the will of the Father? I can assure you that doing the will of the Father will many times not promote "our ministry"! How Self desires to build an image even in the area of the things of God!

The carnal mind does not always think of evil things. There is nothing particularly evil about eating food, or drinking drink, or resting in sleep, or driving a new car, or living in a mansion, or being a minister in a "thriving Church," or having a well-known ministry, or doing a great work, or helping a great many people. But what we want to point out is that the carnal mind is called the carnal mind because it is first and foremost concerned with the things of SELF whether those things be good or bad. The man who robs a bank is centered in SELF no less than the preacher who uses his "gifts" to fleece the people so that he can fill his coffers and live in wanton luxury or build a name for himself. The carnal mind never thinks of any spiritual thing, it always considers things from the standpoint of NATURAL ADVANTAGE. The things of the Spirit are nothing to it. It is always contrary to the SPIRITUAL MIND which could not care one whit whether there is any advantage to self, for the Spiritual Mind is only concerned with the things that belong to the Spirit and man's relationship with God. These two trees, the tree of life and the tree of death, the Spiritual Mind and the Carnal Mind, stand in the middle of the garden, in the middle of man's nature and existence. Every desire and activity of every single man and woman upon the face of the globe is found in one tree or the other. One or the other becomes the CENTER around which men orbit, the SPHERE of their life.

THE DEFINITION OF ETERNAL LIFE

I am indebted to the wonderful, but long-out-of-print, book *Spiritual Law in the Natural World* for many of the thoughts in this section. One of the most startling achievements of modern science is a scientific definition of Eternal Life. Science has produced a description of what, biologically, are the exact conditions necessary for an organism to live forever. For the first time science has come forth with a scientific basis for Immortality. Science does not pretend that it can

fulfill these conditions. Those who understand the principles involved in the scientific definition of Eternal Life make no claim to be able to produce such a life. It simply speculates about the necessary conditions without concerning itself whether any organism should ever appear, or does now exist, which might fulfill them.

In the book PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY we find the following: "Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the Environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet, and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and eternal knowledge" (Principles of Biology, p 88). To put this definition in language we can all understand, what it means is that if you could find or produce an absolutely PERFECT ENVIRONMENT, and, if you could find an organism which could respond and adapt 100% to that Perfect Environment, then that organism would LIVE FOREVER. The only conditions are that the Environment be absolutely Perfect and that the organism be able to fully respond and adapt to that Perfect Environment. If the Environment is not Perfect, if it is not the highest, if it contains any element of change, or imperfection, or pollution, or weakness, there can be no guarantee that the life of the organism would be eternal. On the other hand, if there is any single thing within the organism which cannot, or does not respond and adapt to the Perfect Environment then there would be a dis-harmony and the organism would die.

It is obvious that science knows of no such Perfect Environment, neither can it produce one, neither does it know of any such organism which could meet the necessary conditions of a 100% adaptation to such an Environment. But I have no hesitation in saying that SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT EXISTS! Yes, there really is a PERFECT ENVIRONMENT, and, furthermore, there has already been at least one living organism which has met all the conditions, has responded and adapted 100% to that Perfect Environment, and has already been raised up into the realm of ETERNAL LIFE, spirit, soul AND body! The Perfect Environment is the incorruptible spiritual realm of God's divine life. The holy realm of God's Spirit is the realm outside of all change, all imperfection, all corruption. If any organism, any man, can come into perfect harmony, perfect response, perfect adaptation to the holy and divine life of God, then that man would possess fully the Eternal Life. He and his Environment would be perfectly unified in perfection!

There has been one. His name is Jesus! He is the One who said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (Jn 6:38,30). "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" (Heb 10:9). This bespeaks complete adaptation to the life of the Father. Not one jot or tittle of Christ's mind, will or actions failed to respond fully to the Father. These words, uttered through the Holy Spirit by the mouth of one of God's prophets long ages before Christ's birth, are the key to His life on earth. At Nazareth in the carpenter's shop, at the Jordan with John the Baptist, in the wilderness with satan, in public with the multitude, in living and dying, it was this that inspired and guided and gladdened

Him; the glorious will of the Father was to be accomplished in Him and through Him.

This is where Adam in the garden fell short. For, lo; tempted by the devil, man committed the great sin of doing his own will rather than God's will. Yes, rather his own will than God's will! In this is the root and the wretchedness of sin, and in this is the power of death! The power of death is in an imperfect organism responding and adapting imperfectly to an imperfect Environment. Since there is no perfection of life, death is the inescapable result.

When Peter speaks to the multitude in Acts 2:23 he refers to Jesus in these words: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Peter then declares, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: BECAUSE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT" (vs 24). This reveals that Jesus rose from the dead for a most remarkable reason: It was simply IMPOSSIBLE for death to hold Him! Death COULD NOT hold Him. Why? Long before that glorious resurrection morning the Lord had declared, "For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (Jn 6:38). Jesus lived and walked and breathed in the fresh air of the Environment of the Spiritual World of His Father. Nothing could motivate or control Him except the will of the Father. He had absolutely no correspondence to the desires and lusts and passions and demands of the fleshly realm of this world's bestial system. Nothing in the whole world could hold Him! Sin could not hold Him, for He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). Satan could not hold Him, for when satan tempted Him He answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of God" (Mat 4:4). His mother could not hold Him. His friends could not hold Him. The Pharisees could not hold Him. The traditions of the Elders could not hold him. His own personal desires, His own will could not hold Him. The hatred of His enemies, the plaudits of His friends could not hold Him. So it was a natural thing that DEATH COULD NOT HOLD CHRIST, because nothing else could hold Him! He was not from beneath, He was from ABOVE. He did not live by the polluted Environment of the earth realm, His life was IN GOD who was ALL to Him. It is my deepest conviction that herein lies the secret to the OVERCOMING LIFE OF SONSHIP, the key to the manifestation of the sons of God. When NOTHING ELSE CAN HOLD US except the nature and mind and will of the Father, then every enemy shall be under our feet – including the last enemy which is death!

Long before science came along with a scientific definition for Eternal Life, Jesus had already laid down this definition. With Him it was not theory, for He lived it, tested it, and DEMONSTRATED and PROVED IT! Let us place Christ's definition alongside the definition of science, and mark the points of contrast. Perfect and complete correspondence with a Perfect Environment is Eternal Life, according to science." THIS is Eternal Life," said Jesus, "that they may KNOW THEE, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent" (Jn 17:3). Life Eternal is

to know God. To know God is to “correspond” with God. To correspond with God is to correspond with a Perfect Environment. And the person who attains to this, in the nature of things must live forever. The whole purpose of God in redemption is to bring man into that perfect correspondence with HIM. To bring men to this perfect correspondence involves a process. From glory to glory. Already, in our spirit, this perfect correspondence has been accomplished. In the area of our spirit we are NOW ONE WITH GOD.” He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (I Cor 6:17). It is now our soul and body which must be dealt with, brought low before Him, in submission unto death, that our whole being may be brought to that perfect correspondence with the Father. Jesus is the Pattern. Overcoming is the process. Eternal Life fully wrought in spirit, soul and body is the result.

Let us return for a moment to the two trees, the two Environments. Life is in correspondence with the Environment of the Spiritual World of God, the tree of life, while death comes through correspondence with the Environment of the natural, physical world, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There is an impassable gulf between carnal mind and the spiritual mind, for the spiritual mind is concerned only with the things of God and all the things that concern the Spirit, which things lead to life and immortality. But the fleshly or carnal mind is concerned only with the things of the physical realm of soul and body, Self, which things lead only to death and corruption because there is NO LIFE IN THEM. For this very reason the Scripture says, “If ye live AFTER THE FLESH, ye shall die, but if ye THROUGH THE SPIRIT do mortify the DEEDS OF THE BODY, ye shall live” (Rom 8:13). What other result could there possibly be, for there is no life in the physical world. Therefore, to live for the sake of the body with its earthly desires must end in death. The whole Environment is impregnated with death and to correspond with that Environment means swift and certain death. But the Spirit is eternal, immortal, incorruptible; therefore, TO LIVE AFTER THE SPIRIT IS LIFE. Thus Paul says, “To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life” (Rom 8:6). Science today is discussing WHAT DEATH IS.” To be carnally minded IS DEATH.” That is the correct definition of death. What is death? To be carnally minded!

The point we must see above all other is that if we live after the flesh we will die, the reason being that there simply is NO LIFE IN THE FLESH or in any of its manifestations, neither is there LIFE in anything it can do, accomplish, or design. Therefore, when Paul says, “If ye live after the flesh YE SHALL DIE,” the reason for this death is most obvious. It is because you are living after a realm that has no life in it. To get life out of the fleshly realm is like getting blood out of a turnip. You cannot get what isn’t there! You are trying to find life where there is only death. Therefore, if a man sees God with the EYES OF HIS SPIRIT, he will LIVE. But if he looks upon the man-made IMAGES OF GOD with the eyes of his flesh, he will die. If he drinks the water of life with his spirit, he will live forever; if he drinks water from a well, or eats soda crackers and drinks grape juice with his body, he will die. There is no external, physical ordinance, ritual or ceremony that can give man life for it is only in WALKING AFTER THE SPIRIT that life can be found. If a man HEARS THE VOICE OF GOD with the EAR OF HIS SPIRIT, he

will live; if he only hears the voices of earth, even of creed and doctrine, with the ear of his body, he will die. If his spirit touches God, he will live; but if his flesh touches the things of earth, both he and they will die.

To understand the things written above is of eternal importance, for until we do understand them we will continue to place great emphasis on the things that concern only the realm of the natural man, a realm which consumes all our time and effort from the crib to the coffin, yet a realm that the Scripture describes as grass, a realm that is of no more true value than dung, a realm that profits not one whit those who take their complete fill of it. The Bible asks the question of the fleshly life: "What is your life?" There lie scattered throughout the Bible no fewer than seventeen answers to this question. Let us run over their names." "What is your life?" It is: A tale that is told, a pilgrimage, a swift post, a swift ship, a handbreadth, a shepherd's tent removed, a thread cut by the weaver, a dream, a sleep, a vapor, a shadow, a flower, a weaver's shuttle, water spilt on the ground, grass, wind, nothing. Generally speaking, the first thing to strike one about these images is that they are all QUICK things – there is the suggestion of brevity and fleetingness about them. Centuries ago, Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit made this remarkable statement: "For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal" (II Cor 4:18).

When you go to the grave, my friend, you will be stripped of all that is temporal, and all your five physical senses will be no more. Choose the eternal, then, and let it never slip from your grasp. Hold with a loose grip all things which belong to this present life, for they are swiftly passing away and withering into nothingness before your eyes.

We spend our health to gain our wealth
We sweat and toil and save.
We spend our wealth to gain our health,
And all we get's the grave
We live and work for things we own;
We die, and only get a stone.

Little wonder, then, that the beloved apostle John penned these important words: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER" (I Jn 2:15-17). It is IMPOSSIBLE to walk after the flesh and to mind the things of the flesh and at the same time possess Eternal Life. And why? Because those who walk after the flesh depend upon and correspond with an Environment which is not eternal. Their correspondence is established with that which passes away. We find then that man, or the Spiritual Man, is equipped with two sets of correspondences. One set possesses the qualities of everlastingness, the other is temporal. Here, within man, in the center of man's nature and existence, are the tree of life and

the tree of death in the middle of the garden. But unless these two are totally SEPARATED by some means the temporal and fleshly will continually impair and hinder the eternal and spiritual. The final preparation, therefore, for the inheriting of the fullness of Eternal Life, and adoption, the redemption of our body, must consist in THE ABANDONMENT OF THE NON-ETERNAL ELEMENTS. These must be unloosed and disassociated from the higher elements of the Spirit. And this can only be effected by the DEATH TO SELF and all the desires and cravings of the fleshly mind "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it UNTO LIFE ETERNAL" (Jn 12:25). Death persists in man because certain relations in his being are not adjusted to certain relations in the Eternal Perfect Environment of God's Life and Nature.

This is why death is associated with the CARNAL MIND, with IMPERFECTION. Death is the necessary result of Imperfection, the necessary end of it. Science has shown that a PERFECT ORGANISM in a PERFECT ENVIRONMENT would necessarily live forever. To abolish death, therefore, all that would be necessary would be to abolish Imperfection. Paul put it this way: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to PERFECTION" (Heb 6:1). Of the result of such Perfection he said: "But whatever former things I had that might have been gains to me, I have come to consider as one combined loss for Christ's sake. For His sake I have lost everything and considered it all to be mere rubbish in order that I MAY WIN CHRIST, and that I may be found... IN HIM. For my determined purpose is that I may know Him... and that I may in some way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection: and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed to His death, that if possible I may attain to the resurrection THAT LIFTS ME OUT FROM AMONG THE DEAD EVEN WHILE IN THE BODY. Not that I have now attained this ideal OR AM ALREADY PERFECT, but I press on to lay hold of and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me and made me His own" (Phil 3:7-12, Amp Bible).

Thank God that He is changing us! Each and every change and transformation, each and every victory and triumph brings our being more and more into correspondence with the realm of His divine life. Like Him! Blessed hope, this is. More like Him today than yesterday. MORE LIKE Him tomorrow. More weaned away from earth's polluting Environment of self-centeredness and fleshiness. More able to breathe the atmosphere of the pure and perfect realm of the Kingdom of God. Death is being swallowed up. Jesus is leading us on!

Having seen, then, the great and important issues at stake IN THE MIDST of our garden, let us no longer spend our lives as men of this world, vainly striving to satisfy that which is passing away, for this serves only to bar our progress to the realm of true reality which is the realm of the Spirit, but, counting soulish and bodily pleasures and pursuits as nothing, let us WITHOUT THESE HINDRANCES, lay hold on immortality where all our spiritual senses operate in the realm of reality and life.

Chapter 3

In The Midst Of The Garden

(Continued)

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”(Gen 2:8-9,16-17).

It needs to be perfectly clear and forever settled in our minds that God makes no mistakes, because He is omniscient. He is never taken by surprise nor is He ever forced to alter His plan, for He is immutable. He never fails in His purposes, because He is omnipotent, glorious in power, fearful in praises, doing wonders. It is only foolish and ignorant men who picture God in heaven taken by surprise at Adam’s sin, pacing up and down Hallelujah Boulevard wringing His hands, hastily trying to concoct some new scheme by which to rectify an unforeseen an unfortunate situation. I find nothing but pity for those preachers who purport to be the ministers of Christ yet possess no more spiritual understanding than to teach that Adam’s sin took God by surprise, upset His apple cart, destroyed His wonderful conceived plan, and aborted His magnificent purpose. God didn’t plan it that way, they say, but that’s how it turned out! If this be so, then God is not omniscient, God is not omnipotent, and God is not immutable.

Such foolish prattle is repugnant to the spiritual mind, for it leaves us in the unenviable position of having to believe that satan is wiser and more subtle than the Omniscient Himself. It causes men to believe that lie that God was tricked by a creature of inferior wisdom.

H. G. Wells portrayed it vividly for us when he said that the world is like a great stage production produced and managed by God, and as the curtain goes up, all is lovely to behold. It is fantastically beautiful and the characters are a delight to both eye and ear. All goes well until the leading man steps on the hem of the dress of the leading lady, who falls over a chair and knocks over a lamp, which pushes over a table into the side wall, knocking this over into the back scenery, which brings the whole thing down in chaos on the heads of the actors! Meanwhile, behind the scenes, God, the producer, is running frantically to and fro, pulling strings and shouting orders, desperately trying to restore order to the chaos, but... ah! ... alas! ...unable to do so! This is the God of the modern

church, a very little, very weak, very limited God. As one unbeliever put it, "Either God is not good, or He is not powerful; otherwise the world could not be in the mess that it is in." And since most people are unwilling to believe that God is not good, they conclude that He therefore is not all-powerful; He's doing the best He can in the face of satan's subtlety and man's rebellion, but the "best He can" is just not good enough!

Many people see this world as a world that is running loose, like a chariot which has thrown off the driver, the horse running wild, the reins flapping in the wind, knowing not wither it goes, and about to plummet off the edge of the road into the abyss. But the scripture presents a God who has the reins of this world firmly in His hands... who is absolutely in control of all things whatsoever shall come to pass... who is working out His perfect plan for the world, and has been doing so from the very beginning. The Lord God Almighty says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure... yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, and I will also do it." But as always, the preachers and teachers are convinced that such an One as He could be outsmarted and outwitted by such an one as satan. This childish nonsense has been upheld as truth by the church systems for centuries and even today is shouted from practically every pulpit and proclaimed over radio and television to untold millions of impressionable listeners.

The usual idea preached in this dark and confused hour is that redemption is God's plan for repairing the damage caused when satan slipped up on God's blind side, when He wasn't around and didn't know anything about it, and instigated the tragic fall of man, causing God's Kingdom to tumble down. God, so the world has been taught, had completed His work of creation – man was a finished creation – spiritual, immortal, perfect in character, wisdom and power. Then along came satan, and by cunning wrecked God's beautiful handiwork, thwarted God's purpose, caused man to fall into sin, darkness, and death, ruined God's perfect creation! Poor God! Then God is supposed to have looked down upon this unforeseen and unfortunate smashup, and to have thereupon thought out THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION as a means of repairing the damage. But His success seems limited. He brought forth a plan by which He would actually be able to salvage only a small part of mankind from the fearful dilemma into which he was fallen. The devil was destined to make off with the vast majority of God's creation and they would all end up in eternal hell and damnation, while an elect few would make it to some beautiful Isle of Somewhere and find the golden streets. I do not hesitate to tell you that this ridiculous story is a monstrous lie and a gross and blasphemous misrepresentation of the character, purpose, wisdom and power of God almighty. God was not found napping when man sinned. He was not taken by surprise by what the serpent achieved in the Garden. He had foreseen it all; yea, He had planned it all!" Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Yes – the serpent was successful in Eden. But his victory, foreseen and foreordained, was already being woven into the pattern of the redemption of the Son of God. In the final consummation, it would be made to serve the glorious purposes of the Most High

God, out of which would come a family of redeemed men fashioned after the likeness of Christ – a New Race springing from the second man, the last Adam, that should forever triumph over “that old serpent the devil”, and fully vindicate and truly glorify the God of Heaven.

It was the Mighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of ALL THINGS, who in the beginning proclaimed, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion” (Gen 1:26). This wonderful purpose of God to make man in His own image had been settled in the divine councils of God from eternity. The blessed Lamb had, in the determination of these councils, been slain before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8); the names of all the redeemed of earth had been written in His book of life before the foundation of the world (Rev 17:8); and all blessed sons of God, predestinated to be holy and without blame before Him in love, predestined to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD, were selected and chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-5). This is a profound and mysterious truth, impossible to fully comprehend apart from the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, but it does show us that God is omniscient, that nothing took Him by surprise, that the fall of man was not an accident, that GOD PLANNED IT FROM ETERNITY before the worlds and ages were ever framed.

Paul speaks plainly of this predetermined purpose of God to bring forth sons in His own image, saying, “Blessing be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm! Even as He chose us – actually picked us out for Himself as His own – in Christ before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and blameless in His sight... for He foreordained us (destined us, planned in love for us) to be adopted (revealed) as His own children through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His good pleasure which He had PREVIOUSLY PURPOSED and set forth in Him, He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages to unify all things and head them up and consummate them in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth... so that we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of His Glory!” (Eph 1:3-5,9-12, Amplified Bible).

It is very essential that those who walk with God in this hour should keep this truth of God’s ETERNAL PURPOSE ever uppermost in their thoughts. If we fail to comprehend the certainty of God’s very first statement concerning mankind, “Let us make man in our image: and let them have dominion,” we will undoubtedly lose our way in the frightful nightmare of sin and darkness that has followed on the heels of that inspired proclamation. The entrance of sin in Eden’s fair garden neither destroyed nor aborted this wondrous plan to bring forth human-divine sons in the image and likeness of God Himself. Did not God take to Himself all responsibility for the fall of men when inspiration penned the words; “For the creation was subjected to frailty – to futility, condemned to frustration – not because of some intentional fault on its part, but BY THE WILL OF HIM Who so subjected it. Yet with the hope that creation itself will be set free from its

bondage to decay and corruption and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children" (Rom 8:20-21).

God has some great and magnificent plans for those who become His sons." He that overcometh shall INHERIT ALL THINGS; and I will be His God, and he shall be My Son" (Rev 21:7). "And if children, then HEIRS, HEIRS OF GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom 8:17). "It has been solemnly and earnestly said in a certain place, What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You graciously and hopefully care for and visit and look after him? For some little time You have ranked him lower than and inferior to the angels, for You have put EVERYTHING IN SUBJECTION under his feet. Now, in putting everything in subjection to man, He LEFT NOTHING OUTSIDE OF MAN'S CONTROL. But at present we do not yet see all things subjected to man. But we are able to see JESUS CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR..." (Heb 2:6-9, Amplified Bible). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit WITH ME IN MY THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev 3:21).

In these verses we catch but a flickering glimmer of the glories the Spirit intended to convey when he by inspiration guided Paul's hand to pen these sublime words: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us, and conferred on us!" (Rom 8:18, Amplified Bible). We see God's purpose – to bring many sons to glory, a family of Sons brought to their highest conceivable destiny as co-sons and co-heirs of the universe with His own Son. He had this in mind before the creation, from before the foundation of the world, and this meant one thing – that the sons must be mature, capable sons, not a bunch of irresponsible little children, but knowing who they are as sons, knowing how to function as sons, and thus knowing their destiny and able to fulfill it. That means training and development from innocent little children to sons, and this to sons who can represent their Father and share His business with Him. And this is the history of the human family! Herein lies the grand purpose in the fall and redemption of the race!

God never meant that first Eden to be man's destiny He knew that Eden would never give Him an Abraham, a David, or a Paul. There are lessons that in order to learn man must go into the wilderness of temptation, into the crucible of crisis and battle. There are graces which can only be obtained in the midst of sore suffering. There is an obedience which can be learned only by the things that we suffer. If man had always stayed in Eden, he must have become a human jellyfish, without muscles and fiber, and there would have been no room for those deeds of heroism and faith which have brought out faculties otherwise unknown. Eden could only be a starting point, not a goal. Through the process of sin and redemption, and by the mighty working of the Spirit of God, men have received a power which the first Adam, in his innocence, never could know. If anyone thinks that redemption is nothing but restoration of innocence, as was found in that first paradise, then he is sadly mistaken. God let satan rob man of this in order to

give him His own righteousness instead. And if man was not to exalt himself in the high estate to which he was called, he had first thoroughly to learn the misery and wretchedness of any course other than the wisdom and righteousness of God.

There is one facet of mature experience which is often missed, yet it lies at the roots of capability on any level and none can be sure of himself and his proficiency in any profession without it. Learn this one truth and a great secret thou shalt surely know! Glorious and perfect was Adam our father in Eden's lovely garden, yet one thing was missing from his glory and perfection without which no man could ever fulfill the wonders and potentials inherent in being in the image and likeness of God. Adam for all his wisdom did not know good and evil. For that very reason he fell prey to the shattering calamity of his temptation. Because he did not know evil, he did not know good either, for nothing in this world is either big or small, beautiful or ugly, hot or cold, black or white, up or down, alive or dead, good or evil, except as it stands in contrast to that which is opposite to it. He who lacks the knowledge of both good and evil will fall an easy prey to the devil and this vital knowledge, alas! can ONLY BE GAINED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL. Innocence is beautiful, indeed, but innocence, knowing nothing of experience, falls an easy prey to every harm and danger before it. How we all love the simple innocence of little children, but how swiftly do they in their innocence stick their finger in a light socket, or dash out into the street in front of the speeding traffic! Innocence is sweet but it is fraught with all kinds of dangers. Because of this very thing the beloved Paul wrote in wisdom that "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb 5:14). Thus in making man in the image of God, the first great step must be to bring him to the knowledge of both good and evil. For this reason the Spirit of the Almighty has recorded these significant words: "And the Lord God said, Behold, THE MAN HAS BECOME AS ONE OF US, to know how to distinguish between good and evil, and blessing and calamity" (Gen 3:22).

The business world is always looking for people who are proficient. Proficient means: Highly competent; skilled; an expert. No one is born proficient in any field. Proficiency is attained through training and discipline, through experience that comes through trial and error. Proficiency does not come by ignoring that there is a WRONG WAY of doing a thing, still less in denying that there is a wrong way. Proficiency comes by having known the wrong way, having tried it out, having learned and proven once for all that that way doesn't work at all. Then the RIGHT WAY can be established AS BEING RIGHT when the wrong way has been proven to be wrong. An electrician, to be proficient, must know that you don't connect the wires together that way, but this is the way it must be done. If he does not discern the good and evil in wiring up a thing he may be electrocuted. No chemist can be confident in his laboratory until he knows that you don't mix this chemical with that chemical lest you create a poisonous gas or a destructive explosion. You must know the wrong way and have it proved

wrong, before you are secure and confident in the right. There is no room for innocence here in proficiency!

And here we have God's perfect wisdom in the birth of the human race, and in the placing of them in a garden, in a condition, in a state of being, in which BOTH LIFE AND DEATH, good and evil were set IN THE MIDDLE. Through this interplay of good and evil God would bring His vast company of sons to maturity. They must discover that to be in the image and likeness of God they must be conscious that there are alternatives and make their choice – and ultimately their right choice through having first made the wrong one, and having tasted the consequences. And the wonder of our all-glorious God is that He knew this was the way His predestined family of sons must take, from wrong first and then to right; and He knew the anguish and suffering that entailed for them. He knew it, but He could not turn from it, so we find our first parents in their garden, and placed in the midst two trees, the one to give life and the other death. Why did not the Father just put them there conveniently with only one tree? It doesn't seem very kind of Him to put the two! Why could we have not just eaten of the tree of life and lived forever in the incorruptible life and nature of God? Because we would have been holy without knowing WHY we should be holy! God not only wants us to know who we are but WHY WE ARE WHO WE ARE. God could have left us in innocence protected from evil and sin, but we could never have inherited ALL THINGS and reigned with Him upon His throne in that condition. Who would make an untrained, undisciplined man pilot of a 747 jetliner? We would have been a crowd of helpless babies who knew nothing and could do nothing! No, Adam and Eve must first discover themselves, learn their potentialities for both good and evil, life and death, misuse themselves – and then they are ready to become reliable ones.

And at that tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle, the deceptive voice of that "old serpent, the devil" came to them, and what it did for them was to awaken them to discover what it is to be a Self. Enormous awakening with its vast potentialities. Through those tempting suggestions to have what she would like, Eve discovered that she was a SELF. Suppose there were just God and you in the universe and you were good and, we know, God is good; how could there be two things to choose? There certainly could be, and both of them seem pretty good too. You could choose yourself, and that usually seems good and might not seem so very bad before there was a fall. When God originally created man he was good; but mankind could not develop in wisdom and stature unless they had the power of choice. The choice was simple: they could choose God or themselves first. The instant they chose themselves that was selfishness and self-will, because the highest good and life was promoted by the choice of God and sin and death entered by the choice of Self. Selfishness is the root of all sin; it is in every sin that there is. You cannot name one that does not have selfishness as a root, and yet it looks so innocent to choose one's Self! There can be a selfish and hence a sinful ambition to attain even great spirituality. Evil is always mixed with some element of good, and that is why it is so deceitful.

The whole world system today is the product and manifestation of SELF and SELFishness of man. As fire depends on fuel and as man's breath depends on air, so also does the whole system of this world live on the self-centeredness and carnal desires of men. I can truthfully say that every industry on earth, all the technology, every war that has been fought, and even the years of learning in schools and universities have in mind the ultimate benefit of Self. Frail man not only wants to gather things about himself for his own comfort and security, but he wants to be the center of his own little universe. The more things and power he possesses, be it on the job, in politics, or in the church, the greater his universe seems to be and the greater his desire to add to it. He never discovers that he has enough, but because he finds that what he does have does not bring him the satisfaction he thought it would, he seeks to add more and more to it, hoping the extra he adds will bring contentment and fulfillment. Why do men who possess millions in earthly possessions go on adding more and more millions and billions to them? Why do men who have power seek more and more power? Simply because there is NO LIFE IN SELF. Life is only in God and things possessed apart from God cannot ever satisfy. The wages of sin is death, says the Word. It could also be said that the wages of Self is death. A consciousness of Self apart from God is a mistaken identity. Man has made HIMSELF the center and there is death in the middle of the garden.

THE ECCENTRICITY OF SONSHIP

The following is adapted from an article by an unknown author from the 1800's.

“And they (Jesus and His disciples) went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself” (Mk 3:19-21).

From the world's standpoint the most pathetic life in the history of the world is the life of the Lord Jesus. Those who study it find out, every day, a fresh sorrow. Before He came it was already foretold that He would be “despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa 53:3), but no imagination had ever conceived the darkness of reality.

It began with one of the bitterest kinds of sorrow – the sorrow of an enforced silence. For thirty years He saw, but dared not act. The horrible wrongs He came to correct were there. The hollowest religion ever known – a mere piece of acting – was being palmed off around Him as the religion of the living God. He saw the poor trodden upon, the sick untended, the widow unavenged, His father's people backslidden and scattered, His truth misrepresented, and the whole earth filled with hypocrisy and violence. He saw this, grew amongst it, knew how to cure it. Yet He was dumb, He opened not His mouth. How He held in His breaking spirit, till the slow years dragged themselves out, it is all but impossible to comprehend. Then came the public life, the necessity to breathe its atmosphere: the temptation, the contradiction of sinners, the insults of the Pharisees, the attempts

on His life, the dullness of His disciples, the Jew's rejection of Him, Gethsemane, Calvary. Yet these were but the more marked shades in the darkness which blackened the whole path of the Man of Sorrows.

But in the Scripture already quoted from Mk 3:19-21, wherein we read, "He is beside Himself", we are confronted with an episode in His life which is not included in any of these; an episode which had a bitterness all its own, and such as has fallen to the lot of few to know. It was not the way the world treated Him; it was not the Pharisees; it was not something which came from his enemies; it was something His friends did, yea, something His kinsmen, His very own family did. When He left the carpenter's shop and went out into His sonship ministry, His friends and family were watching Him. For some time back they had remarked about a certain strangeness in His manner. He had always been strange among His brothers, but now this was growing upon Him. He has said much stranger things of late, made many strange plans, gone away on curious errands to strange places, has gathered around Him a motley group of men, performed many strange miracles, and now, when He should be eating and resting, he gives no thought to Himself, but turns to minister to the multitude pressing into the house. What did it mean? Where was it to end? Were the family to be responsible for all this eccentricity? This sad day it culminated. It was quite clear to them now. He was not responsible for what He was doing! It was His mind, alas! that had become affected. He was beside Himself. In plain English, He was mad! The Amplified Bible says, "And when those who belonged to Him, His kinsmen, heard it, they went out to take Him by force, for they kept saying, He his out of His mind – beside Himself, deranged!"

An awful thing to say when it is true, a more awful thing when it is not; a more awful thing still when the accusation comes from those we love, from those who know us best. It was the voice of no enemy; it came from His own home. It was His own mother, perhaps, and His brethren, who pointed the terrible finger at Him – He was beside Himself – He was mad. There should have been one spot surely upon God's earth for the Son of Man to lay His head – one roof, at least, in Nazareth, with mother's ministering hand and sister's love for the weary Worker. But His very home is closed to Him. He has to endure the furtive glance of eyes which once loved Him, the household watching Him and whispering one to another, the cruel suspicion, the laying hands upon Him, and finally, the overwhelming announcement of the verdict of His family, "He is beside Himself."

What makes it seemly to dig out this harrowing memory today, and emphasize a thought which we cannot but feel lies on the borderland of blasphemy? Because the significance of that scene is still so intense. It has a peculiar lesson for us who profess ourselves to be followers of Christ – Sons of God – a lesson in the counting of the cost. Christ's life, from first to last, was a dramatized parable – too short and too significant to allow even a scene which well might speak to the younger Sons to pass by unexplored. When Jesus announced to His disciples that when the blessed Spirit of truth should come "He will show you things to come," He did not mean simply that the Spirit would reveal to men that California

will fall into the ocean or that the oil in the middle East will be seized by the radical Muslim Fundamentalists. He was patiently pointing out to His disciples that when the Spirit of truth should come in blazing glory into their lives He would TAKE THE THINGS OF CHRIST and show them unto them, for He continued, “He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (Jn 16:14). The “things to come” would not be such earthly things as the rise and fall of empires, wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, economic collapses and the like, but rather the glories of the REALM OF SONSHIP in which Jesus Himself walked, of which His disciples understood so pitifully little.

As I have walked with the Lord for many years and the ever increasing wonder of the glory of God’s Christ has unfolded to my wondering spirit, I have come to realize that not only did our Lord speak in parables, but His whole life from the time of His birth in Bethlehem to His ascension into heaven was in itself a parable and a mighty sign of wonders which were to come in the lives of those apprehended to live and walk in that blessed realm of sonship to God. His glorious life was a heavenly life and those who have been born of His Spirit and washed in His blood are called upon to walk even as He walked all the way into the fullness of God. In the light of this truth I now declare that the wonderful life of the first-born Son was in itself a parable, expressly prefiguring the life and walk and experience of all those Sons of God who should follow after Him.

In this marvelous parable of parables, the life of the Son of God, is found this remarkable story of how His own family seized upon him to take Him away by force because, said they, “He is mad!” And I declare to you that from the world’s standpoint, the charge is true. It is useless to denounce this as a libel, a bitter, blasphemous slander. It is not so – it is true! There was no alternative. Either He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, or He was beside Himself. A holy life is always a phenomenon. A life which lives and moves after the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven is always a wonder. The world knoweth it not. It is either supernatural or morbid. For what is being beside oneself? What is madness? It is eccentricity – ec-centr-icity – having a different center from other people. Webster defines eccentricity as: Not having the same center, as two circles; not having the axis exactly in the center; out of the ordinary; deviating from the norm, as in conduct; unconventional. Here is a man, for instance, who devotes his life to collecting objects of antiquarian interest, old coins perhaps, or old editions of books, or perhaps nothing more sensational than stray dogs or cats. His center is odd, his life revolves in an orbit of his own, his center is different from those around him, therefore his friends say, he is eccentric.

Ray Prinzing once commented on this word, “Some folk differ from the norm of society, filling their life with numbers of cats, or dogs, their house is full in every room, their yards are full of them, for they are centering their lives in animals. Some thus view them as being ‘eccentric’, for their center is odd, different than those about them, their life revolves in an orbit of its own.”

Or here is an engine with many moving wheels, large and small, cogged and plain, but each revolving upon a central axis, each turning in a perfect circle. But at one side there is one small wheel which does not turn in a circle. Its motion is different from all the rest, and the changing curve of its motion is unlike any ordinary line of the mathematician. The engineer will tell you that this is called "the eccentric," because it has a peculiar center.

Now when Jesus Christ came among men, He found them nearly all revolving in one circle. There was but one center to human life – Self. Mattered not whether it was the merchant peddling his wares, the king in the palace, the thief by the road, or the priest in the temple. Man's chief end was to glorify himself and enjoy himself forever. Then, as now, by the all but unanimous consensus of the people, this present life and this present world were sanctioned as the legitimate object of all man's effort and energy. By the whole gravitation of society, Jesus – as a man – must have been drawn to the very verge of this vast vortex of self-indulgence, personal ease and pleasure, which had sucked in the populations of the world since that fateful day in Eden. But He stepped back. He refused absolutely to be attracted. He put everything out of His life that had even a temptation in it to the world's center. He humbled Himself – there is no place in the world's vortex for humbleness. He emptied Himself – gravitation cannot act on emptiness. He became of no reputation – there is no place in the world for namelessness. So the prince of this world came, but found nothing in Him. He found nothing because the true center of Christ's life was not to be seen. It was with God. The unseen and the eternal moved Him. He did not seek His own happiness or gain, but only THE WILL OF THE FATHER. He went about doing good. His object in going about was not gain, but to do good.

Now all this was very eccentric to this world system. It was living on new lines altogether. He did God's will. He pleased not Himself. His center was to one side of Self. He was beside Himself. From the standpoint of the world and the flesh it was simply madness. Think of this idea of His, for instance, of starting out into life with so visionary an idea as that of doing good with no price attached – no offering plate, no books for sale, no monthly news-letter telling about all the needs of the work, no gadgets offered to those sending in an offering of \$5.00 or more, no special blessings or prophecies pronounced on those who "obeyed God" in contributing \$20. 00 to the Kingdom, no brochure on how to make out your will and leave your estate to the Lord's work. Jesus did not operate in worldly methods and techniques. Man was not His center, money was not His center, means and methods and programs were not His center, GOD was His center. His trust was not in God's people, His trust was in GOD. God was His source of life and supply.

Yes, Jesus was eccentric. He had a different center from other people. From the world. From the world's viewpoint He was beside Himself, mad. Think of this absurd notion that He had come into the world to usher in a Kingdom in which God's will would be done on earth as it is done in heaven and that God's mind would direct all things and bring every nation under the blessedness of heaven's

perfect order; the simplicity of the expectation that the world would ever become good; this irrational talk about meat to eat they knew not of, about living water; these extraordinary beatitudes, predicating sources of happiness which had never been heard of – Blessed are they that mourn, the meek shall inherit the earth, blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, if a man shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Madness! Then these paradoxical utterances of which He was so fond, such as that the way to find life was to lose it, and to lose life in this world was to keep it unto life eternal. What could these be but mere hallucinations and dreaming! It was inevitable that men should laugh and sneer at Him. It was unusual.

He wanted nothing of the religion of the Pharisees. He held nothing but contempt for the religion of that day, for the blinding traditions of the learned and prestigious Rabbis, the distorted and false doctrines of the Pharisees who walked about with the most imposing and pretentious titles, clothed in elaborate and gorgeous vestments, loving the chief seats in the Synagogue, and binding upon the people heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, with all sorts of rules and regulations. Because he was a SON, Jesus' center was in nothing of earth, nothing of the physical world. Unlike other religious teachers He gives us no detailed instructions about what we are to do or not do; He does not tell us either to eat or drink, or to refrain from eating or drinking certain things. He does not tell us to carry out various ritual observances nor to keep certain days and seasons. He built no church buildings nor did He initiate any building programs, but He did say, "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father... the hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH" (Jn 4:21-23). He did not set up any form of ecclesiasticism, of any hierarchy of officials or any organizational structure, but He did say, "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are BROTHERS. And call no man your father upon earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters (leaders): for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Mat 23:8-10). The blessed realm of Sonship is an UNSTRUCTURED REALM for it is not of earth, but of heaven; not of physical things, but of the Spirit and the Truth.

Jesus never concerned Himself with external structures of organization, hierarchy, buildings, programs, ceremonies, nor any other carnal thing. He ministered LIFE, REALITY, SPIRIT, AND TRUTH. Period. He was unusual. He would not follow the methods and techniques of the world. He would not go with the multitude. And men were expected to go with the multitude. What the multitude thought, said, and did, were the right things to have thought, said, and done. Anyone who thought, said, or did differently, his folly be upon his head, he was beside himself, he was mad! It never ceases to amaze me how deep-seated and deep-rooted within the masses of Christendom are all the things which Jesus denounced, and how scarce are the REALITIES which He spoke

and manifested in the world. Because the average Christian today has been brought up with a CENTER OTHER THAN CHRIST he is totally unable to think except in terms of established orders, sects, denominations, creeds, assemblies, doctrines, meetings, communions, baptisms, programs, campaigns, pastors, choirs, rituals, ceremonies, offerings, drives, conferences, elections, board meetings, committees, invasions, Sunday Schools, Bible Schools, church buildings, fellowship halls, stained glass windows, robes, special numbers, special speakers, and etc etc etc etc... But after they have spent a whole lifetime of this feverish "church activity," how many people are there who have ever taken time to wait on God long enough TO HEAR HIM SPEAK AND DIVULGE HIS WILL TO THEIR SEEKING HEARTS? I declare to you of a truth that any man or woman who will take the time to seek God and God alone, hungering and thirsting after God's mind and God's eternal will – that man will find himself drifting away from all these aforementioned things and from there on THE MIND OF CHRIST will be his program, his quest, his eternal joy.

I can tell you of a certainty that every man who lives like Christ produces the same reaction upon the world as did the first-born Son. This is an inevitable consequence. What men thought of Him, they will think of you and me. The servant is not above his Master. If they persecuted Him, they will persecute you. A son is simply different from other people. Time has not changed the essential difference between the spirit of the world and of a people who live out the very same LIFE OF CHRIST that Jesus lived. The LIFE OF CHRIST is not the historical story of a man who walked the earth two thousand years ago. The LIFE OF CHRIST is the Spirit of Jesus lived out in those who are members of His body. This is what makes the sons of God eccentric. There is no sanctioned place in the world as yet for a life with God as its goal, and self-denial as its principle

Let all who would be followers of the Lamb upon Zion's holy hill know that sonship is no milk-and-water experience. It is a fire. It is a sword. It is a burning, consuming heat, which must radiate upon everything around. The change to the Christ Life is so remarkable that when one really undergoes it, he cannot find words in common use by which he can describe its revolutionary character. He has to recall the very striking phrases of the New Testament: "A new man, a new creature, a new heart, a new birth. His very life has been dissolved and re-crystallized 'round a new center!"

Let a man depart from iniquity, let him depart from the myriad traditions of religion and make CHRIST AND CHRIST ALONE the center of his life and he will soon discover that the impression his friends receive from him now is the impression of eccentricity. The change is bound to strike them, for it is radical, central. They will call in unworthy motives to account for the difference; they will say it is a mere temporary fit, and will pass away. They will say he has shown a weakness which they did not expect from him, and try to talk him out of his novel views and curious life. This, in its mildest form, is the modern equivalent of "He is beside himself." And it cannot be helped. We have a different center.

LIVING BY THE TREE OF LIFE

“These are in the world.”, “The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” “Even as He is, so are we in the world.” (Jn 17:11,14,16; I Jn 4:17)

If Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it, and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed world to which He belonged? The answer is, The Father had sent Him into the world. In these two expressions, “In the world” and “Not of the world,” we find the whole secret of His work as the God-man, the Son of the Father.

He was **IN THE WORLD** in human nature, because God would show that this nature belonged to **HIM**, and not to the god of this world, that the human nature was created to receive the divine and incorruptible life of God and in this divine life to reach its highest glory. He was **IN THE WORLD** in fellowship with men, to enter into loving relationship with them, to be seen and known of them, and thus to lead them back to the Father. He was **IN THE WORLD** to struggle with the demonic and fleshly powers which rule the world, to overcome them and open up the way for those who should follow to overcome; to learn obedience, and so perfect and sanctify human nature.

He was **NOT OF THE WORLD**, but of heaven, to manifest and bring nigh the life that is in God, from which man had become alienated through wicked works, that men might see it and long for it. He was **NOT OF THE WORLD**, founding a Kingdom entirely heavenly in origin and nature, entirely independent of all that the world holds desirable or necessary, with principles and laws and a spirit the very opposite of those that rule in the world. He was **NOT OF THE WORLD**, witnessing against its sin and departure from the Spirit of God, its powerlessness to know and please God. He was **NOT OF THE WORLD** in order to redeem all to Him, and to bring them into that new and heavenly Kingdom which He revealed in His Sonship.

This glorious life of Christ on earth, “In the world” but “Not of the world,” is the very essence and reality of the **TREE OF LIFE** in the Paradise of God.” And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the **TREE OF LIFE** also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:8-9). This Tree of Life was in all reality “In the world” but “Not of the world.” It was accessible to man but had absolutely nothing to do with the realm of earthiness, for it was heaven’s own divine life made available to man. In the Tree of Life, God invited man to find Him as the source and center of life that in union with Him, God would live, and move, and have his being. In the Tree of Life, man would be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in

power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit and shining in the image of God. The fruit of this wonderful Tree would indeed make man radiant with the resplendent glory of God as was Jesus, the second Adam, at the transfiguration, whose face shone as the sun and His raiment was as the light. In this Tree of Life the radiant perfumes of the heavenly realm would be fragrance and life to man's nostrils. He would taste spiritual realities and touch spiritual things. The wisdom and power of God Himself would be wide open to him and he would walk in the presence and glory of celestial realms. The gates of that realm would never be shut by day or by night. Man would need to eat of no other tree nor drink of any of the waters of earth. Man would have "meat to eat" that no other creature in heaven or earth knew of and "water to drink" that none other had ever tasted. The heavens would be opened over his head and he would walk in the glory of the presence of God the Almighty.

THIS was the glory of the Tree of Life in Eden! And what was that glorious Tree?" In the beginning was the WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... in HIM WAS LIFE; and THE LIFE was the light of men" (Jn 1:1,4). This life-giving Tree, THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, Christ, was from the beginning "In the world" but yet "Not of the world." When Eden's gates clanged shut behind our banished foreparents, that blessed Tree of eternal life was never again seen by the wondering eyes of mortal man until the day in which Jesus stood upon the earth and declared: "I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the LIFE OF THE WORLD" (Jn 6:51). The reason Jesus came forth as the visible expression of the Father, the Tree of Life re-planted, was so that there might be a focusing, a manifestation which would become a MEETING PLACE for us to come to know God, and become one with Him, as it was in the beginning. It is IN CHRIST JESUS that GOD AND CREATION MEET, COME TOGETHER, AND ARE MADE ONE. Christ WHO IS OUR LIFE has come and has been planted in the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, that all may come and eat and drink and have life.

There is a most wonderful statement made concerning Christ in the Song of Solomon. The Shulamite proclaims of Him: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the Sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste" (S of S 2:3). The word, "apple," in this place, means orange, pomegranate, citron, as well as apple, and is applied in the Hebrew to this entire family of fruit trees. Though one searched through all the forests of earth, he would not find one fruit tree; and though one searches through the whole forest of unregenerated humanity, there is not one tree there that can bear any fruit excepting that which is poisonous and bitter. Before the Shulamite found that one fruitful Tree, Christ, she searched throughout the forest, seeking life, seeking food, seeking fruit; but upon no tree did she find anything but leaves.

With intense desire she searched through the forest to find a tree that had fruit on it!. With determination she looked here and there for a tree that could give and

sustain life. Weary and exhausted, discouraged and hungry, she looked for peace, but she found it not; she looked for fulfillment, but she found it not; she sought for a true “husband” among the forest of men, but she found none. Neither in man’s creeds or doctrines, nor in their sacraments, programs, traditions, or forms, did she find that which her soul longed for. Neither in her own works nor in those of any other did she find contentment or spiritual advancement. How she traveled and looked for reality and could not find it!

At last, by the guidance and purpose of God she came to Him who is the only “Apple Tree” in the whole forest of humanity; the tree bearing the richest and most nutritious of all the fruits of earth. She came and tasted and found that in HIM there is life more abundant! She has partaken of Christ, the one and only Tree of Life; she has found fruit, refreshing and sweet, both nourishing as food and transforming in power She has found the tree with the most complete and energizing fruit, and fruit all the time. It is the fruit of eternal life and glory! There is righteousness, peace, joy, knowledge, wisdom, and power!

Ah, precious friend of mine, have you come to the one Apple Tree and partaken of His glorious and eternal reality? Is your soul longing for the full nourishment of His holy life and nature? Do you want the love of God to be perfected within your life? Do you desire above all else to put on His mind and to be conformed to His glorious image – a mature son of God? Then come and feed upon this Tree, Christ. This is the Tree that was planted on earth when Jesus came at Pentecost in the power of the Spirit. God planted that Tree, the Tree is Christ, and only by the spirit do we have access to it. And we find that it is all that we need!. With unutterable loathing we turn from every bitter and poisonous tree, from every tree bearing naught but leaves. With haste we flee from every tree of man’s theories, philosophies, creeds, and religious works, for they are empty and powerless.

Many precious brethren are perplexed that we no longer find any desire to fellowship with them in their religious ceremonies and rituals, in their so-called “holy days” and festive seasons, in their carnal ordinances and pitiful programs, in their static creeds and petty doctrines, in their fleshly board meetings and organizations. They wonder why we don’t run from meeting to meeting, from seminar to seminar, from campaign to campaign, to hear every preacher, and teacher, and prophet, and healer, and miracle worker who passes through town. I do not want to beat about the bush in what I am saying, but I want to speak my earnest convictions with clarity and assurance. I find that even the Christian bookstores with their endless shelves of books filled for the most part with spiritual nonsense have become a stench to my spirit. I tell you of a truth that I find the vast majority of the Christian radio and television stations, with their religious racketeers, showmanship, Jesus rock and confusion of tongues to be nothing more nor less than ambassadors of the kingdom of Babylon. Those things satisfied once, but now I have tasted of the fruit of a tree more delicious, satisfying, and life giving than all – CHRIST HIMSELF!

Paul had revelations so great he could not even hint at what they were about, so startling and glorious that he fell as dead before the wonder of them, but he still cried out with deep desire, "THAT I MAY KNOW HIM..." (Phil 3:10). It is that FULL, inward revelation of HIMSELF that we follow after. This is an imperative MUST, and it is this very thing that is causing us to turn from the chambers of Babylon, yea, and to lay down our own lives also, that we might know HIS LIFE in fullest measure. It is this which, as the parable states, "is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mat 13:45-46). Ah, yes, we gladly offer up all that we have, that we might receive HIM, and all the fullness of redemption which is resident in Him, our Tree of Life.

It is not only to find the one Apple Tree, but it is to take up our abode under its shadow. It is not only to taste of its fruit, but it is to eat and be filled with all the fruit that grows upon this divine Tree; it is to feed upon Him continually until we are filled with all the fullness of Christ, until we are strong in Him and in the power of His might. Oh wonderful Tree that dwelt in the bosom of the Father from eternity! Oh marvelous Tree planted of old in Eden's lovely garden! Oh precious Tree planted among men as the Son of the Father, planted by the power of the eternal Spirit, of whose fruit millions have partaken, and whose fruit is ours as we partake of it through faith! Oh eternal fruit, gathered for the eternal Kingdom, as He brings many sons to glory and brings them home to His Father's house! How sweet is this fruit to our taste, how satisfying is every morsel of which we partake! And we can feed to the full for the fruit is ever growing, ever being revealed to us, always perfect, and never passes away.

How we rejoice that we have proven there is fruit upon Him; and by feeding upon Him and Him alone, we too bear fruit to His glory. He is our Storehouse, He is the only fruitful Tree, and we can get nothing outside of Him, but we can get everything in Him. The more we feed upon Him, the more we abide in Him. The more He feeds and nourishes us, the more He becomes manifested in our lives to the glory of God.

There is none other like Him among all the sons of men, neither among the archangels in heaven. And we are made ONE IN HIM, blessed be His name!

Chapter 4

The Tree Of Life

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen 2:8-9).

In this world we live by symbols. We use either written symbols or sound symbols to express every thought or feeling, to identify every person, place or object. Words are only symbols Names are only symbols. Numbers are only symbols. Our alphabet is only a group of 26 small symbols that can be organized into words - then words into sentences - sentences into thoughts - and thoughts into knowledge. God claims the title of the "Alpha and Omega," or the "A" and the "Z" of the alphabet which includes all the other letters in between and can contain and express all knowledge.

Symbols only represent the things for which they stand, not the reality itself. Money is considered the most important factor in human life by many because it represents power and security Of itself, money has no value whatsoever more than the paper or metal it contains, though through it, it is possible to purchase the comforts and luxuries of earth. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the letters of alphabet and the great thoughts that can be woven into tangible form through those tiny little letters. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the money in your pocket and the actual things that money can buy.

It is important that we understand clearly that God has spoken to us predominantly in the scriptures by symbols. Symbolism in its spiritual application means that an object, animal, tree, mountain, person, action, form of words or whatever else is involved has a deeper spiritual meaning than a simple literal interpretation would suggest. A symbol, unlike a type, is usually not prefigurative, but rather represents something that already exists. Without a clear understanding of this great truth the Bible would be the most ridiculous book ever written. Consider the implications if Jesus had meant it literally when He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn 6:53). If this statement had been intended literally Jesus would have become the founder of the world's most bizarre religious cult: cannibalism! But beyond these physical figures lies the glorious REALITY of which He spoke, the reality that His flesh means His Word and His blood means His Spirit Life.

The apostle John begins the book of Revelation with these words: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants

things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it unto His servant John" (Rev 1:1). The word "signified" is the Greek word (semaino) which is a derivative of the word (semo) meaning a mark or sign, or to indicate by signs or symbols. The English word could be written "sign-i-fied" - demonstrating that it means to communicate by means of signs and symbols. We understand, of course, that this is exactly how the Revelation was communicated to John and the whole book is a book of pictures and symbols. The candlesticks are Churches (Rev 1:20), the stars are ministries (Rev 1:20), the beasts are governments, the horns are kings and dominions (Rev 17:12), the bowls of incense are the prayers of saints (Rev 5:8), the great dragon is satan (Rev 12:9), the waters are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues (Rev 17:15), the New Jerusalem is the bride of Christ (Rev 21:9-10) etc etc etc Armed with this understanding let us look at another important symbol employed by the Spirit in the Book of Revelation "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches;. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev 2:7). In harmony with the symbolic language of the Book of Revelation it becomes crystal clear that the tree of life is not a literal, physical tree but a SYMBOL standing for a spiritual LIFE-GIVING-REALITY.

THE TREE OF LIFE

At the beginning of man's existence we are shown man in a relationship with three classes of trees. To understand God's plan, we must be completely clear about these three classes of trees and what they represent. The three classes of trees are set forth in Gen 2:8-9, 16-17 "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Here are the three classes of trees which could be experienced by Adam: (1) all the trees of the garden, (2) the tree of life, (3) the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

There is a clear distinction made between a grove composed of "every tree that is good for food" on the one hand, and the two trees which were in "the midst of the garden" on the other hand - the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. "All the trees of the garden" may be spoken of as a grove, but these taken collectively are not the "tree of life," nor the "tree of knowledge," as shown plainly in verse 9: "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is. good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Thus, all the trees of the garden are distinct from either the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. The tree of life was not of the same nature as "all the trees of the garden" and the tree of knowledge, likewise, was not the same as those trees.

After God created man He placed him before these three classes of trees, and man's whole life was pictured as a matter of feasting upon one tree or the other.

How man would live and walk after his creation depended entirely upon his relationship with these three classes of trees. God told man plainly, "You may freely eat of ALL THE TREES OF THE GARDEN." He also said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." What original command, the only command, was given Adam? To eat! Eating is receiving, and receiving is the basic function of the human self. It is most striking that here at the creation of man this was the only command given him, EAT! Receive! Take something into you! And this is still the only command to man! "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye EAT THE FLESH of the Son of man, and DRINK HIS BLOOD, ye have no life in you. Who so EATETH My flesh, and DRINKETH My blood, hath eternal life" (Jn 6:53-54). "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God" (Jn 1:12).

What is the significance of the first class of tree called "all the trees of the garden"? It is of the fruit of these trees that man lived from the moment of his creation and they therefore represent the realm of life in which man lived before he fell. The record states: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a LIVING SOUL" (Gen 2:7). Man did not come forth from the hand of God upon the earth as a glorious shining spirit-being, neither did he begin his existence as the depraved, sensual, animalistic creature he is today. Man was formed upon earth neither a beast nor a god, but a LIVING SOUL. The realm of perfect human life, the living soul, was a plane of life which far transcended the realm of corruption and death which passed upon man through the eating of the tree of knowledge. But it was also a plane of life which was lower than, and inferior to that glorious realm of DIVINE LIFE which was available to man in the tree of life. Thus, "all the trees of the garden" signify the realm of man as a perfect, sinless, LIVING SOUL. Adam, as a living soul, feasted upon the fruits of "all the trees of the garden." These trees had no power to impart to him either the DIVINE NATURE or the INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE of God. The divine nature and incorruptible life were contained only in the tree of life. The important point here is that Adam, in the beginning, did not walk in that transcendent life and glory typified by the tree of life. The tree of life speaks of that realm of DIVINE SPIRIT LIFE, incorruptible God life, and had Adam been living in the reality of the tree of life He would have been a QUICKENING SPIRIT, INCORRUPTIBLE in both nature and being, and therefore incapable of falling into the ensuing nightmare of sin, darkness and death. It is impossible for that which is incorruptible to be corrupted, for that which is immortal to die, and for that which is divine to become depraved!

Most assuredly the tree of life bespeaks a realm of life beyond what Adam already possessed. Adam was a living soul so it was not necessary for him to eat of the tree of life to be a living soul. The life offered to man in the tree of life is a HIGHER KIND OF LIFE than the life Adam originally knew. It imparts more than the never-ending human life which Adam could have retained simply by refusing to eat the tree of knowledge. This tree of life lifts man up from the realm of humanity, from the earthly, from the physical, from the natural, and infuses him with eternal life, divine life, the very life of GOD. This life is offered us in Christ.

According to the revelation of the scriptures Christ is not only our life today, but He has ever been, from the very beginning, the life of God made available to man. "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God. The same was IN BEGINNING. IN HIM WAS LIFE; and the life WAS the light of men" (Jn 1:1-4). "That which WAS FROM THE BEGINNING, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of THE WORD OF LIFE, for the LIFE WAS MANIFESTED and we have seen it, and show unto you THAT ETERNAL LIFE which was with the Father" (I Jn 1:1-2). This tree of life was known in the beginning, not as the man Jesus Christ, but as THE WORD OF GOD. A little less than two thousand years ago "the WORD was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). The Word made flesh was Jesus, but in the beginning He was known only as THE WORD: God breathed, God expressed, God revealed, God available to man!

THE TWO GLORIES

One of the most significant statements ever uttered by Jesus was made in prayer on that dark and sorrowful night before the crucifixion. He said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self WITH THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS" (Jn 17:4-5). Who can begin to comprehend this? Generally, when people think of the glory of Christ they think of the glory He had while on earth: His holiness of life, the miracles, the teachings, the love, humility, meekness and mercy that flowed forth from His ministry. Those things indeed characterize a great glory. Jesus spoke of it, "I have glorified Thee on the earth" - on the earth plane. But now the blessed Son speaks of another glory as high above the glory He revealed on earth as are the heavens high above the earth. With the most intense desire He petitions the Father, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS!" Come and hearken to what this divine message has to tell us of the eternal glory of the Son, in whom the Father speaks to us. Come and see how truly He is one with God, and dwells in a glory beyond that which can be either seen or known in the earth realm! To be glorified WITH THINE OWN SELF is to be one IN THE FATHER; to be not merely the Son, but God. The deeper our insight into the true Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more confident shall we be that He will, by divine power, make us partakers of His very own glory.

We find arrayed before us here TWO GLORIES. Both glories are uniquely the glory of Christ. The one, the lesser, is His glory as He walked upon earth as a man revealing the Father on the earth plane, in a body of flesh; the other, the greater, is the glory which He had before the world was, and which, having passed through death and into resurrection, He now possesses once more. What is the difference between these two glories and what do these mean for those apprehended unto sonship to God?

The glory of an object is that its intrinsic worth and excellence answer perfectly to all that is expected of it. That excellence or perfection may be so hidden or unknown, that the object has no glory to those who behold it. To glorify is to remove every hindrance, and so to reveal the full worth and perfection of the object, that its glory is seen and acknowledged by all. The highest perfection of God, and the deepest mystery of His Godhead, is His holiness. In it righteousness and love are united As the Holy One. He hates and condemns sin. As the Holy One He also frees the sinner from its power, and raises him to communion and relationship with Himself. His name is, "The Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer" (Isa 54:5). The song of redemption is: "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee" (Isa 12:6). In the union of the two words in the name of the Holy Spirit, we see that what is HOLY and what is SPIRITUAL stand in the closest connection with each other. God is spirit and God is absolutely holy - these are the two basic elements of His being and nature. For this reason the two words are so often found together. So in the song of Moses: "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness" (Ex 15:11). So in the song of the Seraphim: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa 6:3). And so in the song of the Lamb: "Who shall not glorify Thy name? for Thou alone art Holy" (Rev 15:4). As has been well said: "God's glory is His manifested holiness; God's holiness is His hidden glory."

The one work of Christ on earth was to glorify the Father on the earth plane, in a body of flesh and blood, to reveal what a glorious Holy God He is. When the Lord Jesus had glorified the Father on earth the Father glorified Him with Himself in heaven. This was not only His just reward; it was a necessity in the very nature of things. There is no other place for a life given up to the glory of God, as Christ's was, than in that glory. This principle holds good for us too: a heart that yearns and thirsts for the glory of God, that is ready to live or die for it, becomes fitted to LIVE IN IT. Living unto God's glory on the earth plane is the gate to living in God's glory on the heaven plane. If with Christ we glorify the Father, the Father will with Christ glorify us too. Yes, we shall be like Him in His glory! Herein are the two glories of sonship.

To help us better grasp a knowledge of the two realms of glory in sonship let us look at a most important aspect of God's being and nature as revealed in James 1:13. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." God is not only holy by choice, He is holy by nature. The Greek in this verse is very strong - God is simply INCAPABLE of being tempted! One translation says, "God is unversed in evil." The nature of God is a nature of such absolute holiness that it cannot be tempted. The nature of God is UNTEMPTABLE! No wonder He is called the HOLY ONE! The nature of God is therefore incorruptible and cannot be influenced, affected, altered, changed, or ruined in any way. Thus we can see that the divine nature contains, among others, these three distinct characteristics: it is untemptable, eternal and incorruptible. To be truly GODLIKE is to be in nature and being untemptable, eternal and incorruptible. In any portion of our being where we fall short of being either untemptable, eternal or incorruptible, in

that area of our being we have not yet become like God - we fall short of His glory. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23). Herein lies the glory Christ had with the Father before the world was: Christ, the eternal Word of God, as Divine Spirit, dwelt only and fully in the eternal, untemptable and incorruptible nature of Godhead! "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn 1:1).

THE GLORY OF THE SON IN FLESH

Let us turn to Phil 2:5-9 "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him. " The Amplified Bible is so expressive here: "Let this same attitude and purpose and mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus - Who, although being one with God and in the form of God, possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God. God, did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained; but stripped Himself of all privileges and rightful dignity so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born a human being. And after He had appeared in human form He abased and humbled Himself still further and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore God has highly exalted Him."

In this wonderful passage we have a summary of all the most precious truths that surround the person of the Son of God. There is first His wonderful Divinity: "in the form of God," "equal with God." Then comes the mystery of Him laying aside that glory in that phrase of deep and inexhaustible meaning: "He stripped Himself," "He emptied Himself." The humiliation follows: "The form of a servant," "made in the likeness of men," "found in fashion as a man." Then comes the atonement with the humiliation, and obedience, and suffering, and death, whence it derives its worth: "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." And all is crowned by His glorious exaltation: "God hath highly exalted Him!" Christ as God, Christ becoming man, Christ as man in humiliation revealing the glory of the Father in a body of flesh, and Christ in glory as Lord of all: such are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge this passage contains.

The two glories of sonship are here: firstly, the glory He had with the Father before the world was; secondly, the glory He had on earth. Then follows the glory to which He has now been exalted which is one with that glory which He had from eternity.

The great truth we want to grasp here is that Christ (the Word) dwelt from eternity in the form, the essence, the nature and the being of God. In that divine nature He was eternal, untemptable and incorruptible. But when He laid aside that

glory, emptying Himself of it, taking upon Him the form and nature of man, He, the ETERNAL ONE, subjected Himself to the dread power of death, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. When the Christ laid aside His eternal heavenly glory, the UNTEMPTABLE ONE took upon Himself all the frailties and weaknesses of human nature so that the One who cannot be tempted was found in a nature that could be tempted and indeed He was in all points tempted like as we are. The inspired apostle James says that “every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin” (James 1:14-15). Was Jesus truly tempted in all points like as we are, or did He have some mystical advantage over us, some inherent quality of divinity, some unique spiritual power which enables Him to be oblivious to the cravings and demands of the flesh? Anything, to be a temptation for us, must excite something within us that responds to the temptation. That for which we have no desire, can never tempt us. I used to think, as many do, that Jesus was so high and holy that He could not be affected by the base things that allure us. He was indeed high and holy, but not to the extent that He could not be touched by the same infirmities, weaknesses, and feelings that touch us. While some may still find it hard to believe, because of our superstitious religious view of Christ, He knows exactly how the person feels who is tempted to lie, cheat, curse, steal, murder, or commit adultery. There had to be the desire in His flesh, the inclination in His nature to answer the temptation, but, blessed be God! HE OVERCAME IT ALL! He was tempted in every point as we are, YET WITHOUT SIN. As we have the indwelling Holy Spirit, so He had the indwelling Father and by that overcame all temptation and in the one instance of his intense desire to go His own way, He resisted even unto blood. He was the first to do this and HE ENTERED INTO IMMORTALITY AND INCORRUPTION.

Sharing our humanity, being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, He had the same sinful nature we have. Now do not mistake what I say! I do not say that Jesus had the same fallen condition of Adam – I say that He had the same sinful nature Adam has and had from the beginning. The question is just this – when did Adam receive his sinful nature – before he sinned, or only after he sinned? A sinful nature is simply a nature that sins or that is liable to sin. If Adam had not been created with a nature capable of sinning, how, I ask, could he have ever been tempted? How could he have sinned? The correct answer to these questions reveals to our spiritual understanding the amazing fact that the sinful nature had to precede the first sin, not follow it. Can we not see the simple truth that it was not the act of sinning that gave Adam the sinful nature – rather, it was the sinful nature that caused him to sin! It was therefore necessary for Christ Jesus to come in exactly the same state as the first Adam was in before he sinned and plunged the race into death. He could not have been tempted otherwise, but He was subject to all the temptations man is subjected to.” He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” The suffering was not suffering surrounding the cross. In order to be a perfect sacrifice He had to be perfected before He went to the cross. It was through the years that He lived as a man, that He suffered through temptation. You and I haven’t suffered much this way, because when the temptation gets too severe we just yield to it and sin!

He couldn't sin, for if He had, He could not have been our Capricornus, our goat, our perfect sin-offering required to redeem the race. So He had to resist and overcome all temptation, and this must have been excruciatingly difficult for Him to do many times, for He had all the desires and inclinations of the human, sinful nature to battle with.

There is something diabolical about temptation, something satanically bewitching and bewildering. It stirs up our senses and excites our emotions and passions. For the time being the forbidden thing seems more important than anything else in the world. It weakens our powers of judgment, both moral and spiritual. People who are otherwise very intelligent and self-controlled will in a brief season of temptation commit wholly unthinkable follies – which they often live to regret a whole lifetime afterwards. It paralyzes our will. Our many good resolutions melt like wax in the hour of temptation. All this temptation frequently does simply by being permitted to press in upon us. It is like chloroform. If it gets too close to us, it will deprive us of the very possibility of offering resistance. But, praise God, “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Cor 10:13). May God in His great mercy give us a true insight into the glory of what is offered us in this truth – that our great HIGH PRIEST, whom we have in the heavenlies, is One who is able to sympathize with us in each and every circumstance, because he knows, from personal experience, exactly what we feel and face. Yes, that God might give us courage to draw nigh unto Him, He was placed upon the throne of heaven One out of our midst, of whom we can be certain that, because He Himself lived on earth as a man, he understands us perfectly, is prepared to have patience with our weakness, and give us just the help we need to overcome and enter into His glory. May God give us eyes to see and hearts to understand the depth of the mystery of which I now write. Had the Logos, the Word of God remained in that bright glory world above, in that spiritual dimension detached from this realm of flesh and corruptibility, He might have been ever so desirous to help us and lift us up to godhood: but, if He had never tasted death, how could He allay our fears as we tread the verge of Jordan? If He had never been tempted, how could He succor those who are tempted? If He had never wept, how could He dry our tears? If He had never suffered, hungered, wearied on the hill of difficulty, or threaded His way through the quagmires of weakness and grief, how could He have been a merciful and faithful High Priest, having compassion on the ignorant and wayward? But, thank God, our High Priest is a perfect one! He is perfectly adapted to His task, and is able to lead each and every member of God's elect out of this valley of the shadow of death over into the victory and glory of perfection and incorruptibility!

A rich king, who lives every day in luxury, can he, even though he hear of it, - can he fully realize what it means for the poor sick man, from year to year, never to know where his daily bread is coming from? Hardly. And God, the glorious and ever blessed, can He truly feel what a poor mortal experiences in his daily struggle with the weaknesses and temptations of the flesh? God be praised! Jesus knows. As Adam could never have brought us under the power of sin and

death, if he had not been our father, communicating to us his own nature, so Christ never could save us, except by taking our nature upon Him, doing in that nature all we would need to do, had it been possible for us to deliver ourselves, and then communicating the fruit of what He had effected as a nature within us to be the power of a new and eternal life. As a divine necessity, as an act of infinite love and condescension, the Son of God became a partaker of flesh and blood. So alone could He be the second Adam, the Father of a new race of God-men.

The point I want to make crystal clear is that when Christ left the eternal glory of the Father to take upon Himself the glory of the Son in human flesh, He EMPTIED HIMSELF of all His prerogatives as Deity and willfully, yea, deliberately subjected Himself to the finite restrictions and debilitating limitations of this physical, material world. As God He had been infinitely rich, while as man He became inconceivably poor. As God He had been the Omnipotent One, but as man He could do absolutely nothing more than any mortal man except as the Father worked through Him. As God He had been eternal and incorruptible, but as man He grew tired and weary, weak and faint, and died an disreputable death upon a cross. As God He could not be tempted with any evil, but as man He was tempted in every point as is common to men. As God He was Omniscient, possessing all wisdom and knowledge, but as man He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk 2:52). As God He had been the Omnipresent One who filled all things, but as man He lay as a helpless infant in a manger and throughout His life could never be in more than one place at a time. As God He had been PURE DIVINE SPIRIT, but as man He was a physical flesh and blood human being.

Christ's glory as the Son of man was thus a far lesser glory than the glory He had in the Father realm before the foundation of the world. He had faithfully glorified the Father on the earth plane, making Him visible through a body of flesh, but, when He prayed that He might be glorified with the glory which He had before the world was, He was asking to be released from the earthly, material, physical form He had assumed, with its human nature and limitations and restrictions, back into the untemptable, eternal and incorruptible realm of DIVINE SPIRIT LIFE. His yearning was to be forever freed from the whole dreadful realm of physical limitation and confinement. This was to shortly take place through His RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD AND HIS ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN.

THE GLORY OF THE SON IN RESURRECTION

When we speak of the resurrection of Christ, we enter a new and glorious realm entirely, for no man other than Christ Jesus our Lord has until now experienced the glory of such a resurrection. In the glory of this resurrection is seen not only the glory which Christ now has in His exaltation but also that marvelous glory which He had before the world was. Let us consider this glory.

There are three key words translated "immortality" in the Greek New Testament (Athanasia) appears three times, (Aphtharsia) appears eight times, and (Aphthartos) appears seven times. These three terms are translated severally in the King James Version as "immortality," "incorruption," "sincerity," "incorruptible," "immortal," and "not corruptible." These renderings make it quite evident in English that the basic idea deals with that which does not perish, cannot be ruined, or that which will never be corrupted in any fashion. The first term, (Athanasia), is derived from the Greek word for "death" (Thanatos), so that it speaks of that which is opposite of physical death; namely a resurrected body which is spiritual rather than carnal. (Aphtharsia) and (Aphthartos) are derived from the Greek word for "corruption, ruin, destruction," (Phtheiro) is used of corrupted meat, ruins of ancient cities or sunken vessels, or destroyed armies whose dead bodies litter the earth. Like (Athanasia) the alpha prefix indicates that the word "immortality" speaks of that which cannot be corrupted, which cannot be ruined in any manner, and which cannot be destroyed!

I do not hesitate to say that there is only a solitary person who is now "Immortal" according to the Word of God. By this I mean that there is only one man in the entire universe who is a life-giving Spirit resident in an indestructible body. That man is our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. When Paul writes to young Timothy of the appearing of Christ in the blazing, unapproachable light of the Shekinah, he declares Him to be "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only (who alone) HAS IMMORTALITY." (I Tim 6:15-16). Please observe! Jesus only has what the Bible calls "immortality." He, and He alone, of all the men who have lived and do live, resides in the divine spirit realm in a glorified, resurrection body. As the first-born Son, the God-man, only Jesus is immortal at present. Jesus is the only MAN now dwelling fully and completely in the divine nature and being of God, far beyond all temptation, sin, sickness, limitation, change, decay and death.

When Christ our Lord rose from the dead, He was raised not in corruption but in incorruption. That which is incorruptible is forever beyond the power of corruption, decay or death. God Himself is said to be incorruptible and we are said to be born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God that liveth forever. This incorruptible life now resides in our spirits, but has not yet been manifest in our bodies. Death has no power over the incorruptible. Thus of the resurrection body it is written: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor 15:42-44). Paul declares that this corruptible must put on incorruption. The body of the corruptible man is the body of death, but the body of the incorruptible man is the body of the resurrection, a body beyond the power of death. When Jesus rose from the dead, He arose incorruptible. He had no blood as we know blood. He had forever laid aside that blood which had been the life of His corruptible flesh and was now quickened in His flesh by the life of God, life incorruptible and eternal .

Many precious saints have claimed that they have already put on immortality, that they have by-passed the grave and will never die. I would overthrow the faith

of none, for we are now living in the generation that shall see the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God, but I do say that the body of glory and incorruption is the body of the resurrection. When the kingdom of God comes in power and glory on the earth, the sons of God will be manifest to the world and to every nation, tribe, tongue and people on the face of the whole earth in the glory of their RESURRECTION. Being children of the resurrection, they will be seen as INCORRUPTIBLE BEINGS and they will rule the world and bless all the nations of earth as resurrected and incorruptible men. Just as Jesus had power after His resurrection to appear and disappear, to pass right through a wall or locked door, to disclose Himself or to hide His identity, taking various forms, to ascend to heaven and return to the earth, to issue instructions concerning the Kingdom of God, even to eat and drink if He wished, so also shall the glorified and incorruptible sons of God have power. All that Jesus was in His resurrection and glorification the sons of God shall be in their resurrection and glorification, for they are destined to share His glory.

The glory of the resurrection discloses even that glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was. The glory He had and the glory He has are the same glory of INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT LIFE.

MINISTERS OF INCORRUPTION

Jesus was the firstfruit of the resurrection. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept: for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end (of the resurrection)" (I Cor 15:20-24). Paul tells us in Rom 8:19-23 that the whole of creation is in travail to know the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creation itself SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption (placement as sons), to wit, the redemption of our bodies."

This glorious realm of incorruption which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death belongs to the children of God, but, blessed be God! it is also the hope of all creation. One of the fundamental laws of nature is that one cannot give what he does not himself possess, one cannot minister that of which he has not himself been made partaker. I therefore declare to you that although the glory of the Son of God on earth throughout His three and a half years of ministry and manifestation was truly marvelous beyond words to describe, yet, it was a glory which was limited in the extreme. When Christ took upon Him a body of flesh and the nature of man, He willfully subjected Himself to the limitations and restrictions of that which is earthly, material and mortal. Jesus did not walk upon earth as the incorruptible God, but as mortal man. It was as a natural, physical, mortal man that He was tempted; He

hungered; He thirsted; He could be in only one place at a time; He knew weakness; He wept; He slept; He suffered; He died. The incorruptible life of the Father resided in His inner spirit, but that life was confined, limited and restricted by the bounds of the material world which He had taken upon Himself. It is manifest that His body was not an incorruptible body, else He could not have died though He were nailed to a thousand crosses! His own human nature was not the incorruptible nature of God, else He could not have been TEMPTED in all points like as we are. Truly He emptied Himself, yea, stripped Himself of that incorruptible glory of the Father realm and, as man, as flesh, HE COULD NOT, even as a Son, MINISTER THAT WHICH HE DID NOT HIMSELF POSSESS!

It is remarkable that during the three and a half years of Jesus' earthly ministry He never performed one act, not even one miracle or wonder on the higher plane of incorruption. Every miracle Jesus did was in the realm of mortality. Jesus raised a number of folk from the dead, including Lazarus and the widow's son, but every person raised from the sleep of death was merely raised up again INTO MORTAL LIFE to continue their lives in their same old corruptible bodies. Each and every one of them DIED AGAIN! Not one single person was raised up out of a corruptible body into an incorruptible body. It would be impossible for the world to even contain all the books that could be written about the marvelous signs and wonders performed by the Son of God on earth, yet, all those works, wonderful though they were, were entirely restricted to the plane of the physical, material and mortal. Jesus cleansed the lepers and healed every manner of sickness and disease among the people, but I declare to you that each and every one of these good people got sick again and eventually died! These were miracles within the realm of mortality, not ministrations of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE. These deliverances were in all reality but short new leases on the corruptible existence of this body of flesh and blood, this body of death. Though Christ blessed men with healing and health and these were permitted to remain on earth for long series of years, yet He merely lengthened out the period of their mortal existence and none could escape the final catastrophe.

Jesus did many other types of miracles. He turned water into wine. But what kind of wine was it? Very good wine, indeed. But just wine, nonetheless. It was composed of the same chemical elements as is all good wine. It was material, physical, earthly. It was consumed by flesh and blood bodies, digested, and a portion eliminated from the body as waste. Nothing incorruptible or heavenly here! And yet it is written: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY; and His disciples believed on Him" (Jn 2:11). Yes, He manifested forth His glory, but it was not the glory He had had with the Father before the world was, but the lesser glory of manifesting the Father on the earth plane, in the world of the physical and material, the mortal.

Jesus fed five thousand people from five little loaves and two small fish. How we stand in awe before the glory of such a miracle, but remember, dear ones, that even a wonder so marvelous as this was but a wonder on the physical plane.

Bread and fish, Nothing more Multiplied! And what have you? More bread and fish. Earthly bread. Earthly fish. Perishable, corruptible elements, both. The multitude ate of it and had their bodily hunger satisfied momentarily, their mortal bodies strengthened for a few fleeting hours and then all the old hunger and weakness returned. Nothing of eternal value there, nothing of incorruptible life! On one occasion Jesus caused the boat in which He and His disciples were sailing to move from the middle of the sea to the shore with a speed swifter than any modern rocket. Wonderful! you say. Yes, wonderful on the earth plane, wonderful to the fascinated eyes of poor finite mortals in their limitation and confinement to natural law, but still no ministration of the higher life of incorruption. Following this miracle the creation was still groaning as it had been groaning for ages - to be DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE TO CORRUPTION! Without doubt that same boat which made such a fantastic trip across the sea has long since rotted into the earth or lies ruined on the bottom of the sea. And the creation goes on groaning.

"For even the whole creation waits expectantly and long earnestly for God's sons to be made known - waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship. For the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children" (Rom 8:19,21). When Paul by inspiration penned these blessed words of hope he did not have in mind a manifestation of the sons of God on the same plane on which Jesus was manifested while on earth. Jesus glorified the Father on the earth plane, and so do we, but this is not the glory that we anticipate, neither is it the hope for which the whole of creation is in travail. The creation is not groaning for another revival, nor for another evangelistic campaign, nor for another healing campaign, nor for a New Testament Church, nor for more apostles and prophets, nor for more signs, wonders and miracles, nor yet for 144,000 flaming evangelists just like Jesus in His earthly ministry. For 2,000 years we have had revival after revival, healing after healing, miracle upon miracle, and none of them has ever brought in the Kingdom of God, not one of them has ever delivered the creation from the bondage to corruption. Mankind continues to sin and die. The creation continues to groan in its bondage and we ourselves, groan within ourselves, as we wait for the redemption of our bodies. It is not another "patch-up" job that we want but a full and complete and eternal deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of corruption.

Jesus clearly understood that He could never deliver the creation from the bondage to corruption so long as He remained Himself subject to this realm of mortality. He simply could not minister to men that which He had laid aside in coming to earth. Though He would have walked on earth for a million years in His physical body of humiliation, gaining in favor with the people and power over the nations through all those years, He still would have not been able to raise even one poor mortal up out of corruption into incorruption. It was necessary that He be resurrected Himself by the power and glory of the Father that He might be able then to minister even that resurrection life to a first-fruit company, that they, in turn, might minister it to the rest of creation. For this creation waits expectantly.

The law is that one must first POSSESS INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE before He can MINISTER INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE.

Let us give ear to Peter as his lips speak of the resurrection life of Christ in his tremendous sermon on the day of Pentecost. Notice that his message did not center in the Christ of the manger, nor in the Christ of teaching, nor in the Christ of signs and wonders, nor only in Christ crucified, but above all else CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD. "Ye men of Israel," he cries, "hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: WHOM GOD HATH RAISED UP, having loosed the pains of death. For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life" (Acts 2:22-25,31).

How we praise God and bless Him unceasingly for every temporal blessing provided for us by His bountiful grace. We rejoice exceedingly in the provision of finances for our daily needs, for those healings which have preserved our bodies alive unto this day, for every sign and wonder which has quickened our faith and given assurance of His wonderful love, faithful care and gracious presence. We do not minimize the blessedness of any of these things, yet are aware that none of these are that for which the creation, and we ourselves, is groaning. We cannot - dare not - be satisfied until we AWAKE IN HIS LIKENESS! The glory to which we are called as sons of God is not the glory He had on earth, but the glory for which He prayed when He said, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." Paul wrote, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear WITH HIM IN GLORY" (Col 3:4). And Peter declared, "But the God of all grace hath called us unto HIS ETERNAL GLORY by Christ Jesus" (I Pet 5:10).

Therefore the Spirit saith, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and REDEMPTION" (I Cor 1:30). Here we have the top of the ladder, reaching into the celestial realm - the blessed end to which Christ and life in Him is to lead. The word redemption, though sometimes applied to our deliverance from the guilt of sin, here refers to our complete and final deliverance from all its consequences, when the Redeemer's work shall become fully manifest, even to the redemption of the body (compare Rom 8:21-23; Eph 1:14; Eph 4:30). The expression points us to the highest glory to be hoped for in Christ. The word invites us to look upon Jesus, not only as He lived on earth, teaching us by word and example, as He died, to reconcile us to God, but as, sitting at the right hand of God, He takes again the glory which He had with the Father, before the world began, and holds

it there FOR US. It consists in this, that there His human nature, yea, His human body, freed from all the consequences of sin to which He once had been exposed, is now admitted to share the eternal divine glory As Son of Man, He dwells on the throne and in the bosom of the Father: the deliverance from what He had to suffer from limitation, sin and death is complete and eternal. The complete redemption is found embodied in His own Person: what He as man is and has in the celestial realm is the complete redemption.

As our fellowship with HIM becomes more intimate and intense, and we let the Holy Spirit reveal Him to us in His eternal glory, the more we realize that the life in us is the life of the One who sits upon the throne of the heavens. We feel the power of an endless life working in us. We taste the eternal life. We have the foretaste of the eternal glory! The resurrection of the body is no longer a dead doctrine, but a living expectation, and even an incipient experience, because the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in the body as the pledge that even our mortal bodies shall be quickened (Rom 8:11-23). This faith exercises its sanctifying influence in our willing surrender of the sinful members of the body to be mortified and completely subjected to the dominion of the Spirit, as preparation for the time when the frail body shall be CHANGED and fashioned like unto His body of glory. Think you have seen some great miracles? Our bodies are going to be the objects of the most astonishing miracle of Divine transforming power!

I can assure you, beloved friends, that this is the hope of all creation. We rejoice in the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, in prophecies, visions, healings and miracles, but I must confess that I am saddened to see men continually following after mere TEMPORAL SIGNS and PHYSICAL, MORTAL BLESSINGS. I would not depreciate for one moment, nor in any measure, the manifold blessings and gracious provisions of God on this earthly realm of mortality. I, above many, perhaps, can testify to God's absolute and unswerving faithfulness to supply every need in this earthly, temporal realm in which we dwell as He provides daily sustenance for my family and the finances to mail out tens of thousands of pieces of literature each year. It is all the LORD'S DOING and I can bear witness that He has never once failed, bless His name! And yet it brings distress to my soul to see my sick brethren healed by the power of God only to behold them smitten again later on with some other debilitating disease. What sorrow it brings to the human hearts to see the precious men of God who have walked in the Spirit and have so mightily blessed the Lord's people, finally become old and pass from our midst into the silence of the grave. I grow tired of healing the sick only to see them sick again. It is frustrating to have to pray for the same saints over, and over, and over again for the same kinds of problems and weaknesses. I am tired of seeing the dead raised (I personally know several people who have been raised from the dead) just to watch them grow old and die again. I tire of signs and wonders which only minister to the physical man on the level of mortality: food, raiment, money, jobs and all the rest of the corruptible things of earth. I am weary of that which blesses men in the natural but then leaves them to carry on their lives in corruptible natures and bodies. What an apt word the

Spirit selected when He inspired the apostle to write: "For in this (our earthly house) we GROAN, EARNESTLY DESIRING to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven... that mortality might be swallowed up of life (II Cor 5:1-5). Paul says that the whole creation GROANS. He says WE ALSO GROAN. That mortality might be swallowed up of life. "Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who hath given unto us His pledge of the Spirit" (II Cor 5:5).

Christ shall minister His eternal glory to a first-fruit company of sons who shall in turn minister that same eternal glory to the creation. Do not think, dear saints, that the ministry of the manifested sons of God shall be a ministry of holding great salvation-healing campaigns, of merely emptying out hospitals as the sick are healed, or raising some dead people back to life again as Jesus did. What Jesus WAS is not the pattern for the manifested sons of God. The pattern is what HE IS IN HIS ETERNAL GLORY. He has planted within an incorruptible SEED which shall in due time produce an INCORRUPTIBLE PEOPLE. The ministry of the sons of God will be to minister INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE so that ALL THINGS may be raised up out of the realm of limitation and death in the glorious liberty of the ETERNAL SPIRIT. Glory!

"HE is made unto us REDEMPTION." Beloved brethren! Let us lay aside all presumption and purge ourselves of every form of deception. I admonish you - do not allow any man to deceive you into believing that he can in some way minister immortality to your mortal body. Some have professed to have already put on immortality, to have already passed over the grave, but I declare to you that the wrinkles in their skin, the bags under their eyes, the gray in their hair and the unchecked ageing in their bodies give the lie to their confession. Some have tried to teach people into immortality, some have tried to meditate into it, others have had a scheme for baptizing people into it while others have foolishly hoped to live forever by eating health food. Without any fear of contradiction I can tell you that all the fruitarians and vegetarians and food faddists of all previous generations are now lying silent in their graves along with all who subscribed to any other method or technique for the putting on of incorruption. There is a TRUTH in physical immortality! But the reality of its outworking is resident IN OUR LORD – and HE controls both the process and the time element, for HE is the One that shall change us, we cannot change ourselves. Jesus pointed out the impotency of man's fleshly efforts, when He asked, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (Mat 6:27). Our change is not a do-it-yourself project. The word can not be broken: "HE is made unto us REDEMPTION!" How can corruption impart incorruption? "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE PARADISE OF GOD" (Rev 2:7). Let me present this Tree of Life: Christ, risen, glorified and exalted above all heavens! Christ, in the glory He had with the Father before the world began. HE is the tree of life in Eden's lovely garden! The leaves of this tree are for the healing of all the nations of earth. The Church in its hour of corruption has been claiming to do the "greater works" of which Jesus spoke, but this is not so. The greater works will appear when this

corruptible puts on incorruption and the sons of God are manifested in their resurrection glory. When we consider how marvelous and powerful is this glory of the resurrection unto incorruption, it seems to be but little wonder that these mighty sons will bring to pass a world wherein dwelleth righteousness!

With what anticipation do we wait for this glorious manifestation! Meantime we are taught to believe: "Of God, are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This is not meant merely as revelation, to be left for the future; for the full development of our life in sonship we must seek to enter into and appropriate it. We do this as we learn to triumph over death on every level. We do it as we learn to look to Christ as the Lord of our body, claiming its entire consecration, securing even here victory over the terrible dominion sin has had in the body. We do it as we allow the powers of the coming age to possess us, and to lift us up into a life in the heavenly places, to enlarge our hearts and our views, to anticipate, even here and now, the things which have never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Sons of God! Seek to know Christ as your redemption. Let this be the crown of your life in sonship. Do not seek immortality for your body first, or only, apart from the knowledge of Christ in all His other aspects. But seek it truly as that unto which they are meant to lead you. Nothing will fit you for incorruption but faithfulness in every step of the putting on of the MIND OF CHRIST. Seek Him as your wisdom and the wisdom will lead you into the mysteries of complete redemption. Seek Him as your righteousness and dwell clothed upon with Him in that inner sanctuary of the Father's favor and presence. Seek Him as your sanctification; the experience of His power to make you holy, spirit, soul and body will quicken you to a power of holiness that shall not cease its work until the bells of the horses and every pot in Jerusalem shall be holiness unto the Lord. Seek Him as your redemption, and live, even now, in the light of that glory. And as you seek to experience within yourself to the full, the power of His redeeming grace, your heart will be enlarged to see the position man has been destined to occupy in the universe, as having all things made subject to Him, and you shall for your part be fitted to live worthy of that high and heavenly calling!

Chapter 5

THE TREE OF LIFE

(Continued)

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen 2:8-9). "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the TREE OF LIFE, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden" (Gen 3:22-23).

The wonderful Tree of Life in Eden was, as it is said of Christ, "in the world" but "not of the world." The life-giving fruit of this tree was accessible to man but had absolutely nothing to do with the realm of earthiness, for it was heaven's own divine life brought into man's world and made available to him In the Tree of Life. God invited man to find Him as the source and center of life, that in union with Him God would be at once both the indwelling power of life and the environment in which man would live, and move, and have his being. By eating of the Tree of Life man would be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit and shining in the image of God. The fruit of this wonderful Tree would indeed make men radiant with the resplendent glory of God as was Jesus, the second Adam, at the transfiguration, whose face shone as the sun and His raiment was as the light. The mighty power of this Tree would raise man up beyond any possibility of sin, corruption and death into the incorruptible divine life demonstrated by Jesus when He arose from the dead in a body of glorification. In this Tree of Life the effulgent perfumes of the heavenly realm would be fragrance and life to man's nostrils. He would taste spiritual realities and touch spiritual things. The wisdom and power of God Himself would be wide open to him and he would walk in the presence and glory of celestial realms. The gates of that realm would never be shut by day or night. The heavens would be opened over his head. would walk in the glory and presence of God Almighty.

THIS was the glory of the Tree of Life in Eden! Let me present this Tree: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In HIM WAS LIFE; and THE LIFE was the light of men" (Jn 1:1,4). This life-giving Tree, the LIVING WORD OF GOD, Christ, was from the beginning "in the world" but yet "not of the world." When Eden's gates clanged shut behind our banished foreparents, that blessed Tree of eternal life was never again seen by the

wondering eyes of mortal man until the day in which Jesus stood upon the earth and declared: "I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread which I will give is MY flesh, which I will give for the LIVE OF THE WORLD" (Jn 6:51). Christ WHO IS OUR LIFE has come and has been planted as the Spirit of Life in the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, that all may come and eat and drink and have life.

In this article we want to take a look at some of the principles of life. For three hundred years the scientific community has been rent with discussions about the origin of life. Thus far only two theories have been advanced by science in order to explain the origin of life. One theory is that matter can spontaneously generate life, the other that life can only come from pre-existing life. The first theory is called Spontaneous Generation. The theory of Spontaneous Generation teaches that life is capable of springing into being of itself; that at some time in history, billions of years ago, the necessary synchronization of chemical elements accidentally took place and life spontaneously generated itself. The second theory is called The Law of Biogenesis. This law demonstrates that during all of recorded history life has only come from pre-existing life.

Today, as in former times, people are asking the questions, "What is life? How did life on earth originate?" The United States government continually spends a considerable amount of money in order to study this question. Nearly all of our space probes are concerned with the question, "Does life exist out there?" During our Apollo flights, science was interested in looking at the moon to determine if it might contain some form of life. Even now, as further Mars investigation is taking place, the question is still being asked, "Will life be found there?" Yet all the evidence that science has received to the present time indicates that no physical life, as we know it, is present anywhere in our solar system except here upon earth. One might ask the question, "What is life? Is it possible to define life?" At the present time the scientists tell us that the answer concerning the origin of life is not available, yet most scientists still emphatically deny that life came to earth through a creative miracle of an all-powerful God. Instead, they declare that natural law produced the first life. To believe this, one would have to admit that Spontaneous Generation produced the first life, whereas the great principle of biology, the Law of Biogenesis, teaches that life comes only from life. That natural law could produce life is a violation of all the known facts of biology today. Many indications today point to a time when life was not present on earth - when the earth was only a mass of some 100 inanimate elements. According to scientists, certain combinations of these elements had to be QUICKENED in order for life to become present on earth. But if one begins with dead matter, life must appear by quickening dead matter, whereas biology postulates that life had to come from some other life. We know that life is not now being originated on earth and that all the life forms today spring from pre-existing life forms of the same kind.

No human power has as yet been able to produce life out of inorganic chemical substances. One of the famous attempts that was hailed by the press as a success, was the attempt of a young Russian biologist. He succeeded in producing, or rather, organizing five low forms of life in his test tube. The fact that they were of the lowest forms known did not damage the wonders of his accomplishment, as that is just what the scientists would expect to get from inorganic substances. He arranged his chemicals in a certain order in the test tube, subjected them to considerable heat, and eight hours later he had a group of very small one-celled animals (infusoria) living in the tube.

His announcement startled the world of biology, and his formula was revealed, many other biologist tried to follow his experiments. But, alas, nobody except the discoverer seemed able to make it work. All that the others got was a mass of chemicals, no more alive than they had been when they were in containers on the laboratory shelves. So they suggested that the discoverer repeat the experiments under observation so the rest could watch and see what mistakes they had made, if any. The young scientist suggested instead that they go through with the experiment while he watched them, and he could then correct any error they made. The last stage of the technique was to impregnate the mass with a gas before the mass was subjected to heat, and as the experimenters proceeded to do this, the inventor of the method said, "There is your trouble, gentlemen; you are using chemical carbon dioxide. You must use gas that has been generated by rotting vegetation!" That, of course, pricked the bubble; the balloon collapsed. Gas generated by rotting vegetation is simply teeming with the spores, or eggs, of a multitude of living creatures, and all this fellow had done was to incubate them in his test tube. He had created life no more than the farmer does when he puts eggs in his incubator to hatch out by artificial heat! So we see that all attempts to get the living out of the dead have failed. And it is now recognized on every hand that life can only come from the touch of life. There is no other way!

THE UNCROSSABLE GULF

May the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God seize upon our hearts and impress indelibly upon our minds the wonderful truth that all the things that are seen in the Natural World are but pictures and images of the GREATER REALITIES in the Spiritual World. And in this understanding of the impassable gulf that exists in the Natural World between the inanimate and the animate, the dead and the living, lies the revelation that in the Spiritual Realm there is also a great uncrossable gulf between the realm of Spiritual Death and Spiritual Life, between the Carnal Mind and the Spiritual Mind.

For the background material concerning the passage from the Natural World to the Spiritual World presented in this article, I have leaned considerably upon Henry Drummond's book (out of print), NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

Let us at this point fix vividly in our minds the picture of two great Kingdoms of Nature, the inorganic and organic, the dead and the living, as these now stand in the light of the Law of Biogenesis. What exactly is involved in saying that in the Natural World there is no such thing as Spontaneous Generation of life? It is meant that the passage from the mineral world to the plant or animal world is hermetically sealed on the mineral side. It is simply impossible for the mineral to produce any life or raise itself up into the Kingdom of the Living. What is the difference between a stone and a plant? They have much in common. Both are made of the same atoms. Both display the same properties of matter. Both may be very beautiful. But besides possessing all that the stone has, the plant possesses something more – a mysterious something called Life. This life is not something which existed in the stone only in a less developed form. There is nothing at all like it in the stone. The plant is possessed by something new, an original and unique possession added over and above all the properties common to both. When from vegetable life we rise to animal life, here again we find something original and unique. It is an entirely different quality of life as high above the plant life as the plant is high above the dead stone. From animal life we ascend again to SPIRITUAL LIFE. And here also is something new, something still more unique. He who lives in the Spiritual Life has a distinct kind of life added to all the other phases of life which he manifests – a kind of life infinitely more marvelous than animal life. The Spiritual man is, in fact, living in a realm of life more distinct than is the animal from the plant or the plant from the stone.

The natural man belongs completely to this earthly order of things. He is endowed simply with a high quality of the natural animal type of life. He has flesh as the animals have flesh. He has blood as the animals have blood. He has a heart and circulatory system as the animals have hearts and circulatory systems. He has a digestive system, as do the animals, feet for walking, a brain, nervous system, etc etc. The natural man lives and dies, as do the animals. Paul pointed out the contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man in Romans chapters six through eight. In Rom 8:5 he exposed the yawning gulf between those who live after the body realm (which is the flesh) and those who live after the spirit. He taught that "they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit." It all depends what we are AFTER. When I was a young man I met a beautiful young lady by the name of Lorain Walker. I decided that I wanted her to be my wife. For a year and a half I dated her, pursued her, spent every moment I could with her, proposed to her – and got her! At that point in my life she was what I was AFTER. This is the idea Paul has in mind when he speaks of being AFTER the flesh and AFTER the Spirit. We manifest whether we are a natural man or a spiritual man by what we are after, what we are actively pursuing in our lives.

The man who is forever worrying about the welfare of the physical man will always have in mind ways and means of catering to him. How he can provide a better old age pension, how he can get a better home, newer car, fancier clothes, how he can provide more to see and hear and taste and feel and smell. He

expends all his energies to trying to make sure the physical man will never be in need. He is always mindful of the physical flesh and all that is for the physical flesh. He does nothing more than the animals do. He lives his life out on the same plane as does the animal kingdom. He pursues the corruptible things of earth, the things that make for bodily comfort and pleasure, and does not mind the things of the spirit. A man or woman who cares much about the pleasures of the body such as eating and drinking and sexual passion, holding in high esteem such corruptible things as houses and lands, fine clothes, bodily adornments, bank accounts, and luxuries of all kinds, will never, as long as his life is wrapped up in the pursuing of those things, attain to the glory of sonship to God. It is not that such things are wicked or abominable before God, for He has promised to add "all these things" unto us as we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. But I declare to you that to the natural man who is pursuing all these things they are enemies of the spirit because they never give you leave to seek God without distraction. Carnally minded men, whether they be people of the world or professing Christians, are filled with delusion that those who hold in low esteem the corruptible things of earth, turning instead to the eternal values of the spirit, are living lives that are not worth living. But such persons do not know that the opposite is true, for "she who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Tim 5:6).

The moment we grasp the meaning of the scripture, "They who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh," at that moment we can understand what the carnal mind is. The carnal mind is the fleshly mind and the flesh mind minds fleshly things and none of the fleshly things of earth have one iota of LIFE in them! "To be carnally (fleshly) minded is DEATH" (Rom 8:6). Not only in his relation to that spiritual man, but to the whole Spiritual World, the natural man is regarded as DEAD. He is as a stone compared to an organism. The Natural World is to the Spiritual World as the inorganic to the organic. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art DEAD" (Rev 3:1). "To you hath He given life which were DEAD in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). It is not possible to know God or experience God through any of the physical senses of the body, or through any earthly thing. Those who dwell in the earth realm and live unto the physical world abide in death.

The man who has set his heart and affection on things ABOVE has come to the place where he not only holds in low esteem the things of the earth and of his own body, but he despises them as well, even hating them, for he has learned that these are barriers to his quest after LIFE and REALITY. Jesus knew this great truth when He said that a man could not be His disciple unless he hated his brothers and sisters and father and mother and even his own life also, being willing to forsake all to find CHRIST. In the world today there is a small minority who spend their lives minding the things of the spirit. The welfare of the inner Spiritual man is foremost in their thoughts, for they seek to partake of THE MIND OF CHRIST. They esteem the realm of the flesh as less than nothing, as common dung, seeking always to be one mind with the Father. These, being after the Spirit, mind the things of the Spirit. The Spiritual man has partaken of a

life that transcends the physical - a new and distinct and supernatural endowment. He is no longer of this world. He is of the timeless state, Eternity. He is, even now, a son of God and it doth not yet appear what he shall be. The difference then between the Spiritual man and the Natural man is not a difference of development, but of generation. It is a distinction of the quality of life. The life of the Natural man is of so poor a quality that it is not even life at all, for it is filled with the corruptible mind of the flesh and the power of death. And he is absolutely helpless to do anything about it!

The inorganic world is staked off from the living worldly barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, no chemistry, no electricity, nor any form of energy, nor any evolution can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. Only by the bending down into this dead world of some living form can these dead atoms be gifted with the properties of life, without this direct contact with life they remain fixed in the inorganic sphere forever. It is a very mysterious law which guards in this way the portals of the living world. And if there is one thing in nature worth pondering for its strangeness it is the spectacle of this vast helpless world of the dead cut off from the living by the Law of Biogenesis and denied for ever the possibility of resurrection within itself. Here we stand in the presence of the uncrossable gulf – the gulf of all gulfs – the gulf between death and life.

CROSSING THE UNCROSSABLE GULF

The Word of God contains an explicit and original statement of the Law of Biogenesis as it applies to the Spiritual life. In the vision of the Spiritual World presented in the scriptures, the first thing that draws the attention is a great gulf fixed. The passage from the Natural World to the Spiritual World is hermetically sealed on the natural side. In the Natural World the door from the inorganic to the organic is shut, no mineral can open it; so, the door from the Natural to the Spiritual is shut, and no man can open it; the door from the earthly to the heavenly is shut, and no power of earth can open it. This world of natural men, of carnal minds, is staked off from the Spiritual World of God by barriers which have never been crossed from within. No organic change, no modification of environment, no mental energy, no moral effort, no improvement of character, no religious exercise, no ritual or ceremony or tradition can endow any single human soul with the attributes of SPIRITUAL LIFE. The Spiritual World of God and His sons is guarded from the world next in order beneath it, the world of the carnal mind, by a Law of Biogenesis - "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (Jn 3:3-7).

It is not said, in this statement of the Law, that if the condition be not fulfilled the Natural man will not enter the Kingdom of God. The word is, cannot. It is not that God arbitrarily shuts out the Spiritually dead from the kingdom of the Spiritually living. There is a scientific Law involved here. Paul by inspiration pointed out this

Law: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor 2:14). It is not simply that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, but he cannot. It is as utterly impossible for the carnal mind to know Spiritual things as it is for a stone to spontaneously generate life. The entrance of the Natural man into the things of the Spirit of God is simply a scientific impossibility!

The Law is: Except a mineral be born "from above" – from the Kingdom just above it – it cannot enter the Kingdom just above it. And except a man be born "from above," he cannot enter the Kingdom just above him. There being no passage from the lower Kingdom to the higher, whether from inorganic to organic, or from natural to Spiritual, the injection of a LIFE is a necessity, if a stone or a plant or an animal or a man is to pass from a lower sphere to a higher sphere. So long as wheat is wheat it is can never be anything more than wheat. But when man makes bread out of the wheat, the bread rises up into man and is transmitted into man, becoming man. The man eats the wheat and gains two pounds of human flesh. Whence came the two new pounds of humanity? Why, from the wheat! Yet wheat no longer pertains to the vegetable (plant) kingdom, it is now raised up into the human (animal) kingdom. It is human. The wheat now walks, acts, and thinks on the human plane. The earth will never possess the Kingdom of God so long as eternity shall endure. It must be the other way about. The Kingdom of God, the higher Kingdom, must possess the earth. Though the Kingdom of God is within me, yet I cannot possess it. It must possess me, or it will never be known. If I try to possess Christ, I will be as barren in the future as I have been in the past, but if CHRIST POSSESSES ME, then I will be hidden with Christ in God and God will raise me up to find my existence in the realm of His divine life and glory.

As we consider these thoughts may God Almighty grant that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. Let us open wide our hearts and minds before the Lord that He may reveal the eternal truth of this subject to our hearts. The principle by which, in nature, the inorganic is raised up into the organic, and, in like manner, in God's economy, the natural man is raised up out of death into the life of the Kingdom of God, is stated simply by the Lord Jesus in Mat 13:31-32: "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs." Let us UNDERSTAND! How are the inorganic, non-living mineral elements of the earth raised up into the organic Kingdom of living things? You begin with a seed. Within the seed is a germ of life. The seed containing the life is planted in the earth, in the Kingdom of the dead. Once buried in the earth, with all the right amounts of water and air, and the right temperatures, the seed germinates and the life within the seed begins to grow. Finally the shell of the seed bursts and there takes place a release of the life from the seed. As the life is released it immediately seizes upon the chemical elements in the earth, converts them into food, and then builds up living tissue out of matter that never

lived! The inorganic chemicals become organic tissue! The dead is converted into the living! The lifeless elements of the earth are transformed into the substance of the living plant. This is one of the most amazing facts in nature, though it is happening every minute all around us! Now we can see clearly what the Lord Jesus meant when He said that the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, but when it is sowed in the field, and becomes grown, it is the greatest of herbs. The plant stretches down to the dead world beneath it, touches its minerals and gases with its mystery of life, and brings them up ennobled and transformed to the living sphere. In like manner, the breath of God, blowing where it listeth, touches with its mystery of divine life the dead souls of men, bears them across the bridgeless gulf between the Natural and Spiritual, endows them with its own holy and eternal and divine qualities, and produces within them these new and marvelous faculties, by which those who are born of the Spirit are said to see the Kingdom of God and enter the Kingdom of God.

How futile in the face of such truth as this is any form of self reformation! How worthless and unprofitable the empty rituals and the vain and lifeless traditions of Babylon's religion! Place a lifeless rock in the dead earth and nothing will happen. Administer lifeless ceremonies and dead doctrines to a man dead in trespasses and sins and likewise nothing will happen. However thorough the self reformation may be, however beautiful the traditions and doctrines of religion, however impressive and inspiring to the soulish nature of man the rituals and ceremonies, the music and the programs, it leaves us without life and hopelessly dead to the glorious realities of the Spirit of God. Well did faithful Paul bear witness to the life-giving work of the Spirit in the lives of the Ephesians when he said, "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, but God, who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, hath QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:1-5).

LIVING BY THE TREE OF LIFE

What is this wonderful and mysterious quality which constitutes Spiritual Life? What is this strange new power which can raise us up out of the realm of darkness and death and give us eternal life and glory as sons of the living God? The answer is brief – it is Christ! "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I Jn 5:12). Yes, beloved brother, sister, Christ is our life and He is the only Tree of Life in the Garden where we have been planted by faith. "The Garden," which always has the significance of the Kingdom of Heaven, has been re-established on earth by the redemptive work of Christ Jesus. When Jesus rose from the dead and sent forth His Spirit into the hearts of men on the day of Pentecost, the Garden of Eden was re-established in the earth and the Tree of Life was once more planted on earth in the midst of the Garden. The life of Christ by the Eternal Spirit was again made accessible to man by faith. Is it not sadly true that there hangs over our lives that ominous and gray cloud of our own mortality? It frustrates all of our plans; it dampens our hopes; it

diminishes our joy. And yet, Jesus, by His tremendous resurrection, blasts through that darkening cloud and lets in the glorious blue sky of eternity. He would have us know that we shall live forever. I want you to know that is a blessed thought. How it fills my heart with excitement to think that when we look up into the night sky and see the magnificent galaxies, that we can know that when these galaxies have turned to blackened embers, we who have been seized upon by the resurrection life of Jesus Christ, shall not yet have begun to live. We shall live fully and forever.

How this higher life of God reaches down into the earth which we are, seizing upon the earthly elements of our natural life, quickening, changing, transforming, raising us up into the blessed Kingdom of the Spirit, is first to be seen in the life of Jesus as He came into this earth realm. In the very beginning God formed man of the dust of the ground, made him a living soul, and placed him in a garden, in a condition and state of being, with the Tree of Life set before him. God's distinct objective was to infuse man with His own divine and eternal life, lift him up by quickening and transforming power into union with Himself, that he should become like Himself. Man was to be a body for God to dwell in. The closest and most intimate union, the indwelling of love: this was what the Holy One longed for, and looked forward to. What was very feebly set forth in type in the temple in Israel became a divine reality in the person of Jesus of Nazareth: God had found a man in whom He could rest, with whom He could enter into union, whose whole being was opened to the rule of His will and nature and fellowship of His love. In Him there was a human nature, and a body of flesh, to be possessed by the Divine Spirit. The Divine Spirit would enter into that human nature, that body of flesh, and so possess it that it would be quickened and raised up into union with God in His very own plane of life and glory. His Sonship on earth was the planting of the Divine Seed of the Father's life into a human body and nature, to seize upon it, to bear it across the bridgeless gulf between the Natural World of men and the Spiritual World of God, to perfect the Son of man and bring His humanity into perfect fellowship and unity with Himself. His resurrection was the entrance of human nature, free from all the weakness of the flesh, into the life of Deity, the Divine Spirit-life. His ascension was admittance as Man into the very glory of God; the participation by human nature of perfect oneness with God in glory in the unity of the Spirit. All this was fulfilled in the first-born Son, and yet, with all this, the work was not yet complete. Something was still wanting. Such God would have all men to be! And such all would be, as they accepted this Jesus and His Spirit as their life. Man is powerless to carry himself across the impassable gulf between corruption and incorruption, the carnal mind and the Spiritual mind, death and life. But, blessed be God! Jesus has opened up the way.

To bring a dead natural man with his carnal mind of death up into the higher Kingdom of Divine Life necessitates the implantation of the incorruptible seed of God into man's earthiness. The point I want to make very clear is that the New Creation is more than the eternal and incorruptible life of God from heaven. The New Creation is that life planted in the earth, seizing upon the earth, changing

and transforming the earth, raising it up to find its existence in the higher Kingdom of Divine Life. Jesus is the pattern. We know how the Word, who had from eternity dwelt in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended up into the Father realm from whence He had come, He was still the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of man, the first begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself. In His resurrection and ascension He was no longer only the Mighty God, but He was the Mighty God whose Divine Life and Nature had laid hold upon the humanity of man and had raised it up into identification with Himself. The Son of man became the Son of God. The whole wonderful work of Christ in redemption was not merely to deliver man from the law and its curse of death, but to BRING HUMAN NATURE ITSELF UP INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DIVINE LIFE, TO MAKE US PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. This is the work of the Tree of Life. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field."

Even now at this very moment the life that we live is this body of flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God; and that faith assures us fully that the incorruptible seed, sown by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit, shall issue forth in incorruption, immortality and eternal life. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Death is corruption and Life is incorruption. As the rush cannot grow without mire (Job 8:11), as the reed cannot grow without water, as the mustard seed cannot grow without earth, so, in a manner beyond my understanding, the incorruptible Christ seed, planted in the corruptible earth which we are, bears its fruit in immortality, incorruption and eternal life; the NEW CREATION. The seed cannot become a tree without the earth and the earth cannot become a tree without the seed. The tree is neither the life in the seed nor the elements of the earth. The tree is the elements of the earth QUICKENED AND MADE ALIVE by the transforming power of the life in the seed! Such is the New Creation. The New Creation is neither the eternal God nor is it man. The New Creation is CHRIST, the God-man, humanity admitted into the full glory of the Divine, human nature received up into union with the eternal Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is composed of redeemed men who are putting on the divine nature and the incorruptible life of God.

Even now at this very moment the divine life is at work within us, changing, transforming, lifting us up into the higher Kingdom. The life of Christ is not something outside ourselves. I am wearied a little because so very often I hear God's precious people singing such songs as "Oh Lord, Send the Power Just Now," or "Jesus is Passing This Way." I rejoice that there are indeed those special "times of refreshing" that come from the presence of the Lord but I can assure you, beloved brother, sister, that you will never know the glorious reality of sonship to God so long as you live in that consciousness and mentality of "times of refreshing." The consuming desire within my heart in this the end of the

age is that God's chosen people might with me become aware of the abiding presence of God. The message of life and triumph that even in this dark and evil hour reverberates through the yielded spirit of every saint separated unto God by His Holy Spirit is this: It is possible for saints here and now to live with the constant and full assurance that even as the almighty Father indwelt and continually permeated the life of Jesus of Nazareth, so does the Divine Spirit of Christ live and abide within those who are separated unto the Lamb to follow Him whithersoever He goes. As the years have passed since I first heard the call of the Spirit unto the blessed realm of sonship to God, there has come to me an ever increasing assurance that I am dwelling and walking in HIS PRESENCE, for He is not momentarily passing my way but has been impregnated into my earthen vessel as the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and ABIDETH FOREVER.

God is no longer far away; He is no longer without; He is here. No longer need saints say, "Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring Christ up again from the dead?" The Word (Christ) is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. How exceedingly wonderful are the words of scripture: "Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you?" (II Cor 7:5). "Your bodies are the members of Christ" (I Cor 6:15). "At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (Jn 14:10). "We will come unto him and make our abode with him" (Jn 14:21-23). "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (Jn 15:4). "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal 2:20). "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whose eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; for My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him" (Jn 6:53-56).

I would say to you again that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which many babes in the Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable (plant) life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth now and then when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is in every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and substance, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism. Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the Spiritual Life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of the spirit of man. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field." The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He "passes this way," nor from the weekly reviving or refreshing that comes to our

weary souls as we gather together in our church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship and encouragement of those of like precious faith, but I declare to you that the life of sonship can only be known as we become sensitive to the reality of CHRIST ABIDING WITHIN, conscious of His Spirit speaking, His hand guiding, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the mind and the body into the image of Him who created them. With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ's indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you. Nevertheless, I can confidently assure you that, the moment the grand and glorious fact of His indwelling life grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life. Yea, and I shall further add that the knowledge of His abiding life will also begin to change your mind, quicken your emotions, and renew your body as well.

As speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are the evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, so the redemption of our bodies from the power of decay and death is the evidence of the manifestation of the sons of God." We ourselves too, who have and enjoy the first-fruits of the Spirit - a foretaste of the blissful things to come - groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, which will reveal our adoption, our manifestation as God's Sons" (Rom 8:23, Amp Bible). This change in our bodies shall not come by the mighty working of Christ crashing down through the clouds over heads, but by the divine inworking of His indwelling life. Centuries ago the apostle Paul penned these wonderful words of consolation and faith: "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive, immortally) your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU" (Rom 8:11).

In Phil 3:21 Paul says that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." The Amplified Bible reads: "Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty." This phrase, body of humiliation, is a more correct rendering of the Greek. I must confess that it is indeed humiliating to be found in a body like this! It is humiliating to find it necessary to chew mints to keep the breath from offending those around us. It is humiliating to be so weary from traveling and ministering that at times it is difficult to sit up and fellowship with God's precious saints. It is humiliating to get laryngitis in the middle of a Convention where hundreds of saints have gathered to receive the teaching of these glorious kingdom truths. It is humiliating to be bald at twenty-four years of age and gray at thirty! It is humiliating to sense weakness, to feel the labors of years taking their toll, to see new wrinkles in the face, flabbiness of skin and muscle here and there, reminders, one and all, of the earthiness and mortality and corruptibility of these fragile bodies. I will never forget an incident in Canada some thirty years ago when I had traveled day and night for two days to get to a Conference where I was scheduled to be one of the speakers. When I arrived my clothes were disheveled, I needed a bath and my eyes were

bloodshot. The Conference had already started, and not knowing where I was to stay, I slipped into the building to find someone to direct me. I later learned that when I entered the building a number of saints, not knowing who I was, thought a drunk had staggered into the meeting! Body of humiliation! "Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty." Glorious anticipation, this!

Paul tells us again in I Cor 15:51-52 how this marvelous change shall come about." Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." The Greek word for the "moment" is ATOMOS. This passage is the only place in the Greek New Testament where this word is used. ATOMOS is the word from which comes our English word ATOM. The word carried the meaning in the Greek of that which is UNCUTTABLE or INDIVISIBLE because the Greeks believed that the atom was the smallest particle of matter that existed, therefore it could not be divided, cut, split, or reduced in any way. The translators have taken this to mean that our bodies shall be changed in "an atom of time," that is, in an instant of time so brief that you could not make it any quicker, or reduce the time in any measure. But does not this word ATOMOS indicate that we shall be changed in the ATOMS of our bodies, in the very structure and substance of our physical being, in the ATOMICAL STRUCTURE of our bodies? "We shall be changed in ATOMS, in ATOMICAL STRUCTURE, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump!"

Truly we yearn for this change, yea, groan inwardly for the transformation to take place. I continually meet up with brethren who believe that they have already put on immortality and incorruption, that they have already passed over the grave and cannot or will not die. I must be very honest and frank with you, my beloved brothers. I have not one whit of a desire to live forever IN THIS BODY OF HUMILIATION. There is no more repugnant thought, no more frightful possibility, than the idea that I might live forever in this body of humiliation! The thought of such limitation, the suggestion that I might have to bathe, brush my teeth and use Scope throughout eternity, the hint that I may retain this same form, that I might be as I am unendingly, falls as far short of what I comprehend of a body made like unto His body of glory and majesty as does hell fall short of heaven! The body of the resurrection shall resemble this vile body no more than does the mustard tree resemble the chemical elements of the earth which were raised up into the substance of the tree by the mighty working of the subtle and mysterious life-force sown in the earth as a seed.

Sons of God! If we would be fashioned like unto Him, co-sharers of His glory and power and wisdom as the God-man, we must not simply rest content with the faith that trusts in the cross and its pardon; we must follow on to know the fullness of the New Life, the life of glory and power in human nature, injected into man through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, of which the Spirit of the glorified Jesus is the witness and the source. Now, practically everything in relation to our sonship depends upon the clearness with which this great truth

that I have stated is recognized. The Holy Spirit of God inspired the message of these words in Rom 5:9-11: "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE and we joy in our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." The double provision of Christ is here clearly set forth reconciled by His death; saved by His life. Christ's death is the atonement, reconciling men to God, granting a full and free admittance back into Eden's lovely garden from which our disobedient foreparents were once banished. But Christ's life is the Tree of Life in the garden, the source of the life which shall work in us the complete transformation into the divine nature. Sin, sickness, sorrow, fear and death are all part of a power in our life; let us fully understand that it can only be met by another higher power. The power of sin and death works all through our life. The death of Christ, which is the atonement, reconciles us to God, but only the life of Christ can come against the power of sin and death and deliver our life from destruction. Reconciliation places us, in God's eyes, back in Eden's garden; but the Tree of Life is the power that delivers my life from the dominion of sin and death. He redeemeth my life, by His life, from death! Christ's life, not His death, living in our life, absorbing it, impregnating it, transforming it causes us to live. This is the meaning of that profound sentence in which Paul records the first great work of salvation and pointedly distinguishes it from the second great work of salvation, saying, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

"We shall be saved by His LIFE," says Paul. Paul meant no disrespect to the atonement when he said, "We shall be saved by His life." He was bringing out one of the great facts of salvation. If God gives atoning power with one hand, and power to save the life from destruction with the other hand, there is no conflict between these. Both are from God. If you call the one justification and the other glorification, God is the author of them both. If Paul seems to take something from the one work and add it to the other, he takes nothing from God. Atonement is from God! Reconciliation is from God! Power to conquer sin and death is from God! Christ is all in all, the beginning and the end. When the thing we want is deliverance from the guilt of sin, condemnation, let us appropriate the gift God has given us to remove our guilt – the DEATH of Christ." In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins" (Col 1:14). When the thing we want is power to redeem our life from sin, corruption and death, then let us apply the gift which God has given us for our life, the LIFE of the Son of God." He that hath the Son hath life."

When an Israelite was bitten by flaming serpents in the wilderness, he never thought of applying manna to the wound. The manna was for his life. But he did think of applying the brazen serpent. The manna would never have cured his snake bite; nor would the brazen serpent have kept him from starving! Suppose he had said, "Now I am healed by this serpent, I feel cured, and I need not eat this manna anymore. The serpent has done it all, and I am well." The result

would have been, of course, that he would have died. The man, to be sure, was cured, delivered from the judgment of his rebellion against God, but he has to LIVE, and if he eats no manna his life must languish, go to destruction, die. Without going to any trouble about it, simply by the inevitable processes of nature, he would have died. The manna was God's provision to redeem his life from destruction, after the serpent had redeemed it from judgment. And if he did nothing to stop the natural progress of corruption, in the natural course of things, he must die. Now there is no contradiction between these two things – the manna is from God and the serpent is from God. But they are different gifts for different things. The serpent removed the judgment, but could not sustain life; the manna gave life, but could not deal with the sentence. To apply this to the case in hand: "The death of Christ, on the one hand, is the brazen serpent." As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (on the cross)" (Jn 3:14). Christ's life, on the other hand, is the manna – the bread of life." This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn 6:50-51).

Of all the wealth of scripture truth nothing is more certain or clear than the fact that our sins are not forgiven by bread, nor are our lives nourished and supported by death. Our life is not made incorruptible and eternal by Christ's death, nor transformed from day to day from the power of sin and death by the atonement. Our life is not redeemed from destruction by the crucifixion of Christ, nor is it brought to perfection from day to day by the death of Christ. But we are saved, as the Holy Ghost saith, "by HIS LIFE." We cannot live upon death. And after, by the atonement, we are forgiven, and have entered by faith through the gateway into Eden's fair garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, having acceptance before God, we shall then be saved, delivered, changed, transformed, perfected and fully glorified BY HIS LIFE. The atonement gives us the right to enter back into Eden, but only the tree of life can make us live! To sum up, therefore, it is one thing to be reconciled by the death of Christ, and quite another to be saved by His life. If reconciliation and justification could make men to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD then all the baby Christians in all of Babylon's harlot religious systems would be well on their way to sonship. The death of Christ can make one a justified believer, bringing him to life, but only the mighty working of the indwelling life of God's Christ can enable us to put on the mind of Christ and be transformed in thought, desire, emotion, nature and body into His likeness. He redeemeth my life from destruction. How? By His life. This is the power of a full and complete salvation! Unspeakable are the blessings of the high and heavenly realm of God's incorruptible life which flow to the soul from the union with Jesus in His glorified life.

There may be serious differences of opinion about the promises of Christ's coming again. To one it is plain as day that He is coming very speedily in person to reign on earth, and that speedy coming is his hope and stay. To another,

loving the Lord and His eternal purposes no less, the coming of Christ bespeaks the full and glorious revelation of Christ in and through His glorified many-membered body on earth. There is much interest in the study of those things which must shortly come to pass in the earth: The coming of the Lord, the great tribulation, the manifestation of the antichrist, the mark of the beast, one-world government, the World Church, the millennial kingdom, the two witnesses, the place of the United States, Russia, China and the European Common Market, etc etc etc. How often God's chosen ones get more caught up in the understanding and exposition of all these things than in the putting on of the mind of Christ in union with HIS INDWELLING LIFE. It is by abiding in Christ the Glorified One that the believer will be quickened to that truly spiritual looking for His coming, which alone brings reality within. It is not our analyzing of the schedule of so-called end-time events, nor the correctness of the views we hold, nor the earnestness with which we advocate them, that will prepare us for the momentous things that lie ahead, but the abiding in Him, the heavenliness that shows that the Coming One is indeed already our life. Thus only can our being manifested with Him in glory be what it is meant to be - a transfiguration, a breaking out and shining forth of the INDWELLING GLORY that had been waiting for the day of revelation.

Blessed life of the ages! We have the possession within our earth of its hidden power, and we have the prospect before us of its fullest glory. May our daily lives, in all we think and say and do, be bright and blessed proof that the hidden dwells within, daily preparing us for the glory to be revealed. May the eternal and incorruptible fruit of our redeemed life within be our power to live to the glory of the Father, our fitness to share the glory of the Son.

Chapter 6

THREE Trees IN THE GARDEN

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow EVERY Tree THAT IS PLEASANT to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL" (Gen 2:8-9).

One of the many Oriental symbols which, when understood, opens the door to a storehouse of marvelous truth is the word Tree. It has pleased God, on the unveiling of His great plan and purposes, to couch His truth in Semitic symbols which are so natural to the Asian mind. Both the Old and the New Testaments are full of a pictorial symbolism which, when understood, is far more expressive than a thousand words in many instances. However, the symbolisms of Scripture also force those who would understand to plunge far beneath the surface to see its more profound meanings. Two things are absolutely essential to the understanding of the great truths of God contained in symbols. One is to search out and understand Asian customs and the characteristics of the Hebrew mind. The other is the SPIRIT OF REVELATION from God!

Jesus employed this method of teaching – using symbols. In fact, the scripture says: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in PARABLES, and without a parable spake He not unto them" (Mat 13:34). The word "parable" is translated in the Old Testament from the Hebrew word (mashal) which means "a similitude or likeness." In the New Testament it is translated from the Greek word (parabole) meaning "a pithy and instructive saying, involving some comparison and having perceptive or admonitory force." Another Greek word translated "parable" is (paroimia) which is "a symbolic or figurative saying which shadows forth some didactic truth."

It is interesting to note exactly when Jesus began to use this method of teaching. So abrupt was the change in His form of teaching that His disciples asked Him why He did this. Jesus answered, "Because it is given unto YOU to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to THEM it is NOT GIVEN" (Mat 13:11). It has pleased God to set forth much of His deeper truth – the mysteries of the Kingdom – in such a manner that it becomes revealed to the Spirit-anointed mind while at the same time remaining concealed from others. And so it was that Jesus often closed His public teaching with this statement: "He that hath ears to hear, let HIM hear!" May God give us ears!

TREES REPRESENT MEN

Trees are used to represent men all through the Scriptures. In Isa 61:1-3 the trees represent God's chosen ones at the end of this age. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me... to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the PLANTING OF THE LORD, that HE might be glorified." In Ps 1:1-3, speaking again of God's elect people, the Spirit declares: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly... but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a Tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Again in Ps 92:12-13: "THE RIGHTEOUS shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be PLANTED IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God."

Pointing to the day when the Lord shall come forth to deal with all the nations and bring His glorious Kingdom to pass in all the earth, the Spirit says: "Say among the nations that the Lord reigns; the world also is established, that it cannot be moved; He shall judge and rule the people righteously and with justice. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice. THEN SHALL ALL THE TREES OF THE WOOD (the people) sing for joy before the Lord! " (Ps 96:10-13).

Of wicked and impious men David said, I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree" (Ps 37:35). Jude described certain apostates in the early Church in these terms: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness ... these are spots in your feasts TREES WHOSE FRUIT WITHERETH, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 1:4,12).

FRUIT AFTER ITS KIND

The word "tree" makes its first appearance in the Bible in Gen 1:11. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind... and it was so." At first glance it would seem that this is simply a declaration that God is the creator of fruit trees, but such is not the case. It is true that God is the creator of all things, including fruit trees, but this verse has much more to it than merely a declaration of origins. The statement of particular interest is that the FRUIT Tree is to yield fruit "after its kind." This is, of course, a statement of scientific fact and natural law. Apple trees produce apples and orange trees produce oranges and so on. But if we stop there we fall short of what all this means in the symbolic language of Scripture. For this "after its kind" law is a fact not only in the physical world, but in the SPIRITUAL WORLD as well!

Jesus spoke of this "after its kind" principle when he said to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh IS FLESH, and that which is born of the Spirit IS

SPIRIT" (Jn 3:6). Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God human beings have to be born again – becoming the offspring of a NEW STOCK.

James has a great commentary on this principle in the third chapter of his epistle, as he comments on the unbridled tongues of men: "Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives? Either a vine, figs? Neither does a fountain yield both salt water and fresh! Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good life his works with meekness and wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. Such wisdom is descended not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish, for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easily entreated, full of mercy and GOOD FRUITS, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. The FRUIT of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace."

Finally, Jesus says, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM" (Mat 7:16-19).

THREE TREES IN THE GARDEN

It is abundantly clear that different kinds of trees are used in the scriptures to represent different kinds of men. It is, therefore, of special interest to examine a little further the significance of the three kinds of trees in Eden. I have explained in previous articles that these three kinds of trees are: (1) all the trees of the garden, (2) the tree of life, (3) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The three kinds of trees stand for THREE KINDS OF MEN. Now, we know that in the beginning there were not three kinds of men, for there was only one Adam. Then came Eve, but she was one in substance and nature with Adam, so we still have only one kind of person. However, in the one man Adam we do have three POTENTIAL kinds of men! Adam was a particular kind of man, yet he had the POTENTIAL to become an altogether different kind of man – either a higher and better kind, or a lower and worse kind. So in Eden, while we have only one man, we have three potential kinds of men in that one man.

It is plain to all who see with spiritual eyes that the tree of life represents CHRIST who IS our life. Christ has been manifested on earth as a man, the second Adam, and Christ is THE TREE OF LIFE KIND OF MAN! "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor 5:17). All of those who make up that blessed

company of men and women who are "in Christ" are the TREE OF LIFE KIND OF PEOPLE, the kind Adam could have been if he had appropriated his POTENTIAL upward in God.

When Christ comes into us, He comes within as the all-sufficient Spirit to make us all that we must be as God-men. Soon, now, there shall come that long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God to this sin-cursed world. Creation shall be set free from its bondage to corruption. We shall behold the glory, wisdom, and power of the Son of God manifested in all fullness in a many-membered body right here upon this earth. These sons are even now putting on the fullness of His divine life in spirit, soul and body. They are being transformed into His image, filled with His wisdom, quickened by His life. How the whole creation groans and travails for this! The work of preparation is even now in full swing; Paul tells us that this is when Christ shall come "to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). Let us believe it, beloved; for He comes to be glorified in all them that believe (for it) in that day! Hallelujah!

Here I would share some inspired and challenging words from a brother we labored with some years ago. He began with the beautiful text from the Gospel of John, chapter six "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. For Him hath God the Father sealed. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst ... it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." In order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in these verses, you need to understand the word, "quickeneth," that is used in the King James translation. It is an old English word that the King James translators used to describe the original wording in the Greek scripture, which meant "to give life," or "that giveth life," or "that is the source of life." So what Jesus was really saying here is, "It is the Spirit that giveth life," or "It is the Spirit that is the source of your life." The next thing we need to understand in order to comprehend this great mystery is that when Jesus said, "It is the Spirit that giveth life," or "is the source of your life," He was not talking about the Holy Spirit of God alone, but He was talking about your own spirit, for, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (I Cor 6:17). Your own quickened, regenerated, recreated, born-again spirit – which is the Son of God dwelling in you – is the source of your Life.

The next thing we need to understand, to comprehend this mystery, is the meaning of the word "profit" Jesus used here when He said, "The flesh profiteth nothing." Now the profit on any investment is always the increase. It is that which was not, which is created out of the investment's creative powers of that which one starts with. If I invest a thousand dollars, and it brings back two thousand dollars, then the second thousand dollars is the increase, the profit,

that is literally brought forth out of the creative powers that were in the first thousand dollars to increase itself, to double itself, when properly invested. Therefore, this word "profit" is a creative word. It implies the power to create, to increase one's self, or to reproduce one's self. Therefore, when Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," what He was trying to get over to us is that there is no creative power in the flesh — in anything that is physical and material in this earth. It cannot increase itself, it cannot reproduce itself; in fact, it can't even sustain the life that it has, for if our spirit was to depart from our flesh body, it would immediately begin to deteriorate and go back to the dust from whence it came. When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," He was revealing to us that every visible, carnal, natural, material, physical thing in this world, including our own flesh body, is not creative. It has no power to increase itself; it doesn't even have the power to sustain its own life. All it can ever be is the visible manifestation or expression of the Life of Spirit, and of the creative power that is in Spirit.

On the other hand, when Jesus said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth," or "It is the spirit that giveth life," or "is the source of your life," what He was seeking to reveal to us is that the spirit is creative, that our regenerated spirit has creative power. Therefore, the great mystery and the great truth that Jesus was seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that it is our own spirit that is the source of our life, that we carry the source of our life around in our own beings; and therefore, our own spirit being the source of our life we are not dependent on anything outside of our own being for our life. For you see, when you are a source, you are the beginning. A spring from which a river comes out of the earth and flows into the earth is the beginning of that river. It is the source from which the water of that river comes. And therefore that's what Jesus was trying to get over to us – that since we have been born of the seed of God, and since Christ, who is the beginning and the end, is that regenerated, recreated, born-again spirit that is within us, it is your spirit that giveth life, or that is the source of your life, and being a source within itself, is therefore not dependent on anything outside of itself for its life. For when you are a source, you are the beginning; therefore you are not dependent on anything before you or anything after you, or anything outside of you for your life. The truth that Jesus teaches us is that we carry the source of our life within our own spirit and we are not dependent on any fleshly thing outside of our own spirit for our life. It is because Jesus came to the revelation of this truth and the reality of it within Himself that He could step out into the world and say, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." Knowing that He carried the source, the beginning of His life within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the beginning." Knowing that the creative power that was in His spirit to bring forth His final destiny, and that that destiny was under the control of the creative powers that were within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the end."

When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing – it is the spirit that quickeneth, that is the source of your life," He was revealing to us the great truth that the source of our life is not in the flesh, not in the visible, not in the carnal, physical,

material things, or anything that is of this natural world; but all those things are but outward manifestations of the creative powers that are in the life of Spirit, and that the source of our life is in our own spirit. Now the problem with all of God's people, you see, is that they have not known this great truth. They have thought that they are dependent for their lives on the carnal, material, physical things of the flesh of this world – natural money, natural housing, natural clothing, natural food, natural body, natural abilities, the laws completely dependent upon them that if we were cut off from them – if we lost our job, lost our money, lost our housing, lost our food – we thought that we would die! For you see, this is the great lie that the devil deceived man with through the fall. When man lost the consciousness of his spiritual nature, and degenerated down into the consciousness of the carnal, natural nature, the devil convinced man that he was dependent upon the visible and the physical and the natural for his life – natural money, natural job, natural business, natural body, natural housing, natural clothing, natural possessions, natural food – natural, natural, natural! We have been so convinced that that is the source of our life that we have been scared to death that if we were cut off from that source of life, we would die.

Jesus, in our text, when He was out in the Wilderness with his people, and needed bread, by-passed the natural resources, by-passed the wheat field, by-passed the flour mill and sat down on the ground, and through the operation of that spiritual law of faith, drew right out from within His own spirit enough bread to feed five thousand people. For you see, beloved, there is a source of life, and all that pertains to life, including bread that sustains life, which is not dependent on the natural resources of this world. It is the original source of life – SPIRIT. The Bible makes it very clear that all life, and every manifestation of life that is in this universe, originally came right out of Spirit. Thus the apostle Paul says in Heb 11:3 that through faith we understand that the worlds were framed, by the Word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Therefore, the Bible says that everything in this world which is visible and physical – in the beginning, originally, was not made of something visible or tangible already existing – which does not appear – but was made of the resources that came originally right out of Spirit, by the spoken word of faith. Therefore, you see, Jesus, who was not subject to the laws of nature, neither underneath them; and therefore not dependent on the natural resources for bread, but could by-pass them. He was a spiritual Son of God who was sovereign over all physical laws, and therefore could go right back to the original source of bread and draw it right out of His own spirit.

Do you notice how easily Jesus did this? The scripture says that Jesus instructed His disciples, "Make the men sit down." You see, when you get bread from this source, you don't have to get it standing up, with a plow or a sickle in your hand, laboring and sweating, as men have for six thousand years, since they've been under the curse; but you can sit quietly down and bring forth all things sitting down. The men sat down, and Jesus sat quietly down with them. The record states that Jesus just quietly took the loaves of bread, and when He had given thanks, he distributed it to the disciples – as much as they would. You

see there was no shortage here. Everyone got to eat as much as he wanted, as much as he would! And Jesus did it so smoothly and so easily – He simply sat down, gave thanks, and began to hand it out. He didn't have to go through all the soulish and natural things that we do today, in order to work up a little faith. He didn't have to go through a thirty-minute praise service, dance around in the spirit for ten or fifteen minutes, speak in tongues, prophesy, and then say, "In the name of Jesus, let there be bread!" This great truth that we're seeking to share with you, that it is the spirit – the Spirit of Christ in your own spirit – that the source of Life, had become so real to Him that, moving in the spiritual law of faith, He could draw it, effortlessly, right out of His own spirit.

Out of the experiential knowledge of this great truth Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life." Simply because He knew that through coming into the world and shedding His blood to cleanse us of our sins, and make us clean vessels, so the Holy Spirit could recreate us, regenerate us, birth us again, restore us to the consciousness of our true identity, grow us up in the Spirit to that place of manifested sonship that He was at, whereby through Him in us, we might go back to the original source of Life, and of Bread, and of Reality, for He is the Bread of Life to us; not this natural world system, neither the natural resources of this natural world system. It is the Spirit that createth Life, the flesh profiteth nothing. Jesus said it this way: "That which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the spirit is spirit." He set before us two ways of life. You can live your life in the flesh, or you can live your life in the Spirit. You can walk in the flesh, or you can walk in the Spirit. You can draw your existence out of the natural realm, which passes away, or you can draw your existence out of the spiritual realm, which liveth and abideth forever. You can live your life according to natural law, or you can prepare your mind and heart to live your life according to Spiritual Law. To you today, as to men of old, Jesus says, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but labor for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life." You see, beloved, the problem with us is that we have spent all of our life laboring for the meat that perishes; working in business and labor for the natural meat, wearing ourselves out, growing old and weary, our hair turning gray, sweating and toiling always for the meat that perishes, and often have not spent a balance of time and effort laboring for the spiritual meat that will endure when all the natural meat has perished. Yes, the bread that Jesus fed the five thousand was natural bread, although he drew it out of the realm of Spirit. But by learning and knowing and moving in that realm of the true source of Life He was able to go on and by the same law of faith overcome all natural things and, finally, conquer even the last enemy – death – and stride victoriously out of the tomb! Therefore it is time for all who have received the call to sonship to begin to labor for the Spiritual Meat that shall endure into everlasting life, when all the natural meat has passed away! (end quote). That Spiritual Meat is Christ – the glorious Tree of Life!

"All the trees of the garden" represent the realm of life, the living soul, in which Adam lived before the fall "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man become a LIVING SOUL" (Gen 2:7). Man did not come forth from the hand of God on earth

as a glorious shining spirit-being, neither did he begin his existence in Eden as the depraved, sensual, animalistic creature he is today. Man stood in Eden as neither a beast nor a god, but a LIVING SOUL. The realm of perfect human life, the living soul, was a plane of life which far transcended the realm of corruption and death which passed upon man through the eating of the tree of carnal knowledge. But it was also a plane of life lower than, and inferior to that glorious realm of DIVINE LIFE which was available to man in the tree of life within.

Christianity today has no need greater than the need to know the power and glory of the CHRIST WITHIN. CHRIST is the image of God, the scripture says. I know these words may seem to be incredible but they are truth – the very first mention of the "image of God" is applied, not to Jesus Christ, but to our forefather ADAM "And God said, Let us make MAN IN OUR IMAGE, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ... so God created MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, in the IMAGE OF GOD created He him" (Gen. 1:26-27). As we consider the wonderful advent of man created "in the image of God" we can only conclude that this is a SPIRITUAL MAN brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God Almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power, and attributes. The image of God is the nature of God reproduced in man. Thus, man is the true image of God. The divine nature was best and fully expressed in the man Christ Jesus who shed upon mortals the truest reflection of God and lifted man's sights higher than their poor thought-models would allow. Jesus revealed to men their true origin, heritage and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption shall be – THE IMAGE OF GOD. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning and as he ever shall be world without end – THE IMAGE OF GOD. Of Him it is written, "He is the expression of the glory of God – the Light-being, the out-ricing of the divine – and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature... (Hebrews 1:3, Amplified). Christ, and humanity in Christ, is like a ray of light which comes from the sun – man the outcome of God, reflects God.

Contrary to popular teaching man has never LOST the image of God, although the image has been obscured, distorted, marred and corrupted by the usurpation of the carnal mind, the outer man. A lost image is NO image. The true likeness cannot be lost in divine reflection. It would be like fire without light. The out-ricing image of God is like the Word of God. To destroy the Word of God you would have to destroy God Himself, for God and His Word are ONE. To destroy the image of God would necessitate the destruction of God, for God and His image are ONE. The apostle Paul confirms man, as God's image in his remarkably significant words to the saints in Corinth: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he I-S THE IMAGE AND GLORY OF GOD" (I Cor 11:7).

After having created the SPIRITUAL MAN (man in God's image) in Gen 1:26, we find a further work wrought upon this man in Gen 2:7. "And the Lord God FORMED MAN OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND, and breathed into his nostrils

the breath (spirit) of life; and man BECAME a living soul.” Reading this passage we have the definite assurance that, as man has first been "created" on the sixth day a spiritual man, the image of God, a further work is being carried forth by the same almighty Creator and the man is now being "formed" into another expression: "FORMED of the dust of the ground," and so BECOMING a "living soul" -- manifest in the earth realm. The first is the "created" man, the second the "formed" man. The first is a "spiritual" man, the second a "physical" man. The first bears the image of the "heavenly," whereas the second bears the image of the "earthly." The first is known unto God in the SPIRIT, the second is manifest to creation in the MATERIAL WORLD. But I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, that both of these men are but aspects of the very SAME MAN!

The next point we have to note is the nature of the fruit that Eve ate. Over the years various interpretations have been given as to what kind of fruit the innocent couple partook of. There is a popular notion first spawned by the Hebrew Sages, that it was an apple that Eve ate. Others maintained that it was the grape, the potent fruit of the vine. Others were convinced that it was the fig. And still others argued in favor of the bread-providing grain, while some even believed they could prove that it was the pomegranate. Indeed, with the spread of the Bible to exotic lands, there were those who claimed the banana to be the only conceivable fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But the Bible knows nothing about any of this childish prattle!

Gene Edwards once dramatized the encounter with the tree of knowledge in this way. "Adam's teeth were just about to pierce the skin of the fruit of the Tree of Life when he heard his wife call out to him, 'Adam, come here; I've discovered something wonderful. I have found the most wonderful tree in all the Garden. 'Adam walks toward his wife who is a distance away, but yet very near to the center of The Garden. There stands this beautiful, black, brackish, glowing tree that glows in light that's dark. It radiates – as the sun radiates light this tree radiates darkness. Wonderful, beautiful, glowing dark radiates out from it. There is something sinuous that causes one to swoon in the presence of this tree. Just to be near it is to be intoxicated and there is a sense of the quickening of the mind. Out of the glowing darkness the serpent appears, dancing melodiously, his body swaying hypnotically back and forth. Looking to the right and to the left, then drawing near to Adam, he says in a haunting melody, 'If you eat of this tree you will not die, but rather you will be AS G-O-D! 'Adam understands now why he has been forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – for he will be as God. Adam picks up the fruit. It becomes more radiant. Its sensuous odor permeates the whole atmosphere. Even without eating it Adam is intoxicated by the fragrance. He looks into it and seems to see all understanding of all things. A strange power moves through him. He lifts it to his mouth in the most tragic act of universal history, the last moment of sanity this earth will know for eons disappears as Adam buries his teeth in the fruit. The juices, the intoxicating exotic nectar flow into his mouth and quickly enters his bloodstream.

“They are standing there in the midst of the Garden. Adam has eaten. He feels the hypnotic power of the fruit pulsating through his body – and truly the serpent hasn’t lied – he now understands and knows as God knows. He knows evil as God knows evil – except that Adam knows it instinctively and experientially, whereas God knows it by His omniscience. Adam is not capable of handling such knowledge, whereas God has power over all things. Adam knows good as God knows good – God knows good because he IS GOOD; Adam knows good by contrast because he has discovered its opposite. Adam’s eyes have glazed over and become milk-white, glowing with a mystical translucence. He is as one drugged, he has lost all touch in this moment with the spiritual, heavenly realm. And in his mad delusion he dreams that he is God. Great, compelling thoughts course through his mind that seem so legitimate and reasonable – and yet in the light of another day will be totally meaningless. Thoughts spiral, his mind chases off into places he has never been; it is free now to roam through all kinds of conjectures and rationalizations.

“Whereas man had always moved by revelation he now moves by logic. He had always understood by spiritual perception; he will now live by natural rationalization. He had always been guided by deep intuitiveness; now he will have to use his intellect. His emotions which were totally balanced and harmonious have now gone wild. His mind has gone, by any previous standard, mad. His will has grown stronger and it has grown weaker – much more self-will, but less concern for creation and less will to resist evil. His love has turned to lust. Need is turning to greed. Joy has turned to pleasure. Fellowship with God has degenerated into religiousness. He has become unresponsive to the spiritual realm and his understanding of spiritual things has been turned to superstition. Death is turned loose in the universe. Sin now reigns supreme in a fallen world. You may think you have just heard the saddest story ever told, but it is about to become far, far sadder. The story intensifies in its tragedy. Man’s genetic code has been infected, altered, fractured. Out of his loins will come a mutation, a degraded, fallen, biologically different species, and will fill this planet.”
– end quote

The fruit that Adam and Eve ate that fateful day in Eden was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Note this very carefully. What kind of tree is specified? It is the tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil; and so the meaning is obviously allegorical. No such tree grows literally on the earth, even as no such literal trees as the “tree of life” or the “tree of the living soul” grow on earth. The truth of the matter is Adam and Eve did not eat an apple or a pear or whatever kind of fruit that grows on natural trees. What kind of fruit, then, did they eat? What they ate was the fruit of the tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil. If an apple tree produces apples and a peach tree produces peaches, is it not then reasonable that this particular tree called the knowledge of good and evil would produce good and evil? What think ye? This was no tree like we know of trees today. When Adam and Eve partook of the produce of this tree it thrust them immediately into the throes of the dreadful conflict between good and evil.

Ray Prinzing wrote: "With the partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil man entered into a state of duality and conflict which would last for ages, until Christ has subdued all things to His control. God had warned them against partaking of this 'mixed fruit,' but man, in his own self-will, yet under the purpose of God, proceeded to eat of the fruit of the tree, and found himself in the midst of the conflict from that time onward. Producing his Cain and Abel, his Jacob and Esau, his Ishmael and Isaac – and out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing (James 3:10). Such duality produces conflict, and conflict destroys our inner rest."

Not only did the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent a state within man, it represented a message, a word, a knowledge. The KNOWLEDGE or WORD or UNDERSTANDING or TEACHING or MESSAGE or REVELATION of good and evil! The fact that it was a knowledge of good and evil bespeaks its composition. It was a message that Adam received, a wisdom from a realm within his consciousness, that caused him to be enlightened in an area he had never experienced. It was the tree of natural understanding. Natural understanding is a realm of incredible darkness and deceit. The voice of the serpent spoke words of death concealed in deceit. The deceit was all in the interest of Self-knowledge. The fruit of this tree also contained a seed. It was by the knowledge of good and evil that the original corruptible seed was planted in Adam's heart. The knowledge of good and evil was not all bad. It was pleasant for food, delightful to look at, and was desired to make one wise.

In contemporary terms it would run something like this. When we look at the fruit eaten by Eve, it is described in Hebrew in purely positive terms. "Ki tov ha-etz L'ma' achal" – the fruit was good for food, ridiculously low in cholesterol, calories and fat content "Ta'ava hu L'einayim" – lustful for the eyes – it was beautifully packaged, an esthetic delight, worthy of a gourmet's table. And finally, "Nehmad ha-etz L'haskil" – it was good for the mind, probably protein-rich to strengthen brain cells! It is very difficult to deceive someone if the message being taught is not attractive. The items that we purchase in the stores, we most often buy because of the attractiveness of the package or the allure of the taste. The fact is, the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is being offered week after week across the pulpits of the churches! There are vast multitudes today who are not conscious of the fact that they are eating of the same tree Adam and Eve partook of in the garden. And it has been much too recent, beloved brother, sister, that you and I have eaten of that tree!

Adam's sin in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil lay in his walking after the flesh (sense realm) instead of the Spirit. It consisted in his making the outer, physical, material, sensual man his center, identity and existence rather than the inner man of Spirit. The remarkable thing is that he perceived not that all that pertains to the material world is illusionary, transitory, corruptible. Sensual treasures are laid up "where moth and rust doth corrupt." Mortality is their doom. Death breaks in upon them, and carries off their fleeting joys. The sensualist's affections are as imaginary, whimsical, unreal and short-

lived as his pleasures. Covetousness, fleshly passions, gluttony, drunkenness, immorality, fame, fashion, vanity, worldly wisdom, political power, military might, envy, hypocrisy, revenge, hate, and so forth, pass away with the works thereof. Stripped of its coverings, what a mocking spectacle the flesh is! When the almighty Creator counseled the first man and his wife, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," He gave precisely the same instruction in wisdom and prudence that the apostle Paul offered long millenniums afterwards when by inspiration he wrote, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom 8:5-6,13). Life is in the SPIRIT WITHIN, and with what joy and satisfaction do we now entertain the precious promise, "therefore brethren we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, YE SHALL LIVE. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. " (Rom 8:12-17).

George Hawtin has eloquently expounded on this thought, and I share a few of his valuable insights. "Well did the apostle Paul know that the vast mass of humanity was 'at home' only in the REALM OF THE BODY. They belonged entirely to an earthly realm where things are visible, audible, and touchable. Their minds seldom mounted higher than things physical, and when for a few moments they did rise to walk upon a spiritual plane, they were not really 'at home' there, but waited for the moment when they could LAPSE BACK to the NATURAL AND NORMAL, for that is where they were 'at home.' So, while men are 'at home' in the body, they are 'always absent from the Lord' (II Cor 5:6-7), absent from the spiritual world of true reality. HEAVEN IS CLOSED TO THEM. Their minds dwell in the realm where men buy and sell, plant and build, marry and are given in marriage. They dwell in a realm of eating and drinking, of finding pleasure for the body, amusing their minds with silly things of the world, absorbing, listening to, or looking at some fictitious thing that serves only to amuse the natural man, keeping his heart away from the realm of eternal reality."

My heart burns within me and my spirit is flooded with joy unspeakable and full of glory as these sacred and wonderful truths find lodging and substance within my consciousness. With what clarity I see that when Adam stood between the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in that long ago Eden, his future condition was to be shaped by the tree-identity (consciousness) he pursued. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit" (Rom 8:5). It is all a matter of what you are AFTER! These are the two trees: spirit and flesh, life and death, truth and error. Every man who ever lived has had his center, his identity and his existence in one of these two trees. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge

of good and evil are not fossilized relics from some ancient age. They are living, breathing, enduring, ever-present realities throughout all generations, and each of us in God's great today is living by one or the other of these two trees in every thought, word and deed. The tree of life (spirit) invariably ministers incorruption and immortality, whereas the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (flesh) unflinchingly leads to death.

Again I would share significant and enlightening words from the able pen of George Hawtin In his excellent paper, THE PASSING AND THE PERMANENT, he explains; "Now, since the flesh lusts against the Spirit and is at endless conflict with it, then anything that seeks to make you earthly and fleshly-minded is a great evil. The things that belong to the realm of the flesh are passing away. Even the flesh itself is passing away. Anything that is passing away is not real. It is like a bubble that floats prettily in the air only to burst never to exist again. It is like the darkness that disappears with the dawn and has no certain dwelling place. It is like a flower in the field that blooms for a moment and disappears, a vision of the night, a fleeting shadow, a moment of joy, a passing sorrow, or a sudden pain. When such things have passed by, no one knows where they came from or whither they have gone. Those, however, who indulge themselves in the things that belong to the body grow to think that nothing is true or real but what is bodily and can be touched or seen or eaten or drunk or enjoyed by the passions of men. Unwittingly they change true riches for false; things that are unseen by mortal eyes for things that are seen. They exchange things that are spirit for things that can be touched, tasted, and felt by the body. The soul now begins to think that these things which belong to the body are real and therefore becomes fleshly minded. The carnal or earthly mind is an enemy of God and an enemy of all things spiritual

"It is small wonder then that the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; for all things connected with the natural belong to time and change, while all things belonging to the spiritual are eternal and changeless. So then all who would come to know the WISDOM OF GOD, and the REVELATION of the Lord, must turn their spirit from the realm of the physical and changing, the corrupt and mortal, and fly away into the realm of the pure, eternal, unchanging, and immortal. It is only there that rest and truth are found, and, abiding there in the Spirit, even the body itself begins to be lifted from corruption to incorruption and from mortality to immortality. We said a moment ago that when the soul comes into the realm of the flesh, it becomes carnal and fleshly minded because it is dragged into the realm of the body. Inversely then, when the soul and spirit dwell in the secret place with God, they lift the body till it also becomes incorruptible, immortal, and eternal. While the spirit and the body are united and dwell together, one must always be in subjection to the other. Either the body will be servant to the spirit or the spirit will be servant to the body. One will be the servant and be ruled. The other will be the master and rule. We cannot avoid this conclusion. Either the flesh will rule the spirit, or the spirit will rule the flesh. Since, however, the flesh is like the mortal and changing, and the spirit is like the immortal and unchanging, then the spirit is the one who should be the master. If

the spirit is the master, it will save the flesh by lifting it to the realm of God and immortality, but if the body is master, it will ruin the soul by dragging it to the realm of the carnal, the mortal, the changing" – end quote

When the Lord God lowered man into this gross material realm man possessed, by the spirit, the divine potential to overcome the flesh, sanctify it, transform it, infusing it with the qualities of Life--holiness and incorruption. Jesus, the last Adam, came and demonstrated for us this very principle. This potential in man to rule the natural by the spirit is shed forth in Jesus' mighty works--by His healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, forgiving sins, and raising the dead. He transcended by His life, words, and actions all the so-called laws of the material, mortal realm. The great significance of Jesus' mighty works will never ring clear in our spirits until we understand that He did not perform as a unique, different kind of man. All His wonderful works were the teaching of what is NORMAL FOR MAN IN HIS TRUE STATE AS THE IMAGE OF GOD. As the last Adam, Jesus demonstrated all that the first Adam lost--mankind's heritage as the sons and daughters of the Most High. Little wonder, then, that He confidently and joyfully proclaimed to His disciples, "The works that I do shall YE DO ALSO; and greater works than these shall YE DO" (Jn 14:12, Paraphrased).

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a tree, whose fruit, if man ate of it, would cause him to live in the consciousness of good and evil. Good and evil were one tree, not two trees. Mankind has made the terrible mistake of thinking that good and evil are not of the same tree, that being evil is different than being good. However, both good and evil are the knowledge and wisdom of that one tree. We are still operating in the same tree, whether we are a little good or very good, a little evil or very evil. So people either do not care that they are evil, or else they try to be good. At that point they get into an even greater delusion for they think that because of their good they have gained some merit or are in a right standing or state of acceptance before God. They would not do that if they understood the great truth that both good and evil are in the realm of death. Both are of the tree of sin and death, in a knowledge of God that has to do with good and evil, but nothing whatever to do with REALITY AND LIFE.

As someone has written, "Man is a horns-and-halo personality. He is capable of killing or curing, hurting or healing, maiming or mending, bludgeoning or blessing. From his lips flow forth both lies and truths. His hands are equally skilled at cracking safes or setting bones. His feet have scaled the highest mountains, but they have also taken him to the lowest depths of depravity. His imaginations have soared to the heavens, as in the case of Handel's 'Messiah,' or Milton's 'Paradise Regained,' or they have scraped the pits of the nether world in vulgarity, pornography and sexual deviancy." Pick up any newspaper any day in the year and the headlines will read like this: "Prominent Physician Kills Wife," "World War Threat Seen by Statesman," "Murderer of Ten Children Sent to Electric Chair," "Bank President Embezzles Millions," "Hollywood Star Divorces Ninth Wife," "Police Break up Drunken Orgy," "Two Children Murder Infant," "Prominent Government Official Commits Suicide," "Two Killed in Teenage Gang

War,” or, to change the tempo: “Steel Magnate Leaves Millions for Peace Foundation,” “City Purchases New Recreation Area for Underprivileged Children,” “Thousands Pack Arena to Hear Evangelist,” “Doctors Find Cure for Cancer,” “Record Number of Citizens Attending Church,” “Thousands View Remains of Noted Humanitarian,” “Religious Film Breaks All Box Office Records.”

Earth is clearly a battlefield between the forces of good and evil. Each of us in his appointed place is an active participant in that battle on one side or the other. And most of us have, at one time or another, been on both sides! There are people outside the Christian community today who have very high ideals and moral standards. They live exemplary lives, far above the lives of many who profess to be Christian, and even above some who claim to be Spirit-filled. Then there are those in this world who live a degraded life; they appear to be the dregs of humanity. But there is an amazing paradox in all these things. There are lofty lines and noble thoughts in both prose and poetry that have been expressed by men who were as immoral as it is possible to be. Some of the greatest talent in the arts are in people who lead immoral and dissolute as well as undependable lives. But through those miserable and perverted lives shone through thoughts and works which were beautiful beyond compare. Good and evil! This is the knowledge and state of all mankind. It is impossible to find a wholly wicked person; some good necessarily clings to him. On the other hand, it is difficult to find an entirely good person, for somewhere deep in his or her life lurks the darkness of a wicked heart waiting only for the right conditions to suddenly erupt in some sordid expression, which catches everyone by surprise.

God told Adam and Eve that in the day they ate of it they would surely die. There was death in the tree. The spiritual mind has no trouble whatever in understanding that Paul was speaking of that very same tree when he wrote to the Roman saints, saying, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is DEATH; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God... if ye live after the flesh YE SHALL DIE: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom 8:5-13). Ever since that fateful day in Eden man has been feasting on the tree of the flesh and the carnal mind. When our foreparents were banished from Eden's fair portals they were cut off from access to the tree of life and for four long millenniums mankind trudged through the slime of corruption and death without hope and without life until the day in which Christ stood again upon the earth declaring, "I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever!" (Jn 6:51). But nowhere does the Scripture indicate that man was ever cut off from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The fall of man is more than an historical event in the past, it is a constant and present reality. The past is absolutely meaningless unless it relates to the present.

Let all who read these lines thoroughly understand that when we discuss the Garden of Eden, the Serpent in the Garden, and the fall of man, it is not with any idea of drawing an historical sketch. The past is meaningless unless it relates to the present. It is because we see repeated all around us, day after day, generation after generation, the same carnal, fleshly attitudes and activities that brought about the original fall, and in the repetition of these attitudes and activities there is the tragic and dreadful departure from REALITY and the LIFE of the Spirit of God, even among the Lord's own people who dwell in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. So obvious and incontrovertible is this fact that I do not hesitate to say the Garden of Eden is not so much a past event as a present and continuing event. It is a crisis leading to a process---a continuing unfoldment. This is the tragic effect of man's first departure from God. It happened back there in the past, but it continues to happen because the spirit of Adam is within us all! It is, then, for our own instruction and learning that we draw on the lessons brought to us by that past event, which though it occurred long millenniums ago, still finds a place of relevancy not only in our modern society but among all who name the name of Christ and, sadder to say, within those who have received the call to sonship and have gone "without the Camp," as well.

Seeing, then, that the three kinds of trees in Eden represent three potential kinds of men, I want to point out that they also represent the three potentialities WITHIN MAN. Adam once walked as a living soul when he abode in the undefiled life in which he was created. Man now walks in the corruptible realm of the carnal mind as he follows after the lusts and desires of his flesh. Men are able to walk as spiritual men only after Christ's life has been impregnated within by the renewing of regeneration. These three states of being are the three trees of Eden, and all three are INNER POTENTIALITIES and INWARD REALITIES. The man who is born of God is a tripartite being - spirit, soul and body. The spirit (which is dead or unresponsive to God until regeneration) is the realm of GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, the soul is the realm of SELF CONSCIOUSNESS, and the body is the realm of SENSE CONSCIOUSNESS. These three parts of man, indeed, these three kinds of men, are revealed in the three kinds of trees in the garden.

When one understands that the man who is born of God is a triune being, then it is easy to see that such a man possesses a set of THREE of ALL HIS FACULTIES. This is a most wonderful truth, not generally understood. For example, let us look at the heart. The scriptures give almost endless detail concerning the heart. The Bible makes the heart to be the secret of life and expression. "AS A MAN THINKETH in his heart, so is he," is a widely quoted proverb (Prov 23:7), but few there be who actually know what is meant by the word "heart." This saying, like "Let Jesus come into your heart," is used again and again by persons who have not the slightest idea where the biblical "heart" is located. Yet, if we compare scripture with scripture, it is quite clear that the word "heart" is a Hebrew word picture for the inward soulish nature; the seat of the volition, emotions, and intellect which we might call the "control center" of the

inner being. It signifies the center or inner part or seat of a thing. Therefore the Holy Spirit says, "My son, attend to My words; incline thine ear unto My sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thine with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov 4:20-23). The heart is used to describe that area of man's soul life which determines how he will think, what he will do, or what he will become. The heart is thus the nature, the genetic code contained in the soulish life. In man's soul the heart is the central power. As the heart is so the man. The desire and the choice of the heart prove what a man is already, and decide what he is to become. Just as we judge of a man's physical character, his size and strength and age and habits, by his outward appearance, so the heart gives the real inward man his character; and the hidden man of the heart is what God looks to when rendering a judgment in regard to man.

THE THREE HEARTS

Man does not have more than three main parts in his whole being. As humans who have been born of God's Spirit we have a spirit, soul and body. We do not have a fourth and separate part such as the heart. However, each of our three main parts has a heart! I do not hesitate to tell you that it is a fact that you actually have THREE HEARTS! Firstly, within your body you have a biological heart. This heart is the hollow pear-shaped muscular organ located in the left of the middle chest that pumps the blood through your body. It is about the size of your fist and weighs from ten to twelve ounces. The life of the flesh is in the blood, therefore all the physical senses are dependent upon the faithful work of the heart. When your biological heart stops beating your body is dead.

Secondly, within your soul you have a psychological heart. Psychological comes from the Greek word "psyche" which means "soul" or "mind." In looking at this psychological or soul heart, let us bear in mind that the soul of man is now polluted because of the fall. When Adam transgressed the satanic (fleshly) spirit possessed him so that the whole nature of man became defiled and took on a satanic character. God, by His indwelling Spirit, reproduces Himself within the regenerated man "after His kind." It is equally true that satan has reproduced himself within the unregenerated man "after his kind." The spirit within a man is revealed by his words, actions and mental attitudes. The seed of God is known, and the seed of satan, which is "The Spirit of Disobedience," produces another kind of fruit whereby the child of the devil is recognized. While God is omnipresent, filling all things with Himself, yet He is perfectly formed and expressed as a life and nature through His children in whom He dwells. Likewise, satan is perfectly formed and expressed as a life and nature through his children in whom he dwells and is revealed to be "the SPIRIT that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2).

The fallen man and the serpent are today so ONE that you cannot distinguish between them. I will go into this in detail in future articles on THE SERPENT, but

suffice it to say that it is most enlightening to read the words of Jeremiah who said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that "the heart is deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer 17:9). We should not find this so amazing a passage of Scripture if it were not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, "The heart is deceitful above all things, PERIOD! Since Jeremiah spake by the Spirit of God this could not possibly have been a slip of the tongue or something uttered before it was thought through. If the heart is deceitful above all things, it naturally follows that there is nothing more deceitful. The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE WORLD!

A friend has shared the following inspired observations: "There is no doubt whatever in my mind that Jesus had this very scripture in mind when He spoke the words recorded in Mk 7:15-23. 'There is NOTHING,' He said, 'from WITHOUT A MAN that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man.' Having said that, He uttered the statement that so often followed His teachings when there was contained in them a MYSTERY. 'IF any man have ears to hear, let him hear.' If we will be honest with ourselves, we will have to admit that we have fostered and taught for generations a concept that directly contradicts the words of Jesus Christ, for we have, indeed, declared that there IS something from without a man that can enter into him and defile him. We have called him satan (an adversary), and so he is! We have called him a murderer and a liar, and so he is! We have had much truth about him – but the one thing we have NOT known about him is his LOCATION! We have said that he was without – Jesus said that he is within! If there is NOTHING from without a man (and in the Greek that reads: 'not one thing') that entering into him can defile him, then we must conclude that satan's activity is not primarily without but within.

"As we continue to read this passage, we hear Jesus say, 'For FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come FROM WITHIN and defile the man.' Every sin category imaginable is contained in this discourse. Everything that a man could ever think or do that is evil is said by Jesus to come - not from outside of man but from within! In our consideration of this passage, there is one all important phrase that we must be careful to note, for it is the key to the true nature of satan and the heart of man. Jesus said, 'For from within out of the HEART OF MEN. '. It is imperative that we notice the grammatical number of the two words here. The word 'heart' is singular being in the Greek in the genitive SINGULAR case. The word 'men' however is plural being in the genitive PLURAL case. We have, then, ONE HEART – but many men! This heart is the heart of the corruptible soul life, the self, the inward nature of man inherited from fallen Adam, one great nature shared by all the inhabitants of the earth, the very heart of Adam shared with his many-membered body!" – end quote

There is nothing holy or God-like about this soulish heart. There lie scattered throughout the Bible no less than forty titles for this heart. Let us run over their names. It is: a stony heart, a trembling heart, a hypocritical heart, a deceitful heart, a proud heart, a backslidden heart, a fearful heart, a deceived heart, a rebellious heart, a whorish heart, a spiteful heart, a bitter heart, an uncircumcised heart, a beast's heart, a hard heart, an obstinate heart, a presumptuous heart, a warring heart, a fretting heart, a haughty heart, a desolate heart, a despairing heart, a discouraged heart, an erring heart, a hating heart, a mischievous heart, a mad heart, a fainting heart, a divided heart, an exalted heart, a veiled heart, a blind heart, a naughty heart, a lying heart.

Over the soulish heart of every unregenerated man or woman there hangs an impenetrable veil of outer darkness that keeps men blinded to the glory of all spiritual things. Even in reading of the scripture the veil is over their eyes, and they sit in blindness and outer darkness until a totally NEW SPIRIT and NEW HEART is given them. Then and only then does the light shine upon them. This is what Paul was saying to the Corinthians when he wrote of unregenerate Israel that "their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (II Cor 3:14-18).

Thus far we have seen that the body of man has a heart known as the biological heart and the soul of man has a heart that can be called the psychological heart. There is yet the third kind of heart, the spiritual heart, which resides within the spirit of every man, although in a state of spiritual death or unresponsive to God until our spirit is quickened by His spirit.

The heart is the organ of our inclination and affection toward things. All our inclination, affections, delight and desire are functions of the heart. Before we were regenerated, our soulish heart was inclined toward sin, loved the world, and desired the things of the flesh; toward God, however, it was cold and hard, without inclination and without affection; toward the things of God and spiritual things, it had no delight and was void of any desire.

The prophet Ezekiel, foreseeing the days of this remarkable regeneration, prophesied, saying, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Eze 36:26). When a man is regenerated by the Spirit of the Almighty he receives both a new spirit and a new heart. The new heart is contained within the new spirit, for it is the heart of the Spirit, which Spirit is the Spirit of the Lord. God Himself is Spirit and God Himself has a heart. The Spirit of God spake through Jeremiah, prophesying of these last days, saying, "And I will give you pastors according to MINE HEART, which shall feed you with understanding and knowledge" (Jer 3:15). On another occasion the Lord said to Israel, "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which thing I

commanded them not, neither came it into MY HEART" (Jer 7:31). These verses show that God has a heart. His heart is a SPIRITUAL HEART, the seat and center of His own divine nature from which proceed all His thoughts, attitudes, desires and actions. When we are born of God's Spirit we inherit GOD'S HEART. This is the spiritual heart, a heart of the same nature and quality as God's own heart and becomes the heart of the NEW CREATION MAN. This is an altogether new heart, one that we did not possess before. The new creature which God has created in Christ Jesus is a new creature because the Lord has given him a new Spirit and a new heart! Glory!

THE NEW COVENANT AND THE NEW HEART

The new spirit and the new heart bring us into a new covenant relationship with God. The object of a covenant is to define and settle the relationship between two parties who enter into it, and to secure the fulfillment of their commitments to each other. Hear now what the Lord says about the new covenant and the new heart: "But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead out of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Heb 8:6-11).

Let us meditate deeply upon this new covenant and its wonderful provisions. The fault, weakness and unprofitableness of the old covenant stood in the fact that it was merely an external law given to men with desperately wicked hearts who were completely without strength to perform that which was demanded of them. Here is the difference! The new covenant stands in the power of an INNER LIFE. The former is impotent, the latter is mighty. The promise of the new covenant is to convert the external law into an inner life, to put it so in the heart that it shall be the inmost life, so that, as naturally as the heart wills and lives and acts on earth, it shall will and live and do what God demands. Why does an acorn so spontaneously grow up into an oak? Because the law of the oak is written in the heart of the acorn. The life of every creature on earth acts with delight in accordance with the law of its creator, that is, its inner nature. God and His holiness, Christ and His Holy Spirit, if they belong to us, must be as near to us, as essentially within us, as truly inherent in our own life, as our own thinking, willing, and doing. And so God promises that He will put His Law in our minds and write it in our hearts, in such a way that it shall be our inner nature, our very life, and we shall act according to it as naturally as we think or live. Yes, He will do it! So that we can say, even as His first-born Son said, "Thy law is within My heart; I delight to do Thy will, O God."

God does not change His laws to suit man's wicked heart. He gives man a new heart which is in harmony with His law so that the heart of the converted man loves the law of God. Yea, he so loves the law of God that he need no longer receive the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," for his regenerated heart already overflows with love for his Lord, and such a command would be both superfluous and dishonoring to him. Therefore the law is said to be done away. No longer need he be commanded to love his neighbor, because the love of Christ in his new heart causes him to love all mankind. Such a man need not be told, "Thou shalt not steal," because the very thought of robbing those he now loves is repulsive to his pure heart. He would freely give and give again that his neighbor might be blest, but he could take nothing from him by stealth or guile.

In these evil days, when all the world and most Christians are eagerly making the lusts of the flesh their plaything, it is my heart's desire and earnest prayer to God that those elect saints who read these words will lay hold of them by faith. The Holy Spirit, through the power within your NEW HEART, will conquer that old heart of deceitfulness and wickedness and change you from glory to glory until you reach that same image of Christ if you earnestly walk in the life and power of the new heart. How easy it is for any of us to revel in the glory of this blessed hope of sonship that shines before our eyes like a diamond in the sun, only to turn around and become absorbed with our business, our toil, our earthly pursuits and pleasures, thus neglecting the hope and failing to ENTER INTO the promise! If we are hearers of the Word only and do not experientially lay hold upon the promises and make it part of our very existence, we are deceiving ourselves as James has pointed out: "For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (James 1:23-24). Such a man is a forgetful hearer, and I see no promise that such a sluggard will ever attain to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. Look into your new heart, my brother, my sister, and you shall see the image of Christ. Let us continually yield ourselves to the PURPOSES OF THE NEW HEART (Acts 11:23; Heb 4:12).

WALKING IN THE NEW HEART

It is the spirit that quickeneth. It is the spirit who overshadows our being, forming the Christ-life within. At the time of our regeneration THE CHRIST LIFE, planted within by the creative energy of the Holy Spirit, is the only pure and holy and undefiled thing within our beings. The body is still flesh and the soul is still corrupted. The body is yet mortal and the heart of the soul is yet deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The most zealous saint on earth will have to admit, if he be honest, that though he has become alive unto God in the spirit, this wonderful new life is concealed within a womb of flesh and carnality. Simple proof of this fact is easily gained by observing some of the thoughts and desires that pass through your mind and emotions in unguarded moments. The object is to bring the soulish heart to death so that the soul may live solely as the

expression of the spirit. The body, likewise, must become the temple of the spirit as we are admonished in I Cor 6:15-20.

It is a great truth I declare to you when I say that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, all these things without exception will be found in the new spirit and in the new heart. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," He was not speaking of the carnal heart changed by some scheme of self reformation into a good heart. The only change that can come to a man is TURN FROM the soulish heart UNTO the spiritual heart, for the only heart on the face of the whole earth that can be pure is the spiritual heart! Some translators have changed the word "pure" to "clean" - that is, "clean in heart." But the word "clean" is not adequate. It is wonderful to have a clean heart, and the spiritual heart is a clean heart, but a pure heart is something more than that. We may be clean, but mixed, and therefore not pure. To be pure means not only to be clean but to be single – unmixed. You can take a cockapoo dog, which is a cross between cocker spaniel and poodle, wash him and groom him and he will be "clean," but he can never be pure. He is clean, but he is mixed in his nature. To be pure in heart means to not only have a clean heart but to have an "unmixed" heart. To be mixed does not mean just to be dirty, but to have more than one aim and goal.

This is the problem with many of God's precious people. They think they have nothing wrong with their hearts because they are clean and without condemnation. But they are not truly pure, because they have more than one goal, more than one aim. Yes, they are aiming at God, but at the same time they are aiming at several other things. They may be aiming at God and the prestige of a doctor's degree. They may be aiming at God and the building of the largest or most beautiful Church building in town. They may be aiming at God and material prosperity with its luxury of fine home, cars, clothes, etc. They may be aiming at God and the promotion of "their ministry" with the recognition it brings. Our hearts, brethren, must be purified until we have only one purpose and quest in life – the Lord Himself! Only then can we stand among that blessed company of the pure heart who SEE GOD.

No greater tragedy can ever overtake a man than that, after he has been saved by God's grace, cleansed by the blood of Christ, made a partaker of God's Holy Spirit and given a new heart, he should then mingle his affection with things on the earth and not set them entirely on things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. What a tragedy that he should forget that his old self, yea, his old heart is to be reckoned as dead, and his true life is hid with Christ in God to appear and become manifest as Christ becomes manifest in his believing heart! Listen, my brother, and hear, my sister! The children of God are so busy! They are running here and there as though the Lord could not get along without their officious help. One would think that the Lord is not as interested in His own Vineyard as they are. They are organizing, and bringing

together all kinds of machinery to run the Lord's business; they are inventing intricate and clever systems to get men saved, and to entertain them so that they will remain saved (?). Everybody feels that they should be "doing something for God." This sounds reasonable to the natural mind; so men mingle the thoughts, schemes, ideas, plans, purposes and ambition and zeal of the SOULISH HEART with the new inclinations and affections of the SPIRITUAL HEART; consequently Christians rush about in every direction like ants on an ant hill, doing this and doing that, going here and going there, organizing this and organizing that, promoting this and promoting that, praying, preaching, planning, toiling, giving their money, working themselves into nervous wrecks, even neglecting their families and homes, cultivating the vineyards of others and letting their own experience remain on the surface. They find no time to wait upon God in earnest prayer, to sit at His feet in yielding submission and sweet communion, to learn of Him. They spend no time in learning to KNOW the Lord of the Vineyard!

There is clearly a difference between what is related to the human soul and what is truly spirit. The word the Bible uses for flesh is PSYCHE which is also the word for soul. What is soulish is fleshly. The "sins of the flesh" are the mental/emotional things such as anger, jealousy, hatred, pride, selfish ambition, emotionalism, etc. What we have to remember is that many of the so-called "spiritual" things that we do are in fact fleshly and sensual. Listening to Handel's Messiah may be just as fleshly and sensual as drinking beer in front of the television set. Multitudes attend religious concerts and programs to be entertained and experience sensual enjoyment – they aren't worshipping God at all. And in worship services, the "inspiration" we get from stirring songs, the beat of instruments, clapping hands and rousing sermons can be just as sensual and self-centered (soulish) as the inspiration we get from a football game. Some religious sects deliberately attract the overly emotional. In religious meetings their preachers work on the emotions of their congregations, encouraging outbursts of emotional response. "Is this alright? Is this good preaching? Somebody say something! Come on, help me now! Somebody say Amen!". They "work it up" – generate increasingly energetic and noisy displays of soulish emotion. But Jesus Christ set no such example. Nor did any of the early apostles.

Religion today is THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH. If you have watched the TV Evangelists have you ever wondered what is taking place? Eldon Purvis explained it this way: "The stadium, or auditorium, fills up with people, then the minister comes out with his silk suit and flashing rings and starts walking back and forth. He will start with a word from the Bible, then with the Bible in his one hand, he will walk or run, waving his hands, from one side of the platform to the other. He will get everyone singing and finally he shouts, 'Say Amen, brothers and sisters. 'They all shout 'Amen' and 'say it again' is his response. The suggestion is made to hold hands and pray for whatever he suggests – don't forget Uncle Joe in the hospital. The time comes for the silver and gold while something is working on the SOULS OF THE PEOPLE. The standard conclusion is... the spirit is moving... but what spirit? Oftentimes the above reminded me of

a rock concert where the crowds go mad and wild. Put that same preacher in a room with ten people and he finds himself powerless.” – end quote

No man can walk this path of sonship apart from the cross. When the blessing of God comes, when the power and glory of God arise upon us, what happens? We speak either out of the life of God with no self-consciousness, or self takes the credit for what we have received and struts about like a peacock, with its tail all spread out, parading flesh before men. Self will assume the title of “Reverend,” “Head Elder,” “Senior Pastor,” “Bishop,” “First Apostle,” “the Prophet,” “General Overseer,” or “God’s man of faith and power for this hour,” subjecting the people to his dominion for prestige, power or gain. I do not hesitate to tell you that men who have never denied self and who know nothing of the work of the cross have been blessed by God with gifts and self has usurped these gifts and used them for its own ends – building vast empires of flesh in the name of the Lord. These men of reprobate minds presumably serve God but are dedicated to material gain. They promote what they term a “faith message” or a “life message” with joy, peace, miracles, blessings, healing, prosperity, glory, fame, power, and anything else you can invent which would appeal to the lusts of the flesh, and make life on earth one continuous glorified “Disney World” experience. In the name of Jesus Christ, and under the banner of spiritual ministry, they separate the simple, God-fearing saints from their money. These religious racketeers, wearing the masks of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, promise blessing, healing, miracles and prosperity – BUT NOT WITHOUT A PRICE. Their “prayer request” forms are attached to their “offering” forms, subtly suggesting that if you GIVE you will GET. Their clever promises and adroit manipulations have led tens of thousands of distressed and needy souls to send in their meager incomes in hope of a miracle in return. The apostle Paul bluntly describes these crafty promoters of greed and warns the godly against their message and methods in these forceful words: “Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that GAIN IS GODLINESS: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain and having food and raiment let us therewith be content. But THEY THAT WILL BE RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND A SNARE, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL: which while some have coveted after, they have ERRED FROM THE FAITH, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, FLEE THESE THINGS; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” (I Tim. 6:5-11). Again, “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose GOD IS THEIR BELLY, and whose glory is in their shame, who MIND EARTHLY THINGS.” (Phil 3:18-19). The flesh, the soul, the self is the greatest enemy of the spirit and all that is spiritual.

All the way to glorification this inner antagonist is present. This is why every revival God has ever sent through the ages ended in apostasy. Satan – not the Devil with horns and pitchfork – but that inward Devil of fleshly wisdom, sense-

knowledge and carnal zeal – has a subtle way of identifying himself with every move of the Spirit of God, so as to corrupt it from within. Many years ago F. J. Huegel wrote: "Students of the great Welsh Revival (1900-1903) say that the wonderful stream of Divine Life little by little lost its saving efficacy, as another stream from a very different source, naturally very filthy, began to mingle with the River of Water of Life proceeding from the Throne and from the Lamb.' Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them' (Job 2: 1). Beware of false fire. Beware of the counterfeit glow. When the soulish takes the place of a pure working of the Holy Spirit, you have a 'revival' whose fires, though they purport to be from Heaven are more likely to be from Hell. There are any number of 'doors' through which Satan may enter to get control of revival. An undue stressing of the emotional; excitement which grieves and suffocates the Holy Spirit who works quietly; a glorying in the evangelist rather than in the Saviour he preaches; dap-trap methods; self whatever the form in the ministry itself, obstructing Christ, veiling His cross and His glory; these are some of Satan's keys." – end quote.

The same sad story has been chronicled for us in our generation by George Hawtin in his excellent booklet, MYSTERY BABYLON. Speaking of the events that surrounded the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit in 1948, he says, "The spirit of Babylon goes much deeper than sects and denominations. It is a mystery the spirit of which seems to be deep-rooted in the heart of man. It is like an octopus with many arms reaching in all directions. If it cannot catch you with one of its arms, it will enfold you with another. It is like a demon which, being cast out, will return with seven other demons more powerful and cunning than itself. You do not have to look for the spirit of Babylon in some great and powerful denomination; you will find it in your own heart if you look close enough. Mystery Babylon is in the forehead.

"Perhaps it was a miracle. I do not think it was chance. I learned that men could be baptized with the Holy Spirit. So I sought and found this blessed new experience in God, and joys flowed like a river as the Comforter came in. But here again the arms of another daughter of Babylon began to enfold me. Was I going to join their church? Was I going to preach for them? Was I going to take out papers and credentials? This time I was persuaded, and I did, and for seventeen years thereafter I was a faithful slave of the organization, speaking its language and building its visible tower. But I was never fully satisfied, though I loved the work, I loved the people, and I loved the students of my old Bible School. Many dozens of them went out to minister far and wide and many found their way to distant and foreign lands. I am sure their rewards will be many, indeed. All the while there was a longing for a freedom which I did not know, a relationship with God that I did not have. Many times I taught the people that some day God would send a revelation of truth, but the very denomination we had so faithfully built would not be able to receive it. When finally that revelation did come, they were not able to receive it, and those of us who did receive were vomited like Jonah from the belly of the denominational whale, thrown up upon dry land, for we had sickened his stomach.

"God does not leave you in a dry land for long if you are bound to be one with Him. Should my life be very long on earth, I shall never be able to forget the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power that came to our classroom as we waited on God that glorious 13th of February, 1948, when God began to do a new thing that was destined for a time to shake the church all over America. How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs on earth went sweeping up the sky steeples while angels stood at heaven's gates and swept their harps of gold. Day after day, month after month the celestial wonder continued. Heaven came down our souls to greet and glory crowned the mercy seat. People came for thousands of miles to drink at the ever flowing fountain of life and it looked for a time as though the walls of Babylon were to be broken down and the whole church would come marching to Zion.

"But the Babylonian captivity was not over yet. As I look sadly in retrospect now, I can see with great clearness that the great and blessed move of God was not two years old before the sectarian spirit began to show its ugly head and men began to hide the Babylonish garment in their tents together with the silver and the wedge of gold. The old Babylonish garment was well hidden deep beneath the earth of the tent, but it was there nonetheless, and the whole move was becoming more and more enfolded by another tentacle of the great octopus. Stricter and more rigid became the teaching and the discipline. There was to be no fellowship with anybody who was not within the confines of our ever narrowing circle. We were the true church. We were the elect. We stood on the foundation and all other men stood on sinking sand. No man must cast out a devil unless he followed us. No teaching was worth the time it took to tell it unless it originated with us. We were the most spiritual people in the world. We were going to reign in the kingdom and even now we were beginning to reign. We had the gifts of the Spirit, and we were going to 'call the shots' in the tribulation. The elders were no longer fathers, but men who were to carry out the will of those who were lords over the heritage of God. Everything was cut and dried and firmly enfolded in the arms of another of the harlot daughters of the Babylonian system. We boasted of the gifts of the Spirit, but what had become of them? Where were the healings? Where were the miracles? Where was the faith, the gift of languages, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge? The only thing that was left was prophecy and it became a weariness to the flesh, flowing continually from the mind of man and scarcely ever having any fulfillment. Prophecy that has no fulfillment comes from one of two sources: from the mind of Satan or from the mind of man, but never from the mind of God. How often I have listened to people fumble for words as they prophesied thus giving the lie to their words having been inspired of God. How is the faithful city become a harlot!" — end quote. To this faithful testimony I would add — again the sons of God came and presented themselves before the Lord, and how clearer can it be that SATAN CAME ALSO AMONG THEM!

The entire religious world is today walking in fleshly wisdom which seems so logical to the carnal mind. Fleshly wisdom always seems to "make more sense"

than does the wisdom of God! Satan causes carnal wisdom to prosper because it is denial of the life of the Spirit, so that many times Christians and churches operate contrary to the Spirit with the argument, "It works!" Their method of evangelism is contrary to the ways of the Spirit, but since it works they continue in it. The "program" of the church is contrary to true spirituality, and is built generally around flesh-appeal activities of ceremonies, concerts, social activities, sports, Sunday School contests, puppet shows, movies, special speakers, sensationalism and other carnal tactics and techniques. But the organizations continue in it because "it works" and causes the "church" to prosper in numbers and in finances, while their spirits remain dwarfed and hideously shriveled and stunted, if indeed they have been quickened at all!. It must be remembered that if anyone or anything prospers on principles other than the life of the Son of God, that person or thing is being prospered by the Devil and not by God!

Turn with me to two verses of scripture in Gal 3: 3 and Phil 3: 3-4. "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit... and have no confidence in the flesh." The flesh is the name by which the Word designates our fallen condition — Satan in man. Well did William Law write these words of keen insight: In this antagonism of the flesh to the Spirit the flesh has TWO DISTINCT STRATEGIES. On the one hand, the flesh lusts against the Spirit in its committing sin and transgressing God's commands. This is the evil of the flesh. On the other hand, its hostility to the Spirit is no less manifested in its seeking to serve God and do His work! This is the good of the flesh. In yielding to the flesh, the soul sought itself instead of the God into whom the Spirit could have raised it. Self-effort and self-development prevailed over God's life. And now, so subtle and mighty is this spirit of self, that the flesh, not only in sinning against God, but even when the soul learns to serve God, still asserts its power, refuses to let the SPIRIT ALONE LEAD, and in its effort to be religious, wants to serve God independent of the Spirit and is still the great enemy that ever hinders and quenches the Spirit. It is because of this cunning deceitfulness of the flesh that there often takes place what Paul speaks of to the Galatians; "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Unless the soul is brought into absolute submission to the Spirit, the surrender to the Spirit being very entire, and the holy waiting on Him be kept up in great dependence and humility, what has begun in the Spirit, very early and very speedily passes over into confidence in the flesh.

Right where the flesh seeks to serve God, there it becomes the strength of sin. Do we not know how the Pharisees, with their self-righteousness and carnal religion, fell into pride and selfishness, and became the servants of sin and the children of the Devil? Satan has no more crafty device for keeping men out of life than inciting them to a religion, even a serving of God, in the flesh. He knows that the power of the flesh can never conquer sin nor please God, that in the flesh and the serving of the flesh no one will ever become a son of God, for those who become sons not only defeat the Devil in the wilderness of temptation, but also deny their owns souls, wills, plans, abilities, desires, ambitions, hopes and

dreams to declare: "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And He that sent me is with me; for I do always those things that please Him. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things so ever He doeth, these also doeth the Son. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works" (John 8: 28-29; 5: 19; 14: 10).

Child of God, if you feel that something is lacking in your life, if there seems to be a barrenness, if you yearn to be filled with more of God's fullness and to put on the mind of Christ, do not try to work harder for the Lord than you have ever done before; do not try to occupy your time in self-appointed tasks in His Vineyard, or in caring for all the needs around you. Let the conviction sink deep into your heart that your greatest need is for GOD to do something for you. YOU are the one who is in need of having something done, and not God. He is not in need of your sacrifices, for every beast of the forest is His and the cattle on a thousand hills. If He were hungry He would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are His. It is the sacrifice and service of surrender, of communion, of thanksgiving and worship which alone are acceptable to Him. It is not in the life of someone with whom you think God is using you, that something needs to be done; but in your own life there is dire need and shortage, which only God can remedy as you enter into the secret place of the most High to sit and receive at His feet.

Without exception, this barrenness and void in our lives is a sure proof that we are in great need of God's dealing hand. Therefore, let us leave everything that we can leave; let us drop the busy overseeing of those about us, and let us get still before God that He may speak to us and work in us, and for us, to His glory. Then shall we go forth with the presence and power of God upon us, and while we shall be used of Him with those around us, we shall have learned to watch for His movings and dealings upon our souls, and to always yield for Him to work in us first. Thus shall our hearts become truly pure, unmixed with the carnal zeal and scheming of the soulish heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall SEE GOD - at work!"

What a marvelous and incomprehensible potential, this: to see God! Now, we know, of course, that God has no corporeal form. "No man hath seen God at any time" (Jn 1:18). Therefore, there is no question of "seeing" God in the ordinary physical sense in which one might see a human being or a mountain or an airplane. If one could see in this way, He would have to be limited, and, therefore, not God. To "see" in the sense referred to here, signifies spiritual perception, and spiritual perception means just that capacity to apprehend the true nature of GOD'S SPIRITUAL BEING which most Christians so sadly lack. We live in God's world, but we do not in the least know it as it is. Heaven lies all around us – it is not a distant locality afar off in the skies, but all around us now – but because we are lacking in spiritual perception, we are unable to recognize it; that is to say, we are unable to experience it; and, therefore, so far as we are concerned, we may be said to be shut out of Heaven. We do contact a tiny fragment of it, and that tiny fragment we know as the spiritual experiences we

have received, but even that little bit, we see for the most part, all awry, distorted by the dimness of tradition and the outer darkness and wearisome senility of doctrines and methods of the Babylonish Church system.

Heaven is naught but the biblical name for the REALM OF GOD'S SPIRIT, the invisible and omnipresent realm of Spiritual Reality. And it is all around us. We are one with it by virtue of our Spiritual Life. We touch Heaven as we touch God, we dwell in Heaven as we dwell in God and we experience Heaven as we experience God. Heaven is eternity, but what we know here and now, with our spirits imprisoned within these walls of carnal minds and bodies, we know only serially, in a sequence called "time," which never permits of our comprehending an experience in its entirety. All true Christians have touched Heaven when they touched God, but all of our experiences have been limited by this physical world. We have known and seen God through experiences, but no limited experience can enable us to SEE GOD AS HE IS or to know Him as He is. Men speak of the experience of salvation, the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the experience of healing, or of a vision, or a dream, or a miracle, or a revelation. We rejoice in each of these blessed experiences, each one bringing an "experiencing" of something of the life and glory of God, yet in none of them do we truly see God AS HE IS in the unbounded fullness of His glorious and eternal reality.

Remarkable, the words penned by the beloved apostle John: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall SEE HIM AS HE IS" (I Jn 3:2). He than hastily adds: "And every man that hath this hope in him PURIFIETH HIMSELF, even as He is pure" (vs 3). The pure in heart shall SEE GOD, and every man that hath the hope of SEEING HIM AS HE IS purifieth himself. To purify oneself is to "unmix the heart" so that there is no mixture of that which is soulish and that which is spiritual. It is to depart from every goal and aim in life except the Lord Himself, to cease all activity except that which is produced by the spirit, to have an eye single to God's glory and the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. All things must bow before the will of God.

So many saints are very much in the position of a blind man in a beautiful flower garden. All around him are glorious colors; but he is quite unaware of them. If we suppose him to be also devoid of the sense of smell, we shall see what a very small part of the glory of the garden exists for him. And if we further suppose him to have no hands, we shall see how the garden practically does not exist for him at all. Yet it is all there, if he could but sense it! Have we not all been condemned to a far greater tragedy in that we have been planted by the power of a new spirit and a new heart inside the very portals of the Kingdom of God and have walked in the very midst of the eternal glories of Heaven, but our hearts have been so mingled with the clatter of this world that our eyes have not been able to see them, our ears have been dead to their sounds of joy, our nostrils unable to smell their fragrance, our hands unable to lay hold upon the eternal glory.

The closer we come to the Kingdom, the more will those destined sons of God know what it is to be lifted beyond the pale of natural things to behold the glory of the realm where God lives in the Spirit. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 4:8). The mixture is even now being removed from the hearts of a first-fruit company and many are being enabled to SEE HIM in a new and living way. It is beholding Him that changes us from glory to glory, from corruption to incorruption. The new spirit and the new heart are THE TREE OF LIFE, for they are naught but Christ living within. It is the glory of His presence that transforms the ragged garments of our mortality to raiment which is white and glistening. Fantastic changes lie ahead for all who separate themselves unto God. Tremendous changes will transpire as soul and body come under the dominion of Christ, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life. This corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality. Oh glorious victory! The sons of God shall arise into that blessed realm beyond time, and space, and matter, and the carnal mind, and realize and walk in the fullness of God's glory forevermore. Oh glorious and wonderful realm!. It is the realm beyond the veil where we may enter and tread the highways and fields of our heavenly citizenship. It is the realm of the Son of God. It is the inheritance of the sons of God. It is REALM OF THE TREE OF LIFE. The sons of God are the tree of life kind of men, and these are they who shall become the government of the world in the blessed age and ages before us, a government of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. From the life of those who enter that realm shall flow forth such glory and blessing that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.

Chapter 7

Three Trees In The Garden

(continued)

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow EVERY TREE THAT IS PLEASANT to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL" (Gen 2:8-9).

It is abundantly clear that different kinds of trees are used in the Scriptures to represent different kinds of men. It is, therefore, of special interest to examine further the significance of the three kinds of trees in Eden. I have explained in previous articles that these three kinds of trees are: (1) all the trees of the garden (2) the tree of life (3) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The three kinds of trees in Eden are three kinds of men, three potentialities within man, or three kinds of life that may be seen in every person: spirit life, soul life, and body life. According to the revelations given later in the Bible, the tree of life signifies the life of God in the spirit, all the trees of the garden signifies the human life of man in the soul, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies the realm of the body with its five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling. The spirit is the realm of GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, the soul is the realm of SELF CONSCIOUSNESS, and the body is the realm of SENSE CONSCIOUSNESS. The spirit is spiritual, the soul is emotional and intellectual, and the body is sensual. Since the fall of man in Eden, man's spirit life has fled far from him and his soul and body have become united in such a way that in many instances they are referred to interchangeably in the Scriptures as "the natural man," "the flesh," or "the carnal mind."

In order to understand clearly the three parts of man which are the three lives of man, it will be necessary here to consider at length the functions of these three parts. The body is the outermost physical part and is therefore visible and touchable. It includes all the members of our body and has the five physical senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling to contact the physical world around it. These, without exception, belong to the realm of the physical. They are the five senses of the body or the five senses of the flesh. The function of the body, therefore, is a BIOLOGICAL FUNCTION. Deep inside of every man there is a private sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of his being. The deepest part of a man is what it is apart from any of the external parts of either body members or soulful expression. It is the man's "I Am," a gift from the I AM

who created him. The I AM, which is God is underived, eternal, and self-existent; the "I Am" which is man, is derived from God – breathed into Adam in the day when He was formed." God... breathed into his nostrils the breath (in Hebrew: spirit) of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen 2:7). The innermost and deepest reality of man is called in the scriptures the spirit of man. "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor 2:11). As God's self-knowledge lies in the eternal Spirit, so man's true being is in his own spirit.

The spirit includes all the attributes, characteristics and abilities of God, from whence it came. This part of man is only caused to function through the process of re-generation. Without regeneration we have not yet begun our experience of spiritual life. This is why Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh IS FLESH; and that which is born of the Spirit IS SPIRIT. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again" (Jn 3:5-7). The apostle John spoke this truth very simply when he wrote, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I Jn 5:11-12). Regeneration is the obtaining of God's divine life to quicken or fructify our spiritual life in addition to our own soulish and bodily life. The moment we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit is the very moment God's life enters into us and it is also the birth of Christ within us. The birth of Christ in us means that Christ is born once more. Christ was born two thousand years ago in the body of the man called Jesus, but every time a man is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, Christ is born once more in humanity. Hence, regeneration is the birth of Christ within us. It was the very truth of this that prompted Paul to triumphantly declare, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH WITHIN ME" (Gal 2:20).

The spirit is that aspect of God by virtue of which He is able to individualize Himself. The word "individual" comes from the Latin "individuus" which means un-divided. Most people seem to think that it means the exact contrary. It suggests separateness to them, as though being separate or divided from every other human being makes one an individual, but they are mistaken. Individual means un-divided, showing that each human person is undivided from humanity in that he is a perfect expression of what humanity is. Thus, in the higher realm of Spirit life God has the power of individualizing Himself, that is, the bringing forth an another expression of WHAT HE IS without, so to speak, breaking Himself into parts. God individualizes Himself as the new man within us, Christ, and so when you are regenerated you are actually an individualization of God. God can individualize Himself in an infinite number of distinct beings, or units of consciousness and expression, and yet not be in any way separate or divided. Only God can do this because He is SPIRIT. Matter cannot be individualized. It can only be broken up. Thus, if you were to tear off half a page of this article, and then tear that into small pieces you would have divided up the page. The remnant of the page would be smaller by the amount of paper torn off; and the

whole page would be the sum of all the fragments. This is division; it is not individualization. Spirit, however, can be individualized, and this capacity of God is the process by which He is bringing forth a vast company of sons in His very own image! So see your self, the Christ within, the spiritual man, the new creation, is in all truth an individualization of God. This does not, of course, mean that you are an absurd little personal god. Your person is an individualization of the one and only God who was first individualized in the person of Jesus Christ. The new creation life of Christ within you is not "another Christ" or "another God," but the manifestation of the life, mind, will, nature, power and glory of the one and only true God - our Father! God is neither one person, nor is He merely a Trinity of persons – He is a vast family in and through whom He is individualizing Himself, reproducing Himself, extending and projecting Himself.

Regeneration is the beginning of the new man within us. All our experiences of spiritual life are matters of the new man within us, for this life is an entirely new element, not of earth below, but from heaven above. This life gives us the wonderful capacity to communicate and fellowship with God. It is the spirit that causes us to be able to sense God and spiritual things and to contact God. The senses of the spirit are SPIRITUAL SENSES and are, therefore, the gateway to the spiritual world of the Kingdom of God.

The soul, which is situated between the spirit and the body, is our inner, psychological part which includes our human desire, emotion, will and mind. The desire is the organ for fancy, lust, inclination, drawing and aspiration; the emotion is the organ for pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy; the will is the organ for formulating opinions, making decisions and inciting actions; and the mind is the organ for thinking and considering. The senses of the soul are PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSES and comprise man's ego or self, giving him self-consciousness and enabling him to contact the psychological world around him. The soul thus refers to sensation, knowledge and conscious experience. The Greek word for "soul" is PSUCHE. It is the root word from which we get all our English words dealing with the psychic – the mind, the mental life. Words such as psychoanalysis, psychology, psychiatry, all have the same basic root PSUCHE in them.

The soul is the seat of SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS. The soul, when divorced from the life and dominion of the spirit, is SELF-centered and SELF-ish. Have you ever noticed the advertising campaigns of some of the most successful fast food restaurants? McDonald's proclaims, "You deserve a break today," while Burger King advertises, "We do it your way." Both of these are what the super salesmen call the "you" approach. The advertisers tell you that you are important. You are going to get what you need. You are going to get what you want. They are going to make you beautiful or handsome; they are going to cure your aches, pains, halitosis, or get rid of your wrinkles or your obesity. You see, advertisers motivate us by telling us what we want most to believe: that not only are we important, but we are right! Perhaps nothing is so appealing to our human nature as the commercial that promises, "We do it your way." After all, we really want

things done our way, don't we? Yes, the "you" approach sells a great many hamburgers, and many other products as well. Why? Because as humans, we are born with the mentality to envision the world as revolving around ourselves. The appeal is to the soul – the very same appeal made by the serpent in Eden long millenniums ago! Oh, yes – the serpent was a master – salesman!

On another plane, in these days of increasing mental and emotional conflict and strain, many people, including Christians, have been encouraged to turn to psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis for the solutions to their emotional problems. This is a dangerous trend for at least three reasons: First, because the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis are highly speculative, radically experimental, and anti-biblical, and anti-spiritual in their basic theoretical suppositions. All the great pioneers in these fields have been godless, humanistic men who rejected the Word of God and were devoid of any life in the Spirit. They accepted authorities in all these fields starting from the unscriptural theory of evolution, denying man's spiritual existence and need. Second, these programs, including so-called "Christian Psychology," invariably result in giving the changing theories of men precedence over the testimony of the scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit. Third, it leads people to seek the solutions to their problems within their own souls apart from submission to the Word of God and the life of the Spirit, leaving them with a false hope and a rude awakening. Self's trickery and treacherousness is responsible for the fact that psychiatry and psychology have evolved into such complex mazes of pseudo knowledge. Those theories are like a house with many rooms added on haphazardly here and there to take care of all the different situations. Psychiatrists and psychologists, while believing that they are gaining more knowledge, are only being led further and further into the maze of the deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart, which is endless. Their attempts to untangle the secrets of the old nature are like trying to find the end of a piece of string which is tangled into a huge ball, without knowing that the string is in fact a loop. There are no ends. We can trace things in our self forever, but we will only get more lost. And if we mistake the manifestations of the soul for demons, we will then find an endless supply of them to cast out and an equally endless stream of more incredible explanations for why they keep coming back and why more are always showing up. Psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis are but flimsy fig leaves to cover the exposure of the flesh-nature activated as a result of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Each leaf is a facet of our self-image, and when we identify with self, we feel the need to hide from the true God (the Spirit) behind our soulical images.

THE THREE SETS OF FACULTIES

When one has a clear understanding of the three parts of man it becomes increasingly obvious that man possesses a set of THREE OF ALL HIS FACULTIES. Each part of man is a potential kind of man, complete on that level within himself. In our last Study we considered three kinds of hearts: the biological heart which is the physical heart of the body; the psychological heart

which is the emotional and intellectual heart of the soul; and the spiritual heart which is the regenerated heart of the spirit. These three different hearts can act on three different levels at three different times and the child of God can act as three different kinds of persons and live out three different kinds of lives. For example, a brother can lie in bed in the morning and the only evidence of life will appear on the biological level: slow, rhythmic breathing and a pulse - the arterial indicator of the functioning of his biological heart. When he awakes and rises to wash his face and dress he may seem very affable as a person. At noon, this same brother gets angry with his wife, shouts at her, slaps her, with the sudden thought that he hates her and wishes he could divorce her and marry someone else. These actions and thoughts are products of his corrupted psychological heart, and this heart, according to the prophet Jeremiah is "deceitful above all things, and DESPERATELY WICKED" (Jer 17:9). Who can say they do not possess such a heart? This brother who in the morning seemed so congenial now resembles a demon! In the evening, the same brother is convicted of his earlier conduct by the dealing of the spirit within and sees that he has shamefully wronged his wife. He confesses his sin both before God and his wife, asks for and receives their forgiveness, kneels and prays with his wife and together they rejoice and commence to bless and praise God in the Spirit. These are now actions of the spiritual heart. Thus, within one day this brother acts as THREE DIFFERENT PERSONS, living out three different kinds of life which are, potentially, three different kinds of men. In the morning he is affable as a man, at noon he is fierce as a demon, and at night, after dealing with his sin, he manifests the likeness of God. Within twelve brief hours, man, the devil, and God are all manifested in his living. The reason he can act in such diverse ways is that within him there are the realities of three trees of Eden and the three lives of man - body, soul, and spirit. When he lives according to the life of man, he is like a man; when he walks according to the devilish life, he is like the devil; and when he acts according to the life of God in the spirit, he manifests the likeness of God. Whichever life we live in accordance with, regardless of the life, that life determines what we will live out. The tripartite situation of man which existed on that day in the Garden of Eden exists also in us today. We can say that within us is a miniature Garden of Eden with Adam, the serpent, and God – all three – present. Therefore, the Garden concerns us today!

I cannot over emphasize this wonderful and little understood truth that each part of man's being contains a complete set of faculties. For example, let us consider the WILL of man. Within your body you have a biological will which is physical, bodily will. This will is seated in the glands, brain and nerves of the body. This is the will that causes you to breathe and move, to jerk your hand away when you inadvertently touch a hot stove, to shiver when the temperature drops, to sleep at night and awaken in the morning. None of these things are functions of either the will of the soul or the will of the spirit. They are all physical reflexes and functions of the will of the body.

Within your soul you have a psychological will which is an ego will. This is the self-conscious and self-seeking will which is ever opposed to God and His will.

This is the will Jesus brought to the cross when He said, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless NOT MY WILL, but Thine, be done" (Lk 22:42). Within this psychological will is the wretchedness of sin and the power of death, that man would do his will rather than God's will!

Within your regenerated spirit you have a spiritual will which is naught but God's will. This is the will of which Jesus spoke when He said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (Jn 6:38). The location of God's will is settled in Phil 2:13 where we read, "For it is God which worketh IN YOU both to WILL and to do of His good pleasure." Jesus Christ became man to bring us back to the blessedness of doing God's will. The great object of redemption was to make us and our will free from the power of sin, and to lead us again to live and do the will of God. In His life on earth He showed us what it is to live only for the will of God; in His death and resurrection He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He has done. It is this life of obedience, wrought out by the Lord Jesus in the flesh that is not only imputed to us, but imparted through regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Through His death the Lord Jesus has atoned for our self-will and disobedience. It was by conquering it in His own perfect obedience that He atoned for it. He has thus not only blotted out the guilt of our self-will before God, but broken its power in us. In His resurrection He brought from the dead a life that had conquered and destroyed all self-will. And the believer who knows the power of Jesus' death and resurrection knows that His resurrection life gives us power to live as He lived. Jesus Christ enables us, through the indwelling of His Spirit as our new spirit life, to walk not after the flesh, but according to the will of God. This wonderful potential lies within us!

Every child of God has also three sets of emotions. Within your body you have the biological emotions of hunger, thirst, pain, health, sickness, sex drive etc. Within your soul you have the psychological emotions of sorrow, hatred, greed, lust, pride, strife, fear, envy, selfishness, jealousy, aggressiveness, pleasure, etc. Within your spirit you have the spiritual emotions of love, joy, peace, righteousness, meekness, faith, worship, praise etc.

Man also possesses a three-fold conscience. Within your body is the biological conscience which distinguishes between things which are cold or hot, painful or pleasurable, bitter or sweet, pretty or ugly etc. Within your soul is the psychological conscience which judges whether things are good or bad, legal or illegal, honest or dishonest, profitable or unprofitable etc. Within your spirit is the spiritual conscience which determines WHETHER A THING IS OF GOD OR NOT OF GOD. The natural man is guided entirely by his biological and psychological consciences, making all judgments upon the basis of good and evil. The spiritual man, however, discerns whether or not a thing is of God. We have learned a great truth when we learn that many things in this world may be called "good" but yet not be of God.

Let me put it this way – you can know God or good and evil, but not both! Knowing God and knowing good and evil are mutually exclusive. God is known only by the tree of life – good and evil are known only by the tree of death. It is not a matter of right or wrong, yes or no, good or evil – it is entirely a matter of God, a matter of life. Therefore, no matter how much mankind tries to be good, and tries not to be evil, and no matter how much good a man does, even religious good – he is still living off the fruit of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is not until life and truth come spiritually, that we see there are two different trees. Not only is there a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but there is also a tree of life; and good and evil do not belong in the realm of life! Good and evil are simply a knowledge while the tree of life brings life, and reveals life. There is a world in which all that exists is LIFE and neither evil nor good has meaning. This world lies beyond the frontiers of good and evil. It is the realm of Living Reality – the Kingdom of Heaven.

Today most people and churches are teaching and living from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Every thing that is "good" is not according to God's will nor a product of His life. The fleshly religious systems of our day are ever seeking after some "good" tactic or method by which to "promote" the Kingdom of God. Their methods are "good" alright, the only problem being that generally they are NOT OF GOD! The entire religious world today is walking after the psychological conscience of the soul, choosing between "good" and "evil," always choosing the "good" and thus walking in fleshly wisdom which seems so logical to the carnal mind. Fleshly wisdom always seems to make more sense than does the wisdom of God! Satan causes carnal wisdom to prosper because it is a denial of the life of the spirit and the will of God by the spirit, so that many times Christians and churches operate contrary to the spirit with the argument that it is "good" or that "it works!". Their method of evangelism is contrary to the spirit, but since it "works" they continue in it. The "program" of the church, the "organization" of the church is contrary to the ways of the spirit, being built generally around flesh-appeal activities of concerts, social activities, ball teams, Sunday School contests, puppet shows, or movies, speakers, ceremonies, rituals, drives, etc etc. , but they continue in it because it all seems so "good" and "it works," causing the "church" to prosper in numbers and finances, while their spirits remain dwarfed and hideously shriveled and stunted, if indeed they have been quickened at all! The soulish conscience will always make decisions and direct a course of action based in a knowledge of good and evil. The spiritual conscience, on the other hand, will always DISCERN THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT and choose to WALK IN THE MIND OF CHRIST. The soulish conscience will judge upon the basis of the external form of works, whereas the spiritual conscience will discern what is behind the works, whether self-effort or the working of the Spirit of God. This explains the admonition in Hebrews where the writer says "How much more shall Christ purge your conscience from DEAD WORKS to serve the LIVING GOD" (Heb 9:14).

After the end of World War One, the famous desert fighter, Lawrence of Arabia, brought several Arab leaders to Paris to represent their interests at the Versailles

Peace Conference. These sons of the desert were filled with astonishment at the sights of Paris, but nothing intrigued them quite as much as the running water in their hotel rooms. In the desert water was such a luxury, and here in their rooms it seemed to be free and never ending, at the turning of a tap. When it was the time to leave Paris, Lawrence found those Arabs removing the faucets, believing that those magic instruments would give them water at will in their native Arabia. Only with great difficulty did he finally convince them that their faucets were no good if detached from the water supply. "No good if detached!" What a striking picture that is of all our good, of all the forms, rituals, ceremonies, traditions, creeds, means, methods, and works of religion – all that is not of the tree of life is empty, powerless and void. They are but dis-connected faucets, one and all.

The Spirit-substance that nourishes our spirit is the life of the Father within. When we live out of SPIRIT we walk in GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS and SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS has no place. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracle of God -- out of his innermost being. When one speaks the truth, when one speaks and performs what he hears from the Father, it is GOD IN MANIFESTATION, and self is there crucified upon the cross in God's heart. God is raising up a people today, sons who no longer are self-conscious. The secret of Jesus' sonship was that He paid no attention whatsoever to Himself. "Whatsoever I see the Father do, that is what I am doing, whatsoever I hear the Father say, that is what I am saying." The Father said, "You are the way, the truth and the life," so He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He did not say it with His eyes turned to the outer man, thinking how important He was, how vital He was to the situation. He said it because His heart was set on the Father. He said, "The Father has given Me the words I should say." And He spoke the words the Father gave Him with no self-consciousness at all.

The higher we go in God the more refined become the testings. God is causing us to take positions and stands, not against the BAD simply, but against things that are GOOD. Of course, if you take a stand against things that are good and were started by God, formed by God, ordained by God, it will appear as if you are an instrument of the devil out to destroy the work of God. But God said once, "That which I plant, I will pluck up" (Jer 1:9-10; 18:6-10). I rejoiced for years because I saw that "every tree which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Mat 15:13). Now, as we move on in God, we must rejoice when we see God pluck up that which HE PLANTED. God says, "That which I built, I will destroy." We are to rejoice when we see God destroy that which He built. Unless God has done a work in our spirits by the power of the Holy Ghost, we cannot believe that. Our own concept is that if God built it, the only one out to destroy it is the devil. But God says: "I will destroy." May this decade be a decade in which we are prepared to lose the good as well as the bad, prepared to see God pluck up that for which we have given our life to see it planted, where we see God break down and destroy that for which we have sold ourselves out.

Most of us have no problem as to our bad, we know the flesh and all that it represents must go to the cross. But all of us have areas in our life which we

think are good: a devotion, a commitment, a consecration, a faith, a prayer life, a knowledge, a ministry, but which are as much SELF as the bad temper, the lust, and the rest of it. God is saying that everything must go. That which is left will only be CHRIST HIMSELF formed in us. Why is this? Because when God has planted something, after a while we become idolatrous about it. Idolatry is really the self-life projecting itself into the things of God so that they turn into idols because they become the thing which is produced by our consecration, our prayers, our dying. But we do not want it to die, because it has cost us too much, and it represents a work of God in our life. We have given our whole life to see this thing come into being, and anyone that comes along to destroy it is destroying all our consecration, the prayers we have prayed, the reputation we have lost, the deaths we have died. After God has established it, you are telling me that it has to die? But that is exactly it! If it lives we will do what Israel did with the brazen serpent. We make an ephod out of it and go after it to worship it. I know people today who instead of worshipping God, worship worship. It is not the Lord they delight in, but the soulish sensation they get out of "worship." Others worship a message – the faith message, the sonship message, the Kingdom message. Many worship experiences and ministries. Wherever God has brought us in previous dealings, God is progressively moving forward. Today He says: "Build it," tomorrow He says, "Destroy it." Today He says: "Plant it," tomorrow He says, "Pluck it up." Today He says: "Get a harvest," tomorrow He says, "Let the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die." He who has a right to build has also the right to destroy when He is through with a thing. And, woe! unto that man who cannot discern the times.

The cross must strike not only at our carnality and sin, but at all our blessings and experiences and attainments in God. While we praise God for all His mighty acts on our behalf, in and through us, it must all be slain by the cross until we no longer talk about the work of God wrought in us, for that is duality --- God and me. When men saw Jesus, the salvation of God, they saw more than a work of God; they saw the PERSON OF GOD, for, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (Jn 14:9). Ultimately God's purpose is that when the cross has done its work Christ will be so formed in us, so expressed and revealed through us, until he that sees us sees the Father.

The woman represents THE SOUL
That was taken out of man
The man the SPIRIT BEING Son
Who came forth by God's own Hand.

For man was FIRST a Spirit
THEN he became "a soul"
And if you'll hearken to these words
The Truth will soon unfold.

The soul, outside the Spirit,
Is easy to deceive

But the soul that's IN the Spirit
A lie will soon perceive.

So let our souls be subject
To the spirit of the Lord
For if we do, we'll rule our flesh
And not lose our reward.

Now the serpent was a TARE SEED
That blew in from THE FIELD
And settled in the garden
The Truth of God to steal.

The GOOD SEED is The Word of God
Sown in man's side along the way
But she no sooner heard it
Than the serpent came to say:

"Yea, hath God said he shall not eat
Of ALL trees in His garden?"
And when the woman heard this "ALL,"
Her heart did start to harden.

"Why, God said we could eat of all, but one,
And here's the reason why...
If we should eat it – even touch it –
We would surely die.

"Surely die? Of course you won't!
You must be kidding me!
He simply knows that if you eat
You'll be as wise as He!"

"Why, yes," said she, "it's plain to see
He's holding back on me...
To keep the best part for Himself...
The WISDOM of this tree."

"This glorious tree must be the key
To His prosperity...
He doesn't want Ad-AM and I
To live as well as He."

The soul that's IN The Spirit
Other voices will not hear
But the soul that's independent
Has an ever-itching ear.

She did not ask her husband
But like a ship did yaw
And as she stood there looking,
This is NOW the tree she saw:

“... not only is it good for food,
And most pleasant to the eyes,
But, best of all, this wondrous tree
Will surely make me wise.”

Thou shalt not eat the cursed thing
Nor cover with its leaves
The FIG TREE that the Lord Jesus cursed
The Holy Spirit grieves.

Its root is dry, its limbs are bare;
It only brings forth leaves
There's not an ounce of cure in them...
Just sickness and disease.

For all man's works are filthy rags,
An apron of confusion,
A garment of unrighteousness...
The source of man's delusion.

But there is a Tree that God did plant
Its leaves doth heal the nations
A righteous tree, The Tree of Life,
Its fruit... God's new creations.

The devil had inspired in her
The PRIDE OF LIFE, poor girl,
And the wisdom that he offered
Was but THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD.

Man has to learn the folly
Of living solely by his SENSES
For against the serpent's cunning
They are pitiful defenses.

The soul did HEAR the serpent's lies,
Did SEE their worth and merit,
The soul did TOUCH the unclean thing,
Did TASTE, and then did share it.

She SMELLED the sweet smell of success
In the promise of the lie

That she would be as wise as God
And thus be lifted high.

Now the senses are the gifts of God
To help us in this realm
But they cannot function as they ought
If God's not at the helm.

THE THREE MINDS

Not only do saints have three kinds of hearts, wills, consciences, eyes, ears, feet, hands, and emotions, they have also three kinds of minds. Within your body you have a biological mind called the brain. It consists of a mass of nerve fibers, in the form of thin, white strands, at the top of the head. These nerve fibers connect with other nerve fibers that stretch from the brain to all parts of the body. They carry messages to and from the brain in less time than it takes to bat an eyelash. This "computer system" of nerves enables a man to think, have consciousness, and relate to the physical world in which he lives. Special centers inside the brain control our bodily senses, such as sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Every other member of the body is controlled by the brain so that if the brain is damaged some parts may be paralyzed, or the body members may not be able to function, bringing death. The one thing you will notice about all this is that the brain is the biological organ that controls the physical sense of the flesh.

Within your soul you have a psychological mind. Paul calls this mind the "carnal mind," for it is ever minding the things of the body and the soul. The carnal mind is an insane mind. There are many species of insanity. All sin is insanity, in different degrees. The carnal mind is an insane mind given wholly to destructive delusions. The natural man is mentally ill beyond comprehension. The carnal mind is spared from this classification in our world, only because the vast majority of the inmates in this vast asylum called "society" is equally mad and in consonance with the delusion. There is a universal insanity of the so-called "wisdom" of the world, but the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God – the Spirit. The mortal, sinful, sick, warring, confused, sorrowing, imperfect, carnal children of men are counterfeits, to be laid aside for the pure reality – man in the image of God. This mortal, this deranged mind of old Adam, must be put off, and the dispensations since the garden of Eden men have been walking after their carnal minds. They have proudly imagined that they could understand the things of God with the human mind. But this can never be. All through the ages there has been a small number who by the grace of God were able to crucify the flesh, put off the carnal mind, and become partakers of the mind of Christ. Rom 8:6-8 says, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." It is very striking that the carnal mind is equated with death. According to this verse the carnal mind and death are not two separate things - they are the very same thing "To be carnally minded IS DEATH!" It will aid our

understanding of what is meant by death if we first understand what life is, for death is the opposite of life. In the natural world we know that a dog which runs and barks is alive. Usually we can tell by its actions if a thing is alive. A stone does not act. Things happen to a stone. A stone does not of itself make anything happen, either to itself or to its surroundings. If something moves and changes and acts by itself it is alive. There are some things which are not alive that seem to act as if they were alive. The wind blows. The rain falls. The river flows. Fire burns. Each of these have movement, change and action. But these things move only when they are caused to move by some external force or law. Life, on the other hand, is an internal power that does not depend upon some other cause for its movement, change or action. Life moves, changes and acts out of its own inherent power.

When anything ceases to function – can no longer move, change or act out of its own energy - it is DEAD. Death may be either partial or complete. Part of the organism may no longer function in life, or all of it may cease to function. Suppose the case of a man who by disease or accident has been deprived of the use of his ears. The deaf man's ears, in virtue of this imperfection, are said to be "dead." That part of him is no longer functioning. If we suppose that this man then loses his sight, the beauty of the sea and sky, the forms of cloud and mountain, the features and gestures of friends, are to him as if they were not. They are there, solid and real, but not to him; he is still further "dead." Next, let it be conceived, the subtle finger of cerebral disease lays hold of him. His whole brain is affected, and the sensory nerves cease altogether to acquaint him with what is happening in the outside world. The outside world is still there, but not to him; he is still further "dead." And so the death of parts goes on. He becomes less and less alive. Finally, the lungs can no longer breathe, so the heart can no longer pump the blood and the blood can no longer transport the oxygen – the thing, for it is now a thing, is dead.

Next it will be manifest that every living thing lives and functions on a particular level, and while it is alive on its own level it is, in a true sense, "dead" to those things on all other planes of existence. A tree, for example, while it lives on the plane of the vegetable kingdom, is "dead" to the higher realm of life of the animal kingdom and all kingdoms above that. It has neither eyes, nose, ears, mouth nor hands and so does not see, smell, hear, taste nor consciously touch the whole world around it. It is alive on one plane, but dead to all others. So far as consciousness is concerned, we should be justified indeed in saying that it was not alive at all. The murmur of the stream which bathes its roots affects it not. The marvelous insect-life beneath its shadow excites in it no wonder. The tender maternity of the bird which has its nest among its leaves stirs no responsive sympathy. It cannot relate to those things. To stream and insect and bird it is insensible, numb, dead. This is DEATH, this non-functioning, this unresponsiveness.

This brings us to a most wonderful and momentous realization of truth as stated by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "The natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Jesus stated the same truth in different words, saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (I Cor 2:14; Jn 3:3). It cannot be said of the unregenerate man that he is living in contact with the spiritual world of God. Since that fateful day in Eden's garden when man was banished from the glories of the Tree of Life the natural man has been dead to all spiritual things and has positively no communion on the plane of divine life. The natural man functions and knows in this present material world of corruption and death while being completely dead to the higher realm of God and spiritual realities. That does not mean that the natural man has no spirit – it means that his spirit resides in the state of sleep or death, that is, unresponsiveness to God. A corpse is still a body, a man, and has all its members but it has no consciousness or responsiveness to the world about it. And so, until the spirit of man is quickened by the Spirit of God – the Spirit of God is that which KNOWS – it is impossible for him to have any understanding, either of God, or His Word, or His ways.

The Holy Spirit who knoweth all things has taught us in the simplest and most beautiful words that "we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are TEMPORAL; but the things which are not seen: are ETERNAL" (II Cor 4:18). All the things which can be seen, heard, tasted, touched or smelled by the five physical senses or discerned by the psychological senses of the soul are TEMPORAL and are passing away. This was already a fact in Eden's fair garden, for where is the scripture, O man, that tells us that in that distant beginning the plants were immortal, or that the beasts of the field possessed eternal life, or that the roses never faded, that the leaves of the trees never withered, or that no tool in the hand of man ever wore out? I declare to you that not only today are the things that are seen TEMPORAL, but the things that can be seen HAVE ALWAYS BEEN TEMPORAL since the day they came fresh from the hand of the Creator. The awe-inspiring wonder of the Tree of Life in the midst of God's creation is that God held out to His creation the potential to be transformed and transferred out of the realm of the natural into the Kingdom of the Spiritual. I Jn 2:17 has always been true: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God ABIDETH FOREVER." Can you think of any visible thing that is not passing away? Every form of life upon the earth is passing away, and even the earth itself shall pass away. The visible universe of suns and moons and planets and stars and innumerable galaxies will one day be rolled up like a scroll (Rev 21:1) and the magnitudes of time and space shall be no more.

We know that God is Spirit but what does that mean? Well, Spirit is that which cannot be destroyed or damaged or hurt in any way. Spirit cannot deteriorate. It cannot grow tired or old. It is the opposite of matter. Matter is always deteriorating. While you sit reading this page, the paper is actually wearing out. The clothes on your back are wearing out. The building in which you are sitting is wearing out, and your body itself is wearing out - and some day all these things will be dust. True, it will take a long time according to our ideas for these things to

happen but happen they will. There was a time when great cities filled with imposing buildings and splendid monuments flourished in Africa and Asia, cities of which every trace has now disappeared, for they have become one with the desert sands. This is inevitable because matter is always wearing out! "Man who is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:1-2).

This is really a splendid thing because it means that the world is constantly being renewed. It is splendid that old imperfect things should disappear in order that newer, cleaner, and better things may take their place. If clothing did not wear out, many people would continue wearing it for many years until it became out of style and saturated with dirt, instead of which we get new clothes at frequent intervals. If automobiles did not wear out we might still be using the primitive models of fifty years ago. Who would want to eternally preserve something that is imperfect, soiled, ruined, or insufficient? Because everything of the material realm IS IMPERFECT, God has, in His great wisdom and goodness, arranged it so that all things of this realm ARE TEMPORAL and are passing away.

Matter wears out, but the Spirit of God does not wear out because the Spirit is eternal substance. Our fleshly bodies of humiliation are composed of matter, whereas our spirits are the offspring of God's divine Spirit. Herein lies the folly of those who presume that they have already put on immortality in their physical bodies and cannot die. I have known many precious and sincere brethren who believed that they had passed over the grave, but I can tell you that today all of them are both dead and buried except those who have not yet reached the age where death is a certainty. Harken, my brother, and hear, my sister, the words of wisdom and understanding from God: "The things which are seen ARE TEMPORAL; but the things which are not seen ARE ETERNAL." The Spirit here reveals the great truth that there simply is no such thing as INCORRUPTIBLE MATTER. There are no IMMORTAL MATERIAL BODIES walking around anywhere on God's earth! If they are composed of matter and visible then they are not eternal and endure. It is a contradiction of terms. Nothing that is seen by the mortal eyes of natural men can be eternal. There must be a transformation, a transfer from one kingdom to the other.

The incorruptible body of the resurrection is not a material body at all, it is a SPIRIT BODY. The words of Paul to the Corinthians must be made very real to our hearts: "There are celestial (heavenly) bodies, and bodies terrestrial (earthly): but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of terrestrial is another. So is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a NATURAL BODY; it is raised a SPIRITUAL BODY. There is a NATURAL BODY and there is a SPIRITUAL BODY" (I Cor 15:40,42-44). It is plain to see that our present bodies are "natural bodies." The "spiritual body" supersedes the "natural body" and is called in the Greek a "spirit body." The natural body and the spirit body belong to two entirely different kingdoms. The former is visible, the latter is invisible. The former is temporal, the latter is eternal.

The former is of the earth, the latter is from heaven as Paul explains: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building (body) of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II Cor 5:1-4).

Our "earthly house," our physical body, is characterized as a "tabernacle" or a better translation would be "tent-house." The transient character of the earthly body is thus revealed by this symbol. This house is to be "dissolved." "Dissolved" comes from a Greek word meaning "loosened down," as the ropes of a tent are loosened and the tent is taken down. The "spirit body," on the other hand, is described as a "building of God, eternal in the heavens." The metaphor changes, interestingly, from a "tent" to a "building," from that which can be "dissolved" to that which is "eternal." My beloved brethren! I have absolutely no desire whatever to have God imbue with any eternal qualities this poor, imperfect, limited, restricted, humiliating, earthly, animal body! My hope of sonship does not rest in preserving forever a body that must be washed and clothed, fed and rested, groomed and manicured, and powdered and deodorized. There is another body, thank God!, formed of the Spirit of the resurrected and glorified Christ of God and this marvelous body is from heaven even as my present body is of earth. I declare to you that as a man puts on Christ he puts on not only the Spirit of Christ but also the RESURRECTION BODY of Christ and this body is our house from heaven. Even as our earth body has come from Adam, and is Adam's body, so our spirit body comes from Christ and is the body of His resurrection. As the pure and holy life of the Son of God is formed within us God shall also give us bodies worthy of such divine life, bodies capable of expressing all the wisdom and power of that blessed realm beyond sin and death, yea, beyond time and space and matter!

It must forever be settled in our hearts that there is no true reality in any of the things that are seen, for how can we say that things which are always changing and passing away are realities? The only eternal things in the whole universe are the things which are not seen, and yet it is not that they are really invisible, for they are merely invisible to the kinds of eyes we mortals have. Eternal things are only inaudible to the ears of the natural and can be perceived only beyond the senses of the soulish man. The Holy Spirit has faithfully recorded of Moses, that grand hero of faith and spiritual vision, that "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb 11:27). In this verse we have from the history of Israel, on their way from Egypt to Canaan, the truth confirmed anew that in all God does in His great and eternal purposes, on man's part faith is the beginning and the ending. Faith is an attribute and faculty of the NEW HEART and the NEW MIND, and the one outstanding feature of this spiritual faculty of faith is its ability to SEE THE INVISIBLE! Moses "endured, as SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE." This was

done by faith – which sees the invisible One. Here is the mighty power of the new creation: it sees what others cannot see! It sees, amid the thousand things natural men see and are guided by, something infinitely greater and more real – it sees God. No wonder it leads a man to think and act differently from other men. On everything it looks at the bright light of eternity is shining. No wonder that under the inspiration of that vision it can do mighty deeds, for it sees God its helper and strength. Let me here say to every believer that just as, in any pursuit, the eye can be trained to see what others cannot see, so the spiritual eye of the new creation can be trained to see God everywhere. Abide in His presence until the heart is filled with it. You will begin to recognize HIM in everything that happens. Seek to walk in the light of His countenance. Seeing the INVISIBLE will make it easy to forsake the world and do the will of God!

Just as there are five natural senses in the natural realm, so also there are five spiritual senses in the spiritual realm. The five senses of the body and soul are able only to see, hear, taste, touch and smell natural things, but these same five senses in the realm of the spirit are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell all spiritual things which are invisible and incorruptible, as Paul explains: "... eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (by any natural sense of power or perception) the things which God hath in reservation for those who love Him - but God HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US by His Spirit; for the spirit searcheth (out) all things, yea the deep things of God" (I Cor 2:9-14). When we are born of the Spirit the five senses of God become resident and operative within our spirit. Gradually, as we are quickened to become aware of these senses, the EYES of our understanding open wider and wider to the things not seen by the natural eye; by degrees the HEARING of faith increases until every good promise of God is established as truth within; in time we come into TOUCH with the Lord and His invisible presence and powers; little by little we TASTE and see that the Lord is very gracious; after a time we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense-prayers and praises and graces, which are a SWEET ODOR to the Lord. As the natural senses can be cultivated, so can the spiritual; and the cultivation of these spiritual senses constitutes marks indicating our growth in grace, our development as sons of God, to the completeness of our new selves in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature.

When one walks by the spiritual senses of the new creation He, like Christ, has meat to eat that others know not of and drink to drink of which those around him have never tasted. Under the curse of death and separation from God man was banished from entrance into this blessed realm of reality in the Spirit. The heavens became shut up from him. He could not see eternal things. He could see only natural things. He could not hear spiritual and eternal things. He could hear only the lower sounds of earth. He could not taste spiritual things but only such things as he could eat with his physical mouth and take into his soul of the spirit of this world, none of which contain one iota of life or reality. He could not smell the more glorious fragrance of the heavenly realms, but only those perfumes which issued forth from things of earth. Neither could he feel the glory

of God's presence, but his feeling was confined to the tangible and corruptible things of earth. He was condemned to live after the flesh, for the gate of the spiritual world was closed to him.

Jesus has opened the gate, blessed be His name! He now bids us come to the place of feeding upon heavenly manna, for He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20). The first taste we have of the Lord's table, is when we enter into our secret closet and close the door; shutting out everybody and everything, all our thoughts and desires, all sounds from the world, and all the six hundred sixty six voices of Babylon's religious systems. It is upon the door of this closet of communion in the SPIRITUAL REALM, that He comes and knocks; it is there He enters; and when we have shut the door, He spreads a table before us, and we sup with Him and He with us. He spreads this table with heavenly viands; and we not only taste of the hidden manna, but we learn to feed upon it ONLY and CONTINUOUSLY; we drink of the living water more abundantly.

We cannot sit at this table with our voices clattering and every avenue of our being filled with unrest. We cannot abide at His feet and hear His voice when our opinions are rampant, and our thoughts wandering to and fro like the tramps in the alley that feed upon the refuse in the garbage cans. We cannot eat of this table while the wine of Babylon's doctrines and spirit is filling our stomachs and defiling our breath. We must turn from it all, from tradition, from the world, and from self to seek Him diligently and yield to Him in quietness and confidence. We must follow every direction He gives us if we would find this table and abide there; for we can only sit at this table of the Lord when we have commenced to partake of the grace of silence within and without. When the Lord was on earth, He told His disciples that He had meat to eat that they knew not of; and He added: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." The Sons of God will be known first of all by the fact that they make the WILL OF GOD to be their meat and drink. And it is only as we get still before HIM, that we learn to know and do His will. Body and soul must be silenced! The sooner the better. The body man shall pass away. The soulish man shall likewise pass away. But HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER. He that doeth the will of God is THE TREE OF LIFE KIND OF MAN. This hidden feeding upon Christ, the tree of life; this hidden table of communion, at which none ever sits with us but our Lord, is the King's table. Only when He is King of our lives can we expect He will reveal to us His secrets, or take us into His confidence, or share with us wisdom and power. If Christ were sitting upon the throne of our lives continually, we would be sitting at His table continually.

The natural man cannot smell the more glorious fragrance of the heavenly realm, but only those odors which issue forth from the things of earth. In the Song of Solomon it is written prophetically of Christ: "Thine oils have a goodly fragrance; Thy name is as oil poured forth" (S of S 1:3). The very name, "Christ," means the "Anointed One." When the wise men came from a far country to search for the

Messiah, they brought to Him gold, frankincense and myrrh. It did not just happen that the wise men brought these gifts to Him. Nothing ever just happens; for our God is over all things. They brought to Him the gold, which symbolizes His divine nature; they brought to Him the frankincense, which is an emblem of His glory, together with the praise toward God which came through Him. They brought to Him the fragrant, but bitter myrrh, which is a symbol of His fragrance of joy, obedience, confidence and victory even in the bitterness of the suffering and death through which He would pass. Those who brought these gifts perhaps saw no significance in them; but the meaning is very clear to one who sees the symbolism in the metals, the sweet spices and gums were used in the worship of Israel.

We hardly realize how ill-smelling our own fleshly attributes are, and how many flies have gotten into the oil which the great Perfumer has commenced to put within us, until we have drawn close enough to HIM to discern the fragrance of His pure oils. It is when we smell the goodly fragrance of His humility that we begin to detect the offensive odor of our pride. It is when the sweetness of His purity and holiness, His love and longsuffering, breaks in upon us, that we smell the vile odors of our flesh, our stiff-neckedness and willfulness, our lack of love and short-suffering. It is when we smell the perfume of His patience and forgiveness toward us, that we get the real offensive odor of our impatience and unforgiving spirit toward one another. It is when we sense the fragrance of His joy and peace and righteousness that our own confusion, temper and carnality seem so putrid and unclean. How sweet and altogether delightful are the fragrances of the heavenly realms! How beautiful the sights! How delicious the taste! How entralling the sounds! How transforming, heaven's touch!

In the tree of life, Christ, the heavenly Father showed us in Jesus' earthly life what the life of heaven would be like when it came down into the conditions and circumstances of our human life. In His death and resurrection He took all that heaven's life is and poured it out that we might partake of its fullness. When the high priest, who, with the holy anointing oil upon him, had been ministering before God in the Holy of Holiest, came out and passed among the congregation of Israel, the fragrance of that holy oil enveloped him. No oil like unto this could be made by any man or be put upon any flesh; it could be only upon those who ministered before God, and only upon them did this holy perfume linger and ascend before God. So with those who draw close to their Head, Christ, as members of HIS BODY, the body of the High Priest, having boldness to enter into the Holiest by a new and living way which He hath consecrated, through the veil, drawing near to minister before HIM. His oils are upon them, His likeness and fragrance surround and emanate from them; and all who come near them know that they have been abiding in the presence of the Lord. It is only to those who have seen their own vileness and have turned to Him to be washed in the fountain of His blood that His name is as ointment poured forth. It is to those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; it is to the virgins who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; it is to that blessed company of the sons of God who overcome all things to sit with Him upon His

throne; to those who love Him above all else, that His name is as oil poured forth. Do you long to be fragrant, dear child of God? Hasten to HIM whose oils have the goodly fragrance of heaven's divine life and glory; call upon Him whose name is as oil poured forth; put off all the attributes and weakness of self, and put Him on. Put off all the Babylonish garments of man's religious exercises, and put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Put Him on! Clothe thyself in HIM. Let God forevermore hide thee away in Him. Then shalt thou be a Son, then shall those about thee smell such fragrance as has never been discerned upon thee; and they shall know that His good oils have a goodly fragrance, and that His oils are upon thee.

The very nature of our walk in the Spirit as sons of God requires the most drastic change in ourselves. It is impossible to walk as a son until this great change has taken place in us. We cannot hope to enter into this high and holy realm with any hope of walking in the Christ life until a whole new set of faculties has been given us and we, like children, have learned to use them and abide in them. When our minds begin to comprehend how completely the natural man is locked out of the Kingdom of God and barred from all spiritual experience because of the death that has come upon him, then we are able to understand more clearly why it was that Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." There is far more to that statement than any religionist has ever understood, for just as death deprived Adam of any possibility of the sight and presence of the eternal spiritual things of God's Kingdom so also does the new birth bring them back into view. The same heavens that were closed on that day in Eden so long will once again begin to open to us that we, being born again, might live in the light and reality of the Kingdom of the Lord.

That Kingdom is one with which the natural man has no correspondence at all, with which he naturally has no power of communication. Take a walk around the garden. Walk down by the cabbages and vegetables and talk about, well, anything you like. What would the cabbages think about you? What would the turnips say about you? They neither hear nor understand what you are talking about, whatever it is. Their kind of life is not your kind of life. Their faculties are not your kind of faculties. They are not constituted in your kingdom. There is no correspondence between them and you at all. They have not the capacity, the ability, the qualification, the faculty for the most elementary things you may be talking about. You may be talking about such foolish things as cars, ordinary everyday things, but they do not know it. That is how it is. There is just as great divide between the natural man and the Kingdom of God. The divide is so utter that if you and I were brought in our natural state right into the place where the Spirit of God was speaking, unless the Spirit of God wrought a miracle in us, the whole thing would be of another world. Is that not how it is? You believers go out into this world and talk about the things of the Lord and see men gape at you! It is all foreign to them! "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." And to actually enter into this Kingdom as a King-Priest after the order of Melchizadek, which is the order of the Son of God, something has to happen to us, and that means we have to be constituted anew, with altogether other qualifications and abilities and faculties for the realm of the Kingdom of God. You

go out into the church world today and begin to talk about Sonship, Perfection, the Firstfruits, being changed while we stand on our own two feet, Overcomers, the Temple People, the Book of Life Company, Saviours on Mount Zion, no Rapture, no golden streets and no harps and no white night gowns and no marriage supper on a cloud eating porkchops – I can assure you that the Christian will gape at you! It is not that they do not have the spiritual faculties of the new creation man to see and discern the deep things of God, only that they have not developed them! A baby has ears, eyes, nose, mouth and hands, but discerns very, very little of the world into which he has been born. And if that baby were brought into a world where there no other human beings, he would never learn to talk nor do the thousand and one other things that make intelligent, rational human beings. Beloved, if we would grow up in the Kingdom of God there is one thing necessary: Constant fellowship and communion with the One who inhabits that high and holy realm – Jesus! Only through intercourse with HIM are we able to develop the faculties of our spirit that we may become the sons of God. There is no other way!

Few statements have ever been made that carry a more intense message than these words of the apostle Paul written to the Roman believers: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom 8:6). To be spiritually minded means to walk in the spiritual mind and pay no mind to the desires, thoughts and claims of the carnal mind which minds only earthly things. The three trees of Eden are three kinds of men, three potentialities within man, and three kinds of lives that may be lived out by every regenerated person: body life, soul life and spirit life. It is interesting to watch these three kinds of lives revealed in a gathering of the Lord's people where there are saints who are walking on different levels of spiritual development. When a deep revelatory word is coming forth, and the Spirit of God is probing into the depths of the hearts of those saints walking in the SPIRITUAL REALM, others seem to withdraw and appear to be bored with the service. Then if another voice begins to speak, appealing to the SOULISH REALM, with shallow sentimental preaching, peppy music, clapping of the hands, emotional appeal for people to "come forward" for this and that blessing, this second group of saints suddenly becomes alive and responds accordingly with their manifestations. And finally, as yet another voice speaks and announces that the meeting has ended and donuts and coffee will now be served, there is this third group who live in the BODY REALM, who endured all the service thus far, who now begin to respond and come alive. Each has seen, heard, tasted, touched and smelled on one of the three levels, whether of the spirit, the soul or the body.

The sons of God are called to be THE TREE OF LIFE KIND OF PEOPLE. Those pursuing this calling in God will more and more know what it is to be lifted beyond the pale of natural things to behold the realm where God lives in the Spirit. It is the glory of His presence and the power of His life that changes us from corruption to incorruption, that transforms the ragged garments of our mortality to raiment which is white and glistening. God is moving in our heart and preparing us for a great change in which we shall move completely out of the tripartite

nature of spirit, soul and body to live only and forever in THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. There, beyond limitation and imperfection, we shall see Him as He is and know Him even as we are known of Him. Our vision of heavenly things has been so distorted due to our looking through physical and soulish eyes. You have sometimes seen a window made of fluted glass, and you know that if you look at the street through this window everything will be distorted. The passers-by and the automobiles will appear to be warped and distorted in absurd and ugly ways. Nevertheless, you know that these things are really quite alright in themselves, and that the distortion arises from your seeing them wrongly. The pure eyes of our regenerated spirits have had to filter through the fluted shell of our carnal minds and the marvelous things of the realm of God's Spirit have been distorted into myriads of carnal doctrines, traditions, rituals, concepts, interpretations and religious systems and exercises. This distorted vision of heavenly things is really what we know as "Christianity." It is a seeing, but a false seeing. It is knowing, but a false knowing. The sons of God are arising to pass through this veil, to abide forever in the Holiest of all. Our Leader and Forerunner opened up this path to God, in which He first walked Himself, and then draws us to follow Him. The veil is the flesh. The veil that separated man from God was the flesh; body and soul under the dominion of sin. Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelt with us here outside the veil. The Word was made flesh. Through the rent veil of His flesh, His will, His senses, His earthly faculties, His human life, yielded up to God in death, He entered beyond the veil into the Holiest. Through the rent veil He rose to the very throne of God. And this is the way He has dedicated for us. As little as He could open and enter the Holiest for us, except in His path of suffering and death, as little can we enter in unless we walk the same path of obedience and death to self. He is our way. Let us arise and follow HIM!

Chapter 8

A River Out Of Eden

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates" (Gen 2:10-14).

In connection with the parable of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, we are told of a remarkable river that had its source in Eden, but on flowing out of the garden divided itself into four branches. The picture is that of man placed in the garden before a tree called the tree of life. By the side of the tree of life there was a river, and by the flowing of this river there were some precious materials: gold, pearl, and onyx stone. Remember this scene is in the second chapter of the whole of the Bible. At the end of the revelations of the Scriptures, we find the same things again in the very last two chapters. There we see a city built of gold, pearls, and precious stones, the same kind of materials listed in Genesis chapter two. There we also see a river flowing, and on either side of it grows the tree of life. Here you have the river and the tree of life once more. How remarkable that man's history began and ends at the same river and tree of life! The tree of life in Genesis and the tree of life in Revelation are not two different trees, but the one and selfsame tree. The river flowing out of the garden and the river flowing from the city are not two separate rivers, they are the same wonderful river.

THE OUT-FLOWING OF GOD

How many times throughout the scriptures God is spoken of as a flowing stream of water! "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men... shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life" (Ps 36:7-9). The Lord Jesus tells us that the water that He gives will become a fountain of living water within us, springing up unto eternal life (Jn 4:14). He says again that whoever is thirsty may come to Him and drink, and whoever believes on Him will have rivers of living water flowing from within him (Jn 7:37-38). All these words relate to one thing - that God Himself has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity AS LIFE. The question follows – In what form has God flowed out? He has flowed out first in His Son, in Jesus Christ; and then He has flowed out as the Holy Spirit. Let us see God's order: God Himself is the spring, the very source of the water of life; Jesus Christ, the first-born son, is the fountain, the reservoir of this divine water; and the Holy

Spirit, flowing through the body of the Christ, the corporate son, is the living stream, flowing all the time.

The scriptures tell us that along this river grows the tree of life. What is the tree of life? It is simply Christ as our life. The tree of life in Eden, on the one hand, signifies the life of God in His Word – that which spiritually may be “eaten” by man. It is the dispensing of God into man, his partaking of life by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The river of life, on the other hand, signifies the outflowing of God as the Spirit – that which may be “drunk” by man. These two, this tree and the river, correspond to the life of Christ presented in these meaningful words of Jesus: “Except ye eat the FLESH (word, tree of life) of the Son of man, and drink His BLOOD (spirit, river of life), ye have no life in you” (Jn 6:53). The primary purpose of a river is to water the seed of the earth and cause it to grow and produce fruit. In turn, that green verdage beside the river produces fruit that men may partake of and live, and leaves whose wonderful medicinal properties one made healing for the nations. The Spirit and the Word! The River and the Tree! The Word that proceeds out of the Spirit! Therefore, whatever the meaning of a river is in the symbolism of scripture, it will have the primary purpose of causing growth of the seed of God inside of us. The pouring forth of life out of the Kingdom of Heaven unto the barrenness of the earth realm. All life was to be found in Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Eden was constituted debtor to the whole earth to send forth the life-giving streams. Thus, the river of life out of Eden is the profound expression of God's purpose to not only enter into the lives of His people, transforming them into the tree of life kind of people, but to further bring forth in the earth a RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY, a people out of whom the life would flow! Ah - beloved, God is bringing forth His elect who shall be a RIVER OF LIFE, for He Himself in them is an ever-flowing wellspring of life and glory. Wherever God flows out by the Spirit, there He is found as life and eternal reality. To all of man's need God Himself is the supply, the only supply, and all the supply, bless His wonderful name!

Our usual desire, as the Lord's people, is to come together with other "kingdom saints" and through praise and the ministry of the Word, etc. to all get "turned on" together, until we feel the mighty up-surgings of the river of life in waves of the glory and victory. How we thank God for those tremendous surges of His life which we experience from time to time as we are brought together in praise, worship, ministry of the Word, and flow of revelation, and rejoice in each one of them; but I tell you of a truth that out in the desert, arid, barren, so parched and destitute, there God will cause His ELECT to pour forth as a mighty flowing river with an unending supply, even there shall the river of God's Spirit flow like a flood-tide to sweep out and change the world.

The river of life is the flowing out of God as life. His flowing out has passed through four steps. The first step was His becoming flesh. This enabled Him to flow out from heaven into the midst of men and manifest Himself as life. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In

Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:1,4,14). Therefore, the Bible speaks of Christ's coming into the world, on the one hand, as "GOD manifested in the flesh" (I Tim 3:16), and on the other hand, as the "LIFE which was manifested" (I Jn 1:2). Hence, when Christ was in the flesh, He said, "I AM the life" (Jn 14:6). As a man He had received the Holy Spirit without measure and His whole life was under the complete dominion of the Spirit. The words He spake, the deeds He wrought, the miracles He performed were all the result of that limitless fullness of God that indwelt Him. When Aaron the priest was anointed with the holy oil, Moses poured it on his head until it ran down over his face and beard, over his body and down to the very skirts of his garments. This is typical of that measureless fullness of the Holy Spirit of life which Christ enjoyed – not just a drop of oil on the forehead applied by the finger, but oil in abundance for the whole man! Wonderful and glorious as was this reservoir of divine life, full and abundant in Christ. It was but the first step in God's flowing out into humanity and the blessed river of God had not yet begun to flow out from the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Although in this first step in God's flowing out He could manifest Himself as life to us, in Jesus, He could not yet be received by us AS LIFE; man could see the life, observe the life, yea, even handle the life, but could not yet partake of the life! Therefore, He must take the second step in flowing out.

God's second step in flowing out was His being nailed on the cross. Through death, the body of the flesh which He took, which was the reservoir of life, was broken, thus enabling Him to flow out from the flesh and become the living water of life to be received by us (Jn 19:34; 4:10,14). The rock in the Old Testament typified Him; it was smitten and from it came living water to be obtained by the people of Israel (Ex 17:6; I Cor 10:4). He became flesh in order that He might be a grain of wheat which contains life. He was crucified so that He could flow out from the husk of flesh into us – His many fruits – and become our life (Jn 12:24).

The third step in God's out-flowing was in the sending of Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Lord poured Himself out as the Holy Spirit. "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33, New American Standard). Notice the word "poured" in these verses. He "poured out" the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit became the flowing stream of the divine water of life. For twenty centuries since that time, the Holy Spirit has been flowing in this world. This flowing has never stopped and it shall flow into eternity! It shall flow until there is no place in the whole universe that has not been bathed in its life-giving waters! God has poured out His Holy Spirit, flowing with His divine life. There is now a river, a flowing of God's life, and this flowing is the Holy Spirit Himself, poured out by the crucified, resurrected, ascended and glorified Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah the prophet: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin

and uncleanness" (Zech 13:1). This fountain is naught but the "head-waters" of the glorious river of life which flows from Eden's lovely garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

The fourth and final step in the flowing out of God as life is in the river of life itself. Ah – beloved, know ye not that ye are that river? God as life to man has firstly flowed out in His first-born son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus can give us the water, and the water He gives becomes in us a well of water springing up unto eternal life. It is He who gives us water so that we shall never thirst. It was He who cried out on the last day of the feast: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive" (Jn 7:37-39). Every Christian should seek that God would open his eyes to show him that we who drink deeply of Him BECOME THE CHANNEL by which God flows out to humanity. God Himself is the wellspring, the eternal SOURCE of incorruptible life and glory; Jesus Christ, the first-born Son, is the fountain, the reservoir of this glorious life; and the SONS OF GOD are the RIVER by which His life and glory shall be communicated to the arid barrenness of the earth realm. A river is a large stream of water that flows downhill through a channel, within banks. The earth of YOUR BODY and YOUR HUMAN LIFE is the channel through which the stream of the Spirit of God's life flows!

THE RIVER OF LIFE

Those who know nothing of spiritual realities see nothing in the garden of Eden than merely a literal garden abounding with trees and flowers and animals and sparkling streams in the faraway land of Mesopotamia.

But there is neither evidence nor proof of the garden of Eden anywhere in that region. No wonder that men have sought for it; but they have sought in vain. We read of the ancient rivers that flowed out of Eden – of Pison the brimmer, of Gihon the burster-forth, of Hiddekel the arrowy, but we cannot identify them. If indeed there was such a garden the features of the land have so changed through the millenniums that we cannot tell which is the golden land of Havilah or the whole land of Cush. Some have supposed that the garden of Eden was situated on the great continent of Atlantis which is said to have sunk into the depths of the sea. Without doubt it has vanished like the mists of the summer rain before the heat of the sun. And it is best that there are no remains of the lovely Garden, or we should have expeditions got up by excursion agents; and men would build great villas there as though it were possible to get back to the early bliss of our race by surrounding oneself with the same scenes and breathing the same air. No! The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and bliss is to be discovered not in the Garden, but in Him who walked in the Garden in the cool of the day.

The so-called "literalist" studies the Genesis record from a strictly historical, geographical and geological viewpoint. These do, however, come up with some interesting insights about what such a literal garden would have been like, and this is both fitting and helpful, for every parable and type must, in what it represents, correspond to the anti-typical realities to which it points. One scientist, who has spent much time studying the scientific aspects of the literal garden, has concluded that such a luscious garden would require an abundance of water, far more than could be derived from the diurnal mist which nightly came up from the face of the earth (Gen 2:5-6). Since there was no rainfall, the river would have to be supplied through a pressurized conduit from an underground reservoir of some kind, emerging under pressure as a sort of artesian spring. The pressure in the subterranean reservoir could have been established, this scientist surmises, either when the waters were first entrapped below the land surface and compressed or else by being heated from a deep-lying heat source. If there was a continuing heat source, as well as a continuing supply of water to the subterranean pool, then the artesian spring at the surface could be fed indefinitely. The water coming into the pool would have flowed by gravity from one of the surface "seas," through penetrable sands or channels in the rocks, down into the great water heater below. This scientist believes there were similar subterranean channels and chambers in the earth's crust all around the world, and that the water flow in the river of Eden must have been very large for, after traversing the garden, it separated into four "distributaries," each of which was a large and long river. The rivers must have eventually reached one or more of the antediluvian seas, thus completing the cycle. One last observation of this scientist: Since all rivers flow downhill until they reach the sea, Eden would necessarily have been located at a high altitude, in the mountains or a plateau. What a beautiful spiritual picture, this!

This high altitude or "higher realm" of the garden of Eden typifies the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This garden is Canaan, the Promised Land. "A land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year" (Deut 11:11-12). God placed Adam the first in the garden of Eden, or the Kingdom of Heaven, a place of light and beauty, from whence flowed the springs of the fountain of the river of life, the source of living water. Without the garden lies the "lower realm" of earth, bespeaking the human condition outside of God, that whole dreadful realm of darkness and death in which is contained every sin, sorrow, tragedy, pain, trouble, sickness, heartache, fear and torment known to man. The higher realm of Eden extends upward into infinitude, glory ascending above and beyond glory, for Eden is the gate to the unbounded and inexhaustible heavens. The lower realm includes this world and everything that is beneath it. It descends into the lowest realms of the bottomless and embraces the outer realms of darkness. And flowing from the higher realm of the Kingdom of Heaven to the lower realm of the Kingdom of Darkness is the blessed River of Life. Its incorruptible waters of Spirit and Truth are more real and sparkling and alive than any river of earth. It pulsates with righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit and vibrates with the sheer, exquisite beauty of

the divine nature of our great and glorious God and His Christ that is impossible for my poor pen to describe. Its glory surpasses the shining of a million diamonds in the sun, for it is the glory of the Lord God Almighty.

As someone has written: The waters of the most frolicking streams on earth, can and do often come to a stale dead-end slough of stagnancy and defilement. They can end in a contaminated swamp that breeds disease and pestilence or in a fishless, salty sea. However, the waters of that bounteous River of Life can never be restricted, defiled, polluted nor stagnated, for they are living waters of God's Spirit and bring life more abundant where ere they flow. The power and work of this mighty river can best be described by using some of earth's scientific knowledge as comparisons. The whole world is completely enfolded in the ethers and oxygens and various elements which make up the air we breath. And though the entire earth is completely enfolded and surrounded in this substance we call "air" nevertheless there are, within that air, certain air currents and trade winds which are like living streams or rivers. They flow forth in their destined channels and as they flow they continually RENEW and GIVE LIFE to the whole of the encompassing atmosphere – and to the world. Without these currents, the jet streams, all the pollutants and poisons in the atmosphere would hang around our heads and the entire environment would stagnate and suffocate.

Then there are the great and mighty oceans of water, vast and extensive, covering the larger portion of the earth's surface. And through and across these vast bodies of water there are also currents and streams that are like great, stupendous rivers, flowing onward age after age, forever RENEWING and REVITALIZING the whole. These vast ocean currents are absolutely beyond the power or control, yet they are essential to his existence upon earth. Consider the great Gulf Stream as an instance of this beneficence derived from a source beyond and above human invention. This famous stream has been seen by innumerable visitors and residents in the state of Florida, where the stream leaves the Gulf of Mexico and parallels the Florida coast as it travels north to the region of Nova Scotia. As it leaves the Gulf with a temperature of eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit, and practically retains its warmth all the way, it has a tremendous influence on the climate of the lands it passes. The heat of the stream is still eighty-four degrees at Georgia-Carolina border, and the warm temperate climate of these states is directly derived from this stream. Something of its tempering power on the surrounding atmosphere may be understood when we note that the stream is a thousand times the size of the mighty Mississippi River at that river's mouth; being seventy miles wide and something over three thousand feet deep.

The fact is, the coast of North America and Northern Europe would be a frozen waste without this stream. It alone makes the New England states habitable and makes life possible in Northern Europe as well. The British Isles would be frozen and abandoned without the stream, and even now, when the current swings a little wide of its general course, a near ice-age descends upon the old country, and suffering is tremendous. And besides this, there are numerous others

gigantic ocean streams which lend their life-giving vitality to cleanse, refresh, revitalize and keep alive the whole, vast, stupendous seas as well as life upon the land.

The River of Life can be likened to the trade winds and ocean stream in this way: every existing thing which God has created is enfolded or immersed in His great and wondrous presence and love - a presence and love which fills all time and space. The languages of earth do not contain words descriptive and meaningful enough to adequately describe the immensity and all-embracing presence and love and power of our glorious God and Creator, but one prophet by the Spirit framed the truth of it in these words: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me" (Ps 139:7-11). If only men would open their hearts they would see that all things are indeed enfolded in the presence and love of God, as it is written, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might FILL ALL THINGS" (Eph 4:9-10). The whole creation is always enfolded and surrounded by the unspeakable power, the boundless presence and the limitless love of God. Mankind has generally taken this love for granted, ignored it, rejected it, denied it, or through their ignorance, remained unaware of it or its life-imparting reality. Nevertheless the love is always there, always awaiting man's acceptance of it. "For God so loved THE WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that THE WORLD through Him might be saved" (Jn 3:16-17). We have read that beautiful passage ten thousand times. Most of us know it by heart, but today it holds new meaning and wonderful promise. I think I see today what Jesus saw and felt when He spoke those meaningful words about God's love for THE WORLD and His grand and glorious purpose for THE WORLD. He has opened up a river, a River of Life, and that River flows on and on unto all things in that lower realm of the earthly, until everything everywhere shall LIVE by its life-giving waters.

With this picture firmly impressed upon our minds, may the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God enable us to behold God's glorious River of Life and understand its purpose and meaning and powers. Flowing through the vast glory of God's omnipresence and His all-embracing love is also a mighty current or stream. In nature there is both air and water in every part of the atmosphere, but a "river" is a CONCENTRATED and CHANNELED CURRENT or STREAM of air or water. While God's presence, and love and life enfolds and embraces all things, the River of Life is the river, the flowing of GOD'S CONCENTRATED and CHANNELED LIFE, intensified and magnified as it were a thousand times. This concentrated stream of God's intensified life is the wonderful River of Life which holds the power of cleansing, restoration, renewal and transformation for all unto whom it flows. The powers contained within these waters of life are

incomprehensible to the natural mind, for they are the powers of heaven's own divine life. These waters contain the divine, wondrous ability to wash away the very power and effects and result of sin and death!

Every sinner plunged beneath the flood of this River has experienced something of the marvelous transformation that takes place when old things begin to be swept away by its purifying waters and all things become new! In an instant of time, at the foot of the cross, where flow these precious life-giving waters, gone was the darkness, the guilt, the bondage and the death, and in their stead bustling life and a bubbling song filled the ransomed soul. The scripture, speaking of the condition of an unregenerate man, describes him as being without God, without Christ, a stranger to God's covenants and promises, and having no hope (Eph 2:11-12). He is said to be walking according to the course of this age, under the dominion of the prince of the power of the air, who works in all the children of disobedience. He fulfills the desires of his own flesh and is by nature a child of the wrath working in him. Above all he is dead in trespasses and sins, a captive of the devil. Thus, as the earth stood in the beginning, desert, arid, barren, parched and destitute, so now stands the unregenerate man whom God formed of the dust of the earth, but who through transgression fell, becoming a stranger to God, bound in chains of lust and sin, captive to every evil spirit, unconverted, enregenerate and without hope in the world. But, as in the beginning, a river flowed out of Eden and waters proceeded forth at the commandment of God with life to quench the strength of drought and death, so that ten thousand forms of life might appear upon the earth, so also is it written of men, once dead in trespasses and sins, without hope and without God in the world, that, whosoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely, and whosoever drinketh of the water that Christ giveth shall never thirst again; for the water that proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

While some practice their soulish arts of "inner healing," leading the poor oppressed soul through the nightmare of reliving all the horrible traumatic experiences of his childhood and former life, in an effort to cleanse him from accumulated negative thought patterns of guilt, fear, hostility etc., I can testify to you that one simple plunge into God's glorious River of Life, the River of the mighty surging of His Spirit Life, one plunge, I say, will wash away more guilt, bondage, fear, hang-ups, frustrations, habits, oppression and possession than all the "inner healing" seminars for a thousand years. I will never forget how, years ago, because of an unfortunate experience with some people, a bitterness began to spring up in my heart toward these former friends and brethren in the Lord, and finally the bitterness turned to pure hatred. I could not stand the thought of them, much less the sight. One night, in a meeting, the Spirit of the Lord sovereignly swept over the whole congregation with its renewing, sanctifying, cleansing power and suddenly, in an instant of time, my whole soul was deluged, immersed in a baptism of God's divine love, and I found that all the bitterness and hatred, all the animosity and hurt had been swept away by the tidal wave of God's grace and love and I now loved, with a deep and unspeakable love, those

whom I formerly despised. I left the platform and embraced these dear people, rejoiced and wept, cleansed and renewed, and these have been among our closest and dearest friends in the Lord since that day long ago. One wonderful sweep of the River of Life accomplished more in one minute than a thousand sessions on inner healing or psychotherapy could have ever produced. The so-called inner healing movement is nothing more than a Christianized form of psychiatry and psychology, and I earnestly exhort you in the Lord that all who would be sons of God depart from such carnal substitutes for the reality of Christ as life. Let it be forever settled in our hearts that there is a River, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High. May the deepest prayer of our hearts be that God would cause us to come to HIS RIVER, to drink from HIS RIVER, that we might truly LIVE BY HIS RIVER.

God gave Ezekiel a prophetic vision of the glory of the Lord to be revealed at the end of the age. This vision revealed what the body of Christ would become as the Church age ends and the glorious age of the Kingdom comes in. It is so mighty, so overwhelming in scope, that at the time Ezekiel could neither comprehend it nor explain its meaning. In fact half way in to this prophetic vision the Lord stops, turns to Ezekiel, and asks, "Have you seen this?" (Eze 47:6). It is as though the Lord is saying to him, "Do you comprehend the magnitude of what you see? Are you able to grasp the prophetic power of this vision? Do you yet see what the rising of the waters speaks of – how it is going to end? Do you see His glory coming, and the immensity of it? It is so awesome, so mind-boggling, that I don't want you to miss the true significance of this revelation!" The Holy Spirit was shown to him as a small stream which periodically increased and continued to rise until it became a mighty river. In this vision the prophet was conducted along the river by the angel of the Lord – in the form of a man. Harken now to the words of the prophet as by the Spirit he views this blessed River and its wonderful accomplishments: "Then my guide brought me again to the door of the house of the Lord– the temple; and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple was toward the east; and waters came down from under, from the right side of the temple, on the north side of the altar. Then he brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around outside to the outer gate by the way that faces east; and behold, waters were running out in a trickle on the right side. And when the man went on eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were ankle deep. Again he measured a thousand cubits and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that reached to the knees. Again he measured a thousand cubits and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that reached to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the waters had risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over or through. And he said to me, Son of man, have you seen this? Then he led me and caused me to return to the bank of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then he said to me; These waters pour out toward the

eastern region and go down into the Arabah (the valley of the Jordan) and on into the Dead Sea. And when they shall enter into the sea of putrid waters the waters shall be healed and made fresh. And wherever the river shall go, every living creature which swarms shall live, and there shall be a very great number of fish; because these waters go there that the waters of the sea may be healed and made fresh, and every thing shall live wherever the river goes. The fishermen shall stand on the banks of the Dead Sea; from Engedi even to Eneglaim shall be a place to spread nets; their fish shall be of very many kinds, as the fish of the Great or Mediterranean Sea” (Eze 47:1-10, Amplified).

What is the meaning of Ezekiel's vision? What is this rising river which flows from the Temple eastward to the Dead Sea? The entire scene is freighted with keen interest and deep significance when we realize the river is a prophetic picture. We are looking upon the stream of Divine Truth and Life. I have stood on the Temple site on Mount Moriah and from Jerusalem I have looked upon the same view which Ezekiel saw in his vision. It is an incredibly dry, lifeless, barren desert area that stretches down the Judean hills to the Jordan Valley and finally to the Dead Sea where nothing lives. How many times throughout the scripture God is spoken of as a flowing stream of water!

I would draw your reverent attention to the source of this river and how it increases as it flows. It begins at the altar in the Sanctuary of the Temple where the presence and glory of God is. It flows out under the threshold of the door. The source of the river is in the glory of the Lord in the heights of the mountain of God. Sir Samuel Baker, many years ago, was endeavoring to find the sources of the Nile. Suddenly, while he was traveling up the bed of a tributary of the Nile, he lost it completely. The river disappeared. There was no water. He kept on traveling day after day, day after day, but there was no water. It was simply a dry water bed – a water-course where water once had been. Where were the sources of the Nile? He was talking with Lady Baker about it one night, camping in the bed of the dry river, when suddenly in the middle of the night they heard a cry, “El Atbara! El Atbara!” and someone pulling at the tent poles. “Get out quick! The river! The river!”. They all rushed up the banks, and scarcely had they gotten on high ground before they heard the thundering noise of the river coming down the dry bed in which they had camped. In a moment there was a mighty river filling the dry water-course, giving in a moment the answer to the question: Where are the sources of the Nile? Away in the distant mountains where snow had melted and the water came down in floods! In like manner, the glorious River of God is first seen flowing out from the heights of the Paradise of God.

I have shown that the River of Life is the stream of flowing of God's concentrated and channeled life through the river-bed of the body of Christ. The invisible, unapproachable and unknowable God is the eternal spring, the source of the life; Jesus Christ, the first-born Son is the fountain, the reservoir of this divine water; and the body of Christ is the outflowing, the living stream, the river flowing all the time. The pure river of water of life proceeds as clear as crystal out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. This stream originates as

unpolluted, incorruptible, and undefiled in all the power, all the authority, and life of Christ. Carnal, man-made doctrines and teachings of religious leaders and movements have tried to change this crystal River of Life and Truth into a stream of human pollution and spiritual death. We have seen, as did Ezekiel in vision, that River flowing out from the Sanctuary or Temple of God. This is the Temple built of living stones, each son of God a stone in that glorious house not made with hands, an habitation of God through the Spirit. There is but one Temple, one great High Priest, and one Priesthood. The book of Revelation tells us that this stream of living water flows from the New Jerusalem, out of the throne of God and the Lamb (Rev 22:1-2). This is another picture showing us the source of this living water and the channel through which it flows. The water (spirit) flows into us, through us, and out from us. This Mount Zion, this New Jerusalem, this City of the living God, this Temple of the Holy Spirit, this Kingdom of God is composed of MANY SPIRITS who have been quickened by HIS SPIRIT merged into ONE GIGANTIC WATERFALL – ONE GREAT RIVER OF LIFE! Take the shoes from off your feet, oh saint of God, for the ground on which we stand is holy ground. Put away all lightness and foolishness that with heads bowed down and hearts lifted up in worship God's Holy Spirit may reveal how the life of God flowing in Christ and the life of Christ flowing through His body is ONE STREAM OF THE WATER OF LIFE. This is the River flowing out from under the threshold of the Sanctuary and down into the desert and the sea. But notice, my beloved, at the center the living waters begin to rise and issue from "under the threshold" of the Sanctuary. Not an overflow, but an underflow; an under-current, deep, mighty, and strong, picturing the real power and depth of the Holy Ghost within, as it surges upward from our innermost being to flow out to the dry places. How silently it rises under the threshold of the house, the stream unperceived at first, but growing deeper and deeper as it flows on. How imperceptively the spiritual work of God begins in us! How silently yet steadily it increases from realm to realm! How deep Truth runs in its flow! How mighty it becomes ere we are aware of its immensity!

As the River flows out under the threshold of the door, it isn't a very great flow to begin with, just a little trickle, though it comes from a mighty depth within. There was a man there with a measuring rod to measure this outflow of life and he measured out a thousand cubits and brought Ezekiel through the waters. They had increased but it still was not a great River, just ankle deep. He measured another thousand cubits and the waters were knee deep; they had increased more. Again he measured a thousand cubits and the waters were to the loins, up to the waist. "Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." Each measure was a thousand cubits. ONE THOUSAND is the number of the Kingdom of God, the DOMINION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD. The measure is the measure of the outflow of His life in respect to the power and glory of the Kingdom, the rule of His Day. As the grace of God flows through our lives it doesn't decrease with the flow, there is no loss or diminishing, it ever increases; the more we allow it to flow the greater it becomes and the more grace there is flowing. This is the law of God. In God's pouring out there is no

diminishing of Himself, He is increased and expanded, just as parents are increased and expanded by the extension of their life into their children. This is the wonderful part of God's great purpose. There is never any diminishing, there is always an increase. This is the law of the River of His grace, His love, His life and His glory. We do not need to have an abundance of grace in our hands at any particular moment so long as we are connected with the source. There isn't a lake full of water in the faucet in your bathroom, possibly just a cupful, but if you turn it on and keep it running you can run a lake full through it.

Saints, Ezekiel was walking into the future – right into our time! It is my deep conviction, and I believe that I have the Spirit of God, that today we live in the last one thousand cubits of this vision, the very last measurement of water! Ezekiel stepped onto the edge of it but it was too deep for him, too overwhelming! He said, "I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in." In essence he was saying, "This is over my head!" Can't you imagine the prophet's wonder, as he said to the Lord, "What is this sea that has risen? If this River is all about life and resurrection, who are the ones who will be so blessed that they can swim in such power and glory?" What Ezekiel is being shown is that the body of Jesus Christ, the sons of God, in the very last days will be more glorious, more victorious, than at any time in the history of the world. The church age will end in a blaze of power and glory, birthing sons of the Kingdom in the fullest revelation of Jesus Christ man has ever known!" The fish of the sea shall be exceeding many" (Eze 47:10). Coming forth is a people who will be swimming in the rising waters of the Lord's power and life! Life and immortality shall be revealed in power over sin and death, and it shall come to pass that "everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live!"

As God has moved by His Spirit in these days there has been a tendency to look back to the early church and apostles as if those ancient believers had a better revelation and a superior manifestation of what the body of Christ should be! Many have emphasized the recapturing or imitating of their ministry and methods. Men have sought to "restore" the order of the five-fold ministry and to reestablish the so-called divine order of the early church. Let me remind all those who yet cling to the notion that the five-fold ministry will somehow bring the saints to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ and bring in the Kingdom – the early church had the five-fold ministry and they BROUGHT IN BABYLON THE GREAT, AND THE DARK AGES! Make no mistake about it – the Lord does not want us to go back to the early church! He has planned something much better for this generation! Why go back to a trickle of water when you can have "waters to swim in"? Are you grasping this yet? If this river of living water is the Spirit and the Word, then the early church—with all its glory and manifestation—was just the beginning trickle of the flow out of the house!

What glorious prospects lie before us! Very near the Temple is the desert and the Dead Sea – the rough, jagged hills on which nothing grows and over which men stumble, and the sea in whose waters no fish swims, and on whose surface no ship floats. Round about the City of God is a dreary desolation. Is it not true,

even today? The stream that Ezekiel saw, as soon as it left the Temple, made straight for the east, for the Dead Sea – for that was the region of death,, the region that most needed life and blessing. The River flows out toward the east country – the roots of civilization, the power of the flesh life. It goes down into the desert – the land of drought where there is a famine of hearing the Living Word of God. It goes down into the sea – the raging, surging masses of humanity, the restless agitated, uncontrollable emotions of the soul – and everywhere it goes it brings healing and life. Beloved, let us look to ourselves that we do not receive the grace of God in vain, but be laborers together with God, letting the grace of God flow, which is the River of all Divine goodness, life, love and power. If we are to be a part of that River we must keep in contact with the source and get into the flow of the River, the River that will flow to the east country, go down into the desert, bringing life and health to these regions, and continue to flow down into the sea bringing life and blessing wherever it flows. All glory be to God!

One cannot begin to tell the blessings to be revealed, the glory to be seen throughout the earth, the release to be ministered to creation, as God by His Spirit pours forth the eternal stream of the River of Life unto all the fish in the sea in this, God's NEW DAY. I speak as a prophetic voice in the earth in this generation. The manifestation of the glory and power and righteousness which will be manifested within our generation will eclipse all former moves. Who can carry on with the programs of man anymore, who can wade in the shallows of the trickle of former visitations once they have received the vision of what shall be realized as God's people launch out into the deep. The last or most recent "shower of blessing" came during the great Latter Rain outpouring during the years 1948-1953. The effect and blessing of that outpouring is with us still. But the celestial deluge is yet to fall in GREAT POWER AND GLORY. Glorious beyond words to describe was that wonderful outpouring of God's glory at Pentecost, but no language of men below nor of mighty angels above can begin to describe the SURPASSING GLORY of the outpouring in these last days. The "waters to swim in" are coming, the manifestation of the fullness of the spirit and life of the almighty Christ of God, and compared to these waters the former outpourings were flickering candles before the burning brilliance of the noonday sun, or trickling streams compared to the vast ocean currents beyond the power of man to either produce or control. Hear me now and believe me later – if you cannot believe me now – soon, very soon, there will come the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation has groaned for long millenniums and ages. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall flow out and fill the earth. His power shall shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before Him. The harvest of this age shall be gathered. Everything shall live, whithersoever the River cometh. As on the Dead Sea, where once reigned silence, are now boats and fish and nets and fishermen, when its waters are touched by the Waters of the River, so the church and the world shall be transformed, and this old earth of ours shall become the Paradise of God. I tell you the truth. I lie not. The day is at hand! Rejoice and arise, oh ye sons of the Most High! The glorious dawn is now painting the eastern sky, and the River of God is full of Water.

Thank God that this River now flows! The life of Jesus Christ is flowing as a river from out of the . "If any man thirst," saith Christ, "let him come unto Me and drink." Because by His death eternal life was released to all, therefore this River flows and shall flow out unto all earth and the tree of life shall stand in the midst of the street of the New Jerusalem on both sides of the River of Life, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations in that blest dispensation of the fullness of times. And there shall be no more curse, no more death, no more pain, no more sorrow, and no more crying, because the former things, which belonged to the realm of sin and death, are all passed away. Because He lives, we also live by Him, and the hour is wonderfully near at hand when even this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal, immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written – death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ Jesus, our Lord! "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall God, be all in all" (I Cor 15:25-28).

There is coming a time of unspeakable glory, plainly revealed in God's Word as the time when He shall MAKE ALL THINGS NEW (Rev 21:5). This renewal of all things is as certain as the rising of the sun and the going down thereof. There is coming a blessed day when the River of Life shall overflow so abundantly unto the whole creation that the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. There is coming a day when there shall be no more sin and no more curse and no more death anywhere, for the former things have passed away, washed and quickened and renewed and transformed in the life-giving powers of the River of Life. The glorious New Jerusalem, the city foursquare, the government of God, shall fill the earth with the light of the Lord. The people will walk in the light of it and the nations shall bring their glory and honor into it. These are the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have they entered the heart of man. These are the things God has revealed to them that love Him. These are the unspeakable things, unlawful for man to utter, the things that pertain to the Paradise of God which is the realm of the Spirit. These are the things that shall be brought to pass in the age to come and in the ages to come as the River of Life flows out through the ministry of the sons of God.

It is an inescapable truth that the power and glory of this River can flow through none but those who have first drunk deeply of its waters and have been washed and made clean and whole in its flowing. Let us heartily expect that as we personally and experientially enter more deeply into the fountain, its cleansing, quickening, life-giving power, will be revealed more blessedly. We know that in bathing we enter into the most intimate relationship with the water, giving ourselves up to its cleansing effects. The living blood of Jesus is described as a "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness" (Zech 13:1). By the power of the Holy Spirit it streams through the heavenly Temple, which Temple ye are By faith. I place myself in closest touch with this heavenly stream, I yield myself to it. I let it cover me, penetrate into my innermost being, and go through me. I bathe in the

River. I cannot withhold its cleansing and strengthening power. I must in simple faith turn away from what is seen, even within soul and body, to plunge into that spiritual River, which is the life of the Son of God, with the assurance that it will manifest its blessed power in me.

Notice this beautiful passage: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High" (Ps 46:4). The word "tabernacles" is given in the plural to show that this is a reference to individual believers. WE are the tabernacles of God, according to the Word of the Lord. The refreshing River of the life of Christ now flows throughout the city of God. He flows from tabernacle to tabernacle, from life to life, until all the tabernacles, which we are, are filled with His transforming presence. All who are the habitation of God through the Spirit are now partaking of this river of life by which we are being delivered from the vexation of the world, and being lifted from one realm to higher realms, and from glory to glory by that same Spirit.

This is the fuller revelation of what it means to be "born of the Spirit." As one holds forth his sins, weaknesses, fears, carnality, earthiness, and death to the redeeming power of Christ's holy life they are consumed, cleansed and swept away by the mighty quickening of His power and one is free. Then it is that he is prepared to walk in the life more abundant – even the incorruptible life, which Christ has promised. This wonderful promise is fulfilled unto one as he goes down into the waters of the great River of Life and is literally born of Waters as he comes up out of them. This birth contains the great healing and the full glorifying, restoring power of all perfection. All things are made new and perfect and are exalted by it. All conditions are transformed and readjusted and are completely transformed into the image of God which God has purposed for man since the creation of the world. As one plunges fully into these quickening Waters he is cleansed from all the power, effects, and results of sin and death, becoming an entirely new person, healed and restored to God's glory. The symbology of Adam in the Garden declares it. In that primordial beginning man's mind, man's life was like a garden. Through this Garden flowed the river of life. This river of life represents, on the individual plane, the force of spiritual thoughts flowing through the mind, and spiritual impulses flowing through the life. As this river flowed it produced the Edenic state in man's experience. Later on he was cut off from this river and was only capable of producing out of his earth thorns and thistles (expression of carnal mind). This is why as we find ourselves being restored into Christ again we receive the Spirit's admonition to... "be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:23-24).

Sons of God! How we need this fuller measure of the birth of the Spirit, how we need this mighty River of the Spirit to wash, cleanse and fill our minds and hearts with the incorruptible water of Christ's life and truth. We need the Water of Life to penetrate to the lowest parts of our inner nature until all has been transmuted and become one in His Spirit; until out of the heights and depths of our being

there shall come that undefiled living outflow of the Spirit of God, and our entire being has become a well-watered garden. All the emotions, impulses, desires, will, thoughts, attitudes, intents, actions, words and life-style – all are to become expressions of HIS LIFE. This, the CHRIST LIFE, is what the apostle meant when He prayed that the Ephesian believers might be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph 3:19). However much, other men have experienced the fullness of the Spirit of God or however glorious was their baptism in the Holy Ghost, I feel they are all terribly lacking when compared to CHRIST. He is the reservoir, the fountainhead of the River of the Spirit, and all who make up the riverbed, the banks, the CHANNEL of this wonderful River must receive of all the fullness that proceeds from Him. Therefore, when I speak of the fullness of the Spirit, I am not speaking of an initial experience of the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" such as you may have received thirty or forty or five years ago, but I am speaking of an ever increasing fullness, working, and transforming that gradually saturates and overwhelms your life, your being, and your walk until all your thinking, your walking, your talking, and your doing is done by the Holy Spirit Himself. Your whole life becomes a life lived in a realm that is strange and ethereal to all other men because almost all men live on a plane completely governed by the natural and the carnal mind.

THE CONTENT OF THE RIVER

With all emphasis I must declare that sons of God only exist because of their vital relationship to Jesus Christ. By this I mean that Jesus Christ dwells in you as God Almighty dwelt in Him. If He does not dwell in you, you are not a son. It is Christ in you that is the hope of glory. Not Christ in heaven! Not Christ in the Father! Not Christ in your brother! It is Christ in you! And it is Christ manifested and flowing through the sons of God that is the hope of all creation, the River prepared for the vast desert of earth, so arid and barren, so parched and destitute.

It is absolutely certain that nothing can flow out through this River except that which has first flowed into it. It is equally certain that none shall ever know what it is to be part of God's blessed RIVER OF LIFE PEOPLE until first the wondrous reality of the Spirit's words have been fulfilled within them: "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you" (I Jn 2:6,8).

When Paul wrote to the Ephesian Church, he spoke about "the truth as it is in Jesus" (Eph 4:21). Initially, the truth was in God, because He is a God of truth. The truth was then recorded for us in the holy scriptures: "Thy Word is truth" (Jn 17:17). The truth became embodied in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6). The truth comes to us even by the Holy Spirit: "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide into all truth" (Jn 16:13). Finally, the truth must find its embodiment and expression, its manifestation and revelation, in and through the body of Jesus Christ: "Which thing is true," says John, not only in God, not only in the scriptures, not only in

Christ, not only in the Spirit, but also "in you." This is the whole principle of God's Kingdom Economy: If you say you love God, but you do not love your brother, there must be something wrong. The truth of love must find its expression not only in that God loved the world and that this love is revealed in the scriptures and manifested in Jesus Christ, but this love of God must find its dwelling place, its home IN US. Whatever is true in Jesus Christ must be true in us!

If light is the expression of God in Jesus Christ, who said: "I am the light of the world" (Jn 8:12); if "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway" (Ps 119:105), it must be true in us: "YE are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Mat 5:14). If it is true in HIM, it must be true in US. He was full of grace and truth (Jn 1:14), so we read that with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, "and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). If grace is part of the expression of God in Jesus Christ, then it must be the expression of God in us also. If truth is in Jesus Christ, then the truth must find expression in us too. If love is the expression of God in Christ, then love must be the expression of God also in us.

Why tell people things that are true only in God, or in the scriptures, or in Christ, or in the Spirit, but which do not work in us? No, if it is true in Him, it must be true in us, for He is the Head of the whole body of sons. If it is operating in His life, it must come to be operating in our lives. He is come to not only be our Saviour, but our Lord and our Life. "Be ye holy, as He which has called you is holy," is the command. If holiness is true in Him, then holiness must be true in us. "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Mat 5:48). If perfection is true in God and in Jesus Christ, then perfection must be true in us. Jesus said in His prayer in the 17th chapter of John: "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn 17:26).

"God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth" (Jn 4:24). Jesus Christ worshipped the Father, Jesus Christ loved the Father, Jesus Christ did the Father's will. Thank God that He did find a man in whom His will, His love, His power, His grace, His truth, His holiness and His life could find a dwelling place and expression. But would it not be sad if there were not a people today, the body of Christ, saved by His blood, cleansed by the washing water of the Word, indwelt by the Spirit, in whom the same thing is true that is true in Him? If He loves and we do not love, if He is in the light and we are in darkness, if He is expressing the grace of God and we are expressing malice, envy and strife, then He has not yet become our life and we have not yet become His River.

"Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (I Jn 2:8). The commandment of loving one another as He has loved us. Why a new commandment? Really it is not new, but it is new in Jesus Christ. The old commandment is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but Jesus Christ says: "Love one another as I have loved you!" In the old covenant you love your

friend and neighbor and you hate your enemy, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," but under the new covenant Jesus says: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mat 5:44). The truth of love in Jesus Christ was that He loved without retaliation for evil, a love that suffered long, even to the agonies of the cross, and then was kind enough to pray: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). And I declare to you that regardless of what other sins those wicked men may come into judgment for, they will never stand in the judgment condemned for killing the Son of God, for HE FORGAVE THEM! This truth of love of God in Jesus Christ must also be true in us. Jesus did not love people because He loved Himself, as it was under the law. It was the Father's all-surpassing love flowing through Him, flowing as a mighty River out to humanity, so that He could say: "Let your love for others not be based on love for yourself, but on what was true in Me: If the Father could love Judas through Me, and love Peter through Me, and the people that crucified Me, then let the Father's love so find expression through you."

In years past we have sung a chorus that goes like this: "His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundaries known unto men, for out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth and giveth and giveth again." That is a lovely chorus and I love to sing it and I say it is true. In Jesus Christ, there is NO LIMIT to His love, NO MEASURE to His grace, and NO BOUNDARIES to His power for He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and His mercy endureth FOREVER. If I say that there is one sin, one condition, one creature, one place, one age or group of ages to which His love and grace shall not reach then I LIE and know not the truth. Jesus loved His friends, His enemies, the man who betrayed Him, the man who denied Him, the men who nailed Him to the cross. There just was no limit to His love! You could never find a place where you could say: "So far would He love, but no farther." Is that love true in us? Or do we say: "Well, I will only stand so much, I will only forgive so long, I will only trust so far, and that is the end of it." It is God's purpose that His love should find no limit in us, His grace no measure in us and His power no boundary in us.

God is preparing a people who, when they stand up and say: "God is love," are not talking about God's love in heaven, or God's love in Jesus, no, they will be expressing the love of God in their own person. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (Jn 3:16). Everyone likes a verse like that. But how many would like a verse like this: "God still loves the world so much that He would like to give His sons, right now." We do not like that. We like to be sons if God will keep us, if He will bless us, if He will take us to His bosom and not let us go. But what does God do with His Sons? He gives them! Jesus said: "As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you." What did Jesus also say? "This is My flesh, My body, which I give for the life of the world." If we are His body, then will He not give us for the life of the world? "Oh," someone says, "I do not like the kind of religion where I do not get something." Well, my brother, my sister, that is how it starts, by receiving, but it must not end there. We must come to the place

where God can give us, where we can lie down and become a channel, a river – the River of Life poured out to humanity!

Whatever is true in Jesus, may God make it true in us! And not for our sakes, but for other's sakes, that there shall be an out-flowing of God into their lives. If you have been trying to prove something to somebody out of the Bible, let it be proved out of your life instead. Let us say: "Lord, let the Holy Spirit make it true in me and through me." This is sonship! This, beloved, is the River of Life flowing from Eden's lovely garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Christ in us, living through us, working through us, loving through us, redeeming through us – this is the stream of the flowing of God's CONCENTRATED and CHANNELED LIFE, intensified and magnified through God's Christ, Head and body; God Himself the wellspring of living water; Jesus, the first-born son, the reservoir and fountain of this life-giving stream; and the rest of God's sons constituting the mighty, abounding and endless River, the eternal channel for the out flowing of God's light and life and love to the whole creation.

How thankful we are for all of the in-flowing of God into our lives, and with what anticipation do we await the blessed day of which the prophet wrote: "And there shall be upon every high mountain (strong kingdoms), and upon every high hill (lesser kingdoms), RIVERS AND STREAMS OF WATERS in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers (principalities and powers of darkness) fall. Moreover the light of the moon (old-order Church) shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun (Jesus and His body) shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (Isa 30:25-26). That there may be rivers and streams of waters upon all the kingdoms of earth, the Lord is preparing a RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY, a people who have come to live in the glorious and eternal reality of the Spirit. No man can minister what he himself does not possess, neither can he impart to others that which he has not himself been partaker of.

Let us consider the source of this eternal Stream. "And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev 22:1). On the highest peak of the universe there is a throne, one throne, and on this throne the blessed Lamb is sitting. Who is the Lamb? The Lamb is the crucified, buried, resurrected and exalted Lord Jesus Christ. The Lamb is the first-born son of the living God who stands on Zion's holy hill, followed by 144,000 redeemed ones who have put on the MIND OF CHRIST and the NATURE OF GOD. A Lamb is a very humble thing, and a throne is full authority. As the Lamb slain, pouring out His life blood as a divine River of Life, the crucified Jesus has now been exalted to the throne to have the full authority of the universe. And it is "out of the throne of the Lamb" that the River of Life proceeds.

Men have prophesied and sought to change the source of these great headwaters, turning the vision toward self, toward external ministries and movements, and natural places. The great move of God, the glory of God, the Kingdom of God will center, they say, in this or that group, in this or that ministry,

or in this or that place. Los Angeles will be the origin of God's great out-flowing, or Seattle, or Houston, or New York, or Miami, etc because that is where their special group-work is. But it is all a lie. It is out of the throne of God and of the Lamb that the blessed waters gush forth. That throne is a universal throne and the Lamb is the nature of God in the enChristed. What is going to startle the world is that this manifestation of God will be issuing forth from men and women right where they live – a royal priesthood strategically placed in the midst of every tongue and tribe and people and nation. Glory to God!

Consider the situation of the symbolic New Jerusalem and with this picture fresh in your mind suppose that you are one who is coming into the city from the outside. When you enter the gate, you immediately come upon the one street of the city in which is flowing the River of Living Water. If you follow the River, it will lead you to the source of the water. It will bring you to the Lamb upon the throne. This means that the River will bring you into contact with the Lord, this living stream of Water will cause you to know something of Christ, to receive something of Christ, to experience something of Christ. How can you experience and know Christ? In the River! Here is the channel; here is the way; here is the means by which you can touch Christ, by which you can experience Christ. The reality and power of the living Christ, therefore, is within the very stream of divine Life. Where the River of His Spirit flows, there is the LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD.

May we meditate deeply upon what is included in this wonderful River. Since it flows out from the throne of the Lamb, then all that Christ has obtained and attained, all that He has and all that He is, must be included in it, for it is the flowing out of Himself. In the flow of this River is all the love, joy, peace, power, victory, righteousness, authority and life of SONSHIP. Everything of God is included in it! From the throne where Christ is sitting, there flows out a River of Water of Life, the contents of which can never be exhausted, the power of which is omnipotent and transforms men into the image of God.

By the flowing of this River there are some precious materials: gold, pearl, and onyx stone (Gen 2:11-12). At the end of the scriptures, we find the same materials again. In the last two chapters of Revelation we see a city made of gold, pearls, and precious stones and there we also see a River flowing. Out of the flowing of the River comes the gold of God's divine nature, the pearls of God's incorruptible life, and the precious stones of God's glory. These precious materials are for the building of God's dwelling place. Wherever the River flows, material will be found for the building of God's temple of living stones. These are the materials that come out of the current of the flowing of the Holy Spirit. Where the stream of the divine is, there some material, some precious material, for the building up of the house of sons will come into view. You and I never produce any material for this house of sons! Beloved, if you would be holy, do not try to be holy. Christ is holy so let Him live in you. If you long for righteousness, do not try to be righteous. Christ is righteous, therefore let Him live in you. If you long for purity, do not try to be pure. Seek to let HIM live in you for He is pure. Do you

yearn for sonship? Do not waste time seeking sonship. Let Him live in you. He is God's Son. He that hath the Son hath wisdom, for in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom. He that hath the Son hath peace, for He is the peace of God. He that hath the Son hath the mind of Christ, and he that hath the Son hath purity, holiness, truth, longsuffering, love, gentleness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, judgment and government! Oh! World of truth, IN HIM are all things! Christ is all in all, and Christ in you is the hope of glory, and Christ flowing from you is the hope of all creation.

You can never by any self-effort produce anything of Christ in your life. Only the flowing of the divine life can do this. Beloved brother, sister, we must continually be in this Stream! Is it flowing, surging, pulsating within your life at this very moment?

"Whithersoever the River shall flow
Everything shall live,
God's great mercy, His grace and His love
Shall then make all of us one.
The River of God shall flow from the mount
Out o're the valley and plain,
Till everything flows in this great Stream of God,
Great numbers that no man can name."

Chapter 9

A River Out Of Eden

(continued)

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and came into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates" (Gen 2:10-14).

In connection with the story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, we are told of a remarkable river that had its source in Eden, but on flowing out of the garden divided itself into four branches. How many times throughout the scriptures God is spoken of as a flowing stream of water! "The children of men shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life" (Ps 36:7-9). The Lord Jesus tells us that the water that He gives will become a fountain of living water within us, springing up unto eternal life (Jn 4:14). He says again that whoever is thirsty may come to Him and drink, and whoever believes on Him will have rivers of living water flowing from within him (Jn 7:37-39). All these words relate to one thing – that God Himself has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity as LIFE.

The scriptures tell us that along this river in Eden grows the tree of life. The tree of life represents the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The tree of life represents Christ as our Life through His Living word. It is interesting to note that the tree of life could only be partaken of in Eden. None can experience the glorious and eternal reality of what it means to be transformed into the TREE OF LIFE KIND OF PEOPLE except as they eat of Christ, being made one with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven Realm. This realm of the fullness of Life is reserved for those who go all the way with God to become ONE IN HIM. Nowhere does the scripture state that any sinner may rush in and, by grace, eat the incorruptible fruit of this blessed tree. Jesus specified who may eat of it, saying, "He that hath ears let him hear: TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev 2:7).

Eden, the garden of God's Christ, the source of all Life, is constituted debtor to the whole earth to send forth the wonderful Life as Life-giving streams of grace and salvation. Thus, the river of life out of Eden is the profound expression of

God's purpose to not only enter into the lives of His ELECT, transforming them into the tree of life kind of people, but to further bring forth in the earth a RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY, a people out of whom the life of the Spirit should flow! Yes, beloved, God is bringing forth His elect who shall be a RIVER OF LIFE, for He Himself in them is an ever-flowing wellspring of life and glory. Wherever God flows out by His Spirit, there He is found as salvation and reality. To all of man's need God Himself is the supply, the only supply, and all the supply, bless His wonderful name!

THE WATER OF LIFE

By inspiration of the Holy Spirit the beloved apostle John identified Eden's lovely River as that which flows forth out of the New Jerusalem, the ruling city of God's overcoming people "And He showed me a pure river of WATER OF LIFE, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come and take of the WATER OF LIFE freely" (Rev 22:1,17).

This wonderful River is the River of the WATER OF LIFE, God's own life, divine, eternal, and incorruptible. All Bible truth is great and precious. No costly gem of earth can compare its value to the priceless worth of truth. In the vast storehouse of truth embodied in the holy scriptures no part nor phase thereof is in any way more outstanding or precious than the truth concerning the Water of Life. This great and eternal verity sparkles with ever increasing splendor, surging as an inexhaustible River of Life from Eden's perfumed garden of long ago to the jasper walls of the New Jerusalem, where, unto ages of ages the Spirit and the bride shall sing the everlasting song so old and yet so new: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely!" This glad song of joy shall be hymned until the day in which this River shall have so overflowed its banks that the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea and God Himself shall be ALL IN ALL.

In the manner designed by God from the creation of the world all spiritual truth runs parallel with the mysteries and marvels of the natural creation. Even in this physical realm water is without doubt one of the most precious commodities brought forth by the hand of Omnipotence. I am sure that all who are reading this article are aware that water is a substance that exists everywhere on, in and around the earth and it is absolutely necessary to life; without it there would be no life. All living things, both plant and animal, must have water. The human body is composed of two-thirds water. Blood and other fluids in our bodies are composed mostly of water. To maintain this high level of water in our bodies, we drink so much water that if the amount we drink each year were weighed it would amount to about a ton. The earth itself is more than two-thirds water. Much of the earth's surface is covered by oceans and seas. In other parts there are rivers, lakes, streams and ponds. Water is a chemical compound because it is made up

of two different elements, or basic substances. The elements are both gases, hydrogen and oxygen, but when they are together in the proper quantity, two atoms of hydrogen to every atom of oxygen, they make water. The chemical name, or formula, for water is H₂O.

As natural water is a compound of two natural elements, with godly awe I now tell you that God's Water of Life is likewise made up of the two SPIRITUAL ELEMENTS of the Spirit and the Word. How remarkable that water is used in the scriptures as the symbol not only for the Spirit of God but also for the Word of God! Surely this shows us that both the Spirit and the Word are compounded together as the Living Water. The Lord Jesus tells us that whoever is thirsty may come unto Him and drink, and whoever believes on Him will have RIVERS OF LIVING WATER flowing from within him and then in the simplest of terms He explains that this Water IS THE SPIRIT which they that believe on Him should receive (Jn 7:37-39). Paul, on the other hand, speaks of water being a symbol of the WORD OF GOD, saying, "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by THE WORD" (Eph 5:25-26). In a similar usage Jesus also spoke of the water of the Word when He said to His disciples, "Now ye are clean through the WORD which I have spoken unto you" (Jn 15:3).

On one occasion our blessed Lord had been speaking of Himself as the Bread of Life, and of His flesh and blood as the meat and drink of eternal Life. To many of His disciples it was a hard saying, which they could not understand. Jesus tells them that it is only when the Holy Spirit is come, and they have Him, that His Words will become clear to them. He says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The Words that I have spoken unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life" (Jn 6:63). May I explain that it is the SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH (THE WORD)! Just as hydrogen and oxygen must be joined before there can be life-giving water, so the Spirit and the Word must be joined, and received in that union, before there can be any flowing of Living Water. In these words we have the nearest approach to what may be called a definition of the Spirit. The Spirit always acts as a Life-giving power. It is of deepest importance to keep firm hold on this. His wonderful work within, of enlightening, strengthening, sanctifying and transforming, is all rooted in this: it is as the Spirit is known and honored, and place given to Him, as He is waited on, as the inner Life of our being, that all God's gracious workings can be experienced. The development of the New Creation is but the outgrowth of the Life Within.

Jesus applies this saying now specially to the Words He had just spoken about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. You will see at once that it is not just eating His flesh OR drinking His blood that gives life, but "Whose eateth My flesh, AND drinketh My blood, hath eternal Life" (Jn 6:54). His flesh is His Word and His blood is His Spirit. "The WORDS that I have spoken unto you ARE SPIRIT AND ARE LIFE." This is the Spirit and the Word joined together as LIFE. He wanted His disciples to not be discouraged if they could not at once comprehend His Words to them. His Words are Spirit and Life; they are not meant for

understanding, but for Life! Coming in the power of the unseen Spirit, higher and deeper than all thought, they enter into the very depths of being, into the very roots of the life; they have themselves a divine Life, working out effectually with a divine energy the Truth they express into the experience of those who receive them. How often we have this experience of the Word as a Life, receiving it into our spirit, sensing it working within, deep in the inner recesses of being; teaching, strengthening, transforming, yet not really understanding the Word with our minds nor being able to even articulate it to those around us.

More often than not, when a Word is clearly understood with the mind it becomes mere head-knowledge and I do not hesitate to say that all head-knowledge is only knowledge of the carnal mind and to be carnally minded is death. As a consequence of the spiritual nature of the Word, the Word needs a spiritual nature to receive it. Not into the mind only, nor into the feelings, nor into the emotions, nor even into the will alone must the Word be taken, but beyond them into the life. It is the Spirit that comes from God, the Spirit that Christ has poured out, becoming our Life, taking the Word and assimilating it into our life, that will make it become Truth and Power within us.

Man cannot drink either hydrogen or oxygen alone, but compounded he drinks both of them together as water. Can we not now see from this that a man can not receive either the Spirit or the Word independent of the other and have spiritual Life? Can we not see from this that only as the Spirit and the Word are joined within do we have the Water of Life? To take in the Word apart from the Spirit leads to legalism. To receive the Spirit without the Word leads to fanaticism. It is my conviction that the true spiritual formula is: S2W – two parts Spirit to one part of the Word makes LIVING WATER! To try and separate these two spiritual elements leads to either right-hand errors or left-hand errors. On the one side we have the left error: seeking the teaching of the Spirit without the Word. On the other side we have the right-hand and more common error: seeking to master the teaching of the Word apart from the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. The Spirit and the Word must be in each other or THEY CANNOT BE ASSIMILATED by man as Life. The Holy Spirit has for all ages embodied the thoughts of God in the Written Word, and lives now for that very purpose in our hearts, there to quicken the meaning and the power of that Word. If you would be full of the Spirit, dear ones, be full of the Word. If you would have the divine Life of the Spirit within you grow strong, and acquire power in every part of your nature, let the WORD OF CHRIST dwell richly in you. If you would have the eternal Word as your Light and Life, let the Living Word of God be transcribed on the fleshy tables of your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Think not for one moment that any Word of God can unfold its Life within you, except as the Spirit within accepts and appropriates it in the inner life. How much of the Bible reading, and Bible study, and Bible preaching is there in which the first and main object is for the mind to reach the meaning of the Word? Men think if they know correctly and exactly what it means, there will come as natural consequence the Life the Word is supposed to bring. My brother, my sister, this

is by no means the case! The Word and the Spirit are, indeed, the Water of Life, but one may have a whole river of earth's most pure and sparkling water; he may understand everything about the meaning of the water: its source, its chemical make-up, its multiplied beneficent uses, etc. etc., yet unless it be assimilated by something which can be quickened by it, unless there is that quickening, it ministers nothing of life. You can pour literal Niagaras of the Water of Life upon the carnal mind and it will be as barren and fruitless as if you had poured water upon a slab of marble, for the carnal mind receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can it know them, for they are spiritually discerned (I Cor 2:14; Rom 8:7).

"The Words I have spoken unto you are Spirit and Life," and for the appropriating and apprehending of them "the flesh profiteth nothing: it is the Spirit that quickeneth." It is a sad fact that the vast majority of Christians today have not yet learned this one important truth: the human understanding of the carnal mind, however intelligent, however educated, however earnest, however religious, profiteth nothing. Nothing! Multiplied millions think that in the mental believing of the scriptures, in the acceptance of particular creeds and doctrine, and in the performance of particular rituals and ceremonies and religious exercises of the churches they have Life; but the Living Christ, in the power of the unified Spirit and Word, as their Life, they know not at all or but precious little. Let us never take even the scripture into our hand, or mind, or mouth, without it first being joined with the breath of the quickening Spirit that it may flow in deeper than all thought and understanding, into the depths of being, into the very roots of the Life. In this, and only in this, do we experience the flowing, cleansing, refreshing, revitalizing, renewing and quickening power of the WATER OF LIFE.

DRINKING ONLY FROM GOD'S FOUNTAIN

Should you find difficulty in perceiving this necessary point of truth, may I direct your attention to the fact that without water you will die within a few days, and anything that does not contain water cannot possibly meet this vital need of your body. We must realize that in all our spiritual walk we must follow the strict path of LIFE. How can we know what is of God and what is not of God? How can we discern different ministries? How can we tell which doctrine or teaching is right? There are ways to know! First of all the Christ in you must be contacted by the Christ in the ministry or the teaching. There must be a flow of Life. If there is no quickening flow of Life then you are not receiving Living Water! There are many things that are true but they are not the Truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). Now Truth always brings Life because Christ is the Truth and Christ is also the Life. Truth always brings Life but there are things that are true that can sometimes bring death. For example, if I robbed a bank this morning, and if someone stood up in your fellowship next Sunday to tell how Preston Eby robbed a bank, would it bring you Life? Would you say, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord for that Word, we are blessed!" Do you see what I am saying? The word would be true – a fact – but it would not minister Life. Therefore, though it would be true it would not be the Truth, for the Truth and the Life are

one, the Spirit and the Word are joined together in the Living Water! There are so many things that are true, but they are not the Truth and if you live in them you will die. Truth brings Life and because we are the children of Truth we desire Life. The difference is just this: facts may be true, but (Truth) is REALITY. REALITY is the very substance of all that is eternal. Facts are knowledge about things, but facts are not Reality!

And now may I exhort you further to flee from those things that are true but are not Truth, as surely and swiftly as you would flee from your home if you discovered it to be a den of rattlesnakes. We have a whole crop of doom-casters in the land today who spend their time and energy in nothing else but informing God's ELECT of all the negative situations which are going to overtake our nation and the world. Many of the Lord's precious people are continually being fed a diet of messages, articles, books, and tapes about world conditions, politics, Middle-east intrigue, communist encroachment, oil crisis, economic collapse, international monetary systems, World Bank conspiracies, mark of the beast implants (laser scanned), world take-over by the Illuminati, European Union Beast Government, strikes, riots, war, tribulation, retreat hide-outs, safe areas, depression-proof investments, food storage, self-sufficient living off the land, planetary conjunctions, nova of the sun, earthquakes, tidal waves, pestilence, erratic weather conditions, wickedness, catastrophe, antichrist, dates for the beginning of the tribulation or the end of the age and a whole catalog of other fearful and frightening events, some of which will undoubtedly happen, but many of which I tell you now are nothing more than wild and sensational speculations conceived in the darkness of the carnal minds of men who love to masquerade as end time teachers and prophets of God, bewitching the saints.

Let every child of God who has had birthed within his bosom the beautiful hope of sonship turn the searchlight of sincerity and truth upon his pure heart and ask himself this one honest question: Do any of the above mentioned things minister LIFE? Does the knowing and study of them cause you to be more filled with the Spirit? Do they enable you to put on the mind of Christ? Do they work deliverance in your life? Do they work to transform you into the image of God's Son? Do they imbue you with wisdom and spiritual understanding, with righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost? Do they inspire you with that ever-increasing faith by which you shall conquer every enemy and lay hold upon your adoption as a SON OF GOD? Are they TRUTH, Life-giving Truth, or are they one and all, merely things that are true – facts – or, perhaps, may be true?

I pray that the truth and force of these questions may grip your believing heart! It is important in this hour at the dawn of the Kingdom that our thoughts be God's thoughts and that our words be God's Words of Spirit and Life. One of the unmistakable marks of a son is that he speaks the Words of the Father. The mind that dwelt in Christ Jesus during His thirty-three years upon this earth was the Father's mind. For this reason He was able to say, "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is

LIFE everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so speak I" (Jn 12:49-50). How could He do otherwise when the Father's mind possessed Him? When we walk in unity of mind and spirit with the Father, the words of our mouths automatically become the Life-giving Words of our Father in heaven.

Every man needs the spirit of revelation from God. I do not refer to that silly spirit so often found among sentimental and over-enthusiastic Christians that is always clamoring to come up with some new idea or interpretation that they can call a revelation. It is not a flurry of fantastic fancies that we need, but a great spirit of wisdom and revelation given by God that will unfold to us the majesty and glory of God's eternal purpose. That spirit of wisdom and revelation imparted by the Holy Spirit gives the heart of man the ability to receive and understand the purpose of His divine mind which has been planned from before the foundation of the world. There is certainly no lack of fantastic notions among the saints which they imagine are revelations. Should I try to imbibe or believe even half of the weird doctrines I come in contact with around the country among God's people I would now be floundering in a sea of utter confusion and my tiny bark would soon be strewn upon the rocks and reefs and shoals of some inhospitable shore.

Shipwreck is not a pleasant contemplation. Paul once bewailed the shipwreck of a saint who had become confused in his prophetic interpretations, maintaining the error (still around today) that the resurrection was then past. Writing to young Timothy Paul said, "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; who concerning the truth have erred, saying the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some; whom I have delivered unto satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (I Tim 1:19-20; II Tim 2:16-18). This man Hymenaeus was no worse an offender than are many Christians today. He had as good, or better, evidence in support of his contentions than have the majority of prophetic teachers today. This man was correct in part. He merely failed to consider that the resurrection of which he spoke takes place on many levels, past, present and future – spirit, soul, and body. He failed to consider that the resurrection of which he spoke was only a pledge of that to come: just a beginning. And yet his offense, at least the only offense the inspired writer seems to consider worthy of recording, was of such a grave nature that Paul delivered him unto satan to scourge, until he should stand corrected and learn not to blaspheme. He was a false prophet. He was teaching his own perverted reasonings and imaginings as the order of God's eternal purpose, and by his perversions, leading his listeners into error which derailed them from the truth and could point them only down the path of disgrace and shame. For the teaching of error, no matter how inoffensive it may appear, is like all other sin: one original error leads to many and greater mistakes, and ultimately results in utter apostasy and confusion and unbelief.

We do not have our heads in the sands, pretending that the horizons are not dark, or that the Day of the Lord is not upon us, but we do want to be able to distinguish between the multitude of voices in this hour and know the difference between the VOICE OF MAN and the VOICE OF GOD. I have no hesitation in saying that the sons of God will not parrot the words of the scientists, the politicians, the economists, the ecologists, the psychologists nor the military leaders; rather, they will speak the WORDS OF THEIR FATHER. I do not believe the hour is dark for the people of the earth realm just because the politicians and scientists and generals say it is. Their word holds nothing at all with me, for I must know only and always as I am taught of my Father and I must speak only the Words I hear my Father speaking.

If a man comes telling me that the International Bankers have a plan and a timetable for world domination, it could be true but it would not be a Word of the Lord. It would be the word of the Illuminati. It does not then become my duty to join an anti-Illuminati campaign and commence stomping the country warning God's people about what the World Bankers are going to do. The sons of God have an ear only for what the Father says He is doing and a mouth to speak only what they hear from the Father.

In May of 1979 I wrote in an article the following: "Some today are busy proclaiming the conspiracy of the Illuminati (World Bankers etc.) to take over the world. The instruments of oil crisis, gasoline shortage, gun control, transportation and longshoremen's strikes, economic collapse and martial law are supposed to be used in the next 30 months to bring this take-over to pass. It could be true, however, whether it is true or not, it is not the Word of the Lord; at best it is merely the word of the Illuminati! If you believe this word and teach others this word, then you must know that you are both believing and teaching the word of the Illuminati, and not the Word of the Lord, for what prophet among you has received the revelation of the Illuminati FROM THE FATHER? Has God revealed these things unto us by His Spirit, or has the knowledge of them been gleaned from the books and tapes of men? You see, if I accept the word of the Illuminati as being true; if I proceed to teach God's people that this fulfills the prophecies about the Antichrist; if I say that the Illuminati plans to take over the world within a year or two or three and that we will see oil crisis, gun control, strikes, economic collapse and martial law, then I have accepted THE DEVIL'S WORD as Truth and have transformed myself into a minister of satan by proclaiming that the devil's word can be depended on, that he will surely do what he says he will do! I do not receive my revelation from the politicians, nor the scientists, nor the ecologists, nor the World Bankers, nor the communists, nor the John Birch Society, nor the media, nor Newsweek magazine, nor the Wall Street Journal, for these are all clearly the VOICES OF MEN and not the VOICE OF THE FATHER. I care not one whit what the communists plan to do, nor the Illuminati, nor the devil. Satan is a braggart and a liar. He is defeated!

"From time to time people ask me what I think will happen in 1982. I must answer that I don't know, for the Father hasn't spoken to me of any specific events that

are to transpire during that particular year. I am confident there may be some very significant things take place in 1982, for truly we are living in momentous days and the end of age is swiftly drawing near, but I cannot speak beyond what I hear the Father saying. Anything I might speculate would be of no more value nor import than the incoherent babblings of a mad-man. Two scientists are predicting (The Jupiter Effect, Newsweek, Sept 16, 1974) that the earth may face a devastating series of events in 1982. At that time, all of the nine planets of our solar system will be perfectly aligned on the same side of the sun. These scientists speak of the severe effect of this planetary alignment on the upper part of the atmosphere caused by the magnetic pull of this line-up of the planets on the sun, creating an increase in the magnetic activity on the sun with huge storms of sunspots and solar flares, some spreading over fifty millions miles. These would greatly disrupt weather patterns around the world by sharply altering wind directions. This in turn would give our rotating planet a jolt large enough to trigger many major earthquakes in those areas of the world under severe geological strain. It is expected that the earthquakes around 1982 could destroy large populations of the earth. Some have even theorized that the sun could "nova" in which case the earth would be completely burned to a cinder.

"These predictions by the eminent men of science are extremely interesting, however, I cannot be too strong in my earnest exhortation to all who read these lines that we remember one thing well: Not one of these predictions is the Word of the Lord, and while they may be true they are not the Truth for they do not minister LIFE. However factual these things may be, yet, not one of them came down from the Father above by the spirit of wisdom and revelation to that blessed company of sons begotten by the Holy Spirit of God. It is my firm conviction that if you have knowledge of these predicted events for 1982 you learned about them by reading an article or tract or by listening to some man relating them. Whatsoever is not of the Father is of the world and surely no one would argue that these predictions are not made from the carnal minds of unregenerate men learned in the wisdom of this present age. It is quite alright for saints to examine the evidence, to soberly watch the events that may unfold before our eyes in the days to come, never forgetting for one moment that it is indubitably the word of men and not a divine revelation from God. Let all who have a sincere desire to walk as sons of God refrain from building prophetic interpretations, predictions, prophecies, end-time teachings or doctrines upon the ever-shifting sands of carnal human wisdom lest our house be demolished by the changing winds of time. "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak" (Jn 12:50). No Son of God has been called to say, 'Thus saith the scientists,' rather, 'Thus saith the LORD! '

"In Noah's day, in the days of all the prophets, and in Christ's day it was the man of God who notified the world, by the spirit of revelation from God, of the impending destruction and exactly when and how the judgment would fall. In our day, far too often I think, it is the world that is feeding the information to the preachers about what is going to happen! If your revelation of end-time events is dependent upon what comes over the wire services, or what the leaders are

saying or doing, then you need a new revelation! And if God has not spoken to His people about 1982, or any other event, we need not worry about our ignorance of those things. Our only concern should be that when God does send us light that we both receive it and walk in it, lest the birds of the air steal away the seed of truth before it has a chance to sprout and take root within our lives. The Words of God are always SPIRIT and LIFE and by them we are quickened to those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. About the solar flares and earthquakes and calamities of 1982 I do not at this time know very much, but my heart sings a thousand hallelujahs, for I do know that this earth in God's good grace is yet to see a whole race of sons of God begotten by the Holy Spirit. In the extremity of the age, the wonderful Life of Jesus Christ shall flow out from the throne of God within their innermost beings as mighty surging torrents of Life-giving water in that blest age that lies just before us.

“Another popular theory circulating widely among Christians concerns a computer in Brussels, Belgium called ‘The Beast.’ This computer is reported to be three stories high and is designed to assign every individual world citizen a number which would be lasered – with an inerasable laser beam – on the forehead or on the hand: a walking credit card to be used in all future buying and selling. This would be used to totally control the people's lives under the guise of providing a convenience so we can do away with things like money and the theft of credit cards! The chief analyst of the Common Market says, reportedly, that by using three six digital units the entire world population could be assigned a number. One central authority could have every number in the world at his fingertips. Only one number would not be assigned, the number 666, which has (allegedly) already been reserved. What would the authorities do if a person objected to receiving this laser tattoo? A Common Market leader has (reportedly) answered: ‘We would use force to make him conform.’

“That is most interesting! But – is it really the long awaited ‘Mark of the Beast?’ To hear the Fundamentalists and Charismatics, as well as many end-time saints, talking about it one would certainly think so! But, beloved, has such revelation come to God's people as the WORD OF THE LORD, or have we merely supposed, presumed, speculated, guessed and assumed that a computer number will be the mark of the beast? Dare I declare this sensational theory as TRUTH to those youthful sons of God predestined to be conformed in thought, desire, nature, wisdom, knowledge, power and word to the image of the blessed first-born Son who said, ‘I speak to the world those things which I HAVE HEARD OF MY FATHER’ (Jn 8:26)? I am confident that few of those aspiring to sonship in this hour would venture to say that THE FATHER REVEALED TO THEM THE BEAST IN BRUSSELS. What they know of it has come, for the most part, from rumor and all would be hard pressed to document that there even is such a thing! Such knowledge comes from man and not from God. O brethren! We need to be very careful in these matters! We often speak too freely of things that originate in carnal minds! And often I feel that the way such speculations are so presumptuously presented as Truth only demonstrates that those who

... speak them understand less of those hallowed and sacred things that pertain to the Kingdom of God in this momentous hour than the Pharisees understood of how the coming of the Messiah would be accomplished in their day.” – end quote

THE RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE

The River flowing out of the garden of Eden in Genesis and the River flowing out of the New Jerusalem in Revelation are not two different Rivers, but the one and selfsame River. Our Lord Jesus spoke of this same wonderful River when He said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of His belly shall flow RIVERS OF LIVING WATER" (Jn 7:37-38). The word "belly" is the Greek word "koilia" which is often used for the innermost part of man, the heart. These words point back to the smitten Rock in the desert. Moses wrote under inspiration of that smitten Rock and in our Authorized Version it reads in Ex 17:6: "There shall come water out of it," but in the Hebrew it reads, literally, "There shall come water from within Him." The "Him" is Christ, Head and body, for that Rock is Christ and it is from the inexhaustible reservoir of His divine Life that the pure and sparkling streams of Living Water flow out through the channels of His body upon earth. "Out of his belly shall FLOW Rivers of Living Water." The word "flow" is the Greek word "rheo" which means "to pour forth; to utter, to speak or say." It denotes the pouring forth of A WORD. "The WORDS that I speak unto you, they are SPIRIT, and they are LIFE" (Jn 6:63). Ah – beloved, out of God's ELECT, from within shall flow the speaking waters of LIFE! These "speaking waters" are the spiritual hydrogen of the Spirit joined with the spiritual oxygen of the Word – the LIVING WORD.

Many centuries ago Hosea prophesied of this day, saying, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the RAIN, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hos 6:3). The Hebrew word used for "rain" is "yarah" which means "to flow as water" but is also the Hebrew word for "teach." Truly there has been much teaching through the years, but the mind of man has been so darkened by the blinding traditions of religious Babylon that there has been but a mere trickle of Life, and the fruitage has been so dwarfed. Thank God, He is now causing His Spirit to join in union with His Word within a RIVER OF LIFE PEOPLE that there shall come forth in the earth a flowing, speaking, teaching message to all nations which will have inherent in it the quickening of Life, that the people shall come and drink of the pure steams of Spirit and Truth and a great multitude that no man can number shall be caused to live!

It is written of God's ELECT in the Song of Solomon 7:8-9: "I said, I will climb up into the palm tree, I will take hold of the branches thereof, let the smell of thy

breath be like apples; and thy mouth like the best wine, that goeth down smoothly for my Beloved, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak." It is not at all inconsistent that the members of the body of Christ should be spoken of almost as though they were the source of the food and drink which belong to the Kingdom of God. They are not the source, but they are the channel; they are the body of HIM who is the source of Life and of all spiritual food and drink, even Christ. We are His body; and it is through the members of His body on earth that He is working and shall yet do greater things than He did through that one human body in which He walked the earth during those thirty odd years.

In the second chapter of the Song of Solomon Christ is likened to the Apple Tree among the trees of the forest. There can be no doubt that the more the body of Christ feeds upon Christ, the more the fragrance of the Christ-life breathes out from their life, and the more the odor of Him upon whom they are feeding is discerned. In the natural, the breath bears the odor of that which has been eaten. It is the same in the spiritual; if any man is feeding continually upon the fruit of this one incomparable Apple Tree, the air about him will give forth the fragrance of this Divine Apple. Every thing that goes out from his life will exhale the odors of Christ dwelling in his life by the Spirit. As one learns to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, he is filled unto all the fullness of God.

In that company of the obedient, spiritual saints who are following hard after the Lord, there comes to be a breathing out of the Life of Christ, which can be discerned by all who come into their presence. The working of self and its activities are gone; there is rest, sweet rest, as such a company sit together with their Lord in the heavenly places. This rest, and faith, and love is exuded as fragrance poured forth from their innermost being. God would not have our breath laden with the vile odors of unbelief, struggle, carnality or the filthy spirit and speech of the world. He would not have any scent go out from us that does not come from Him which is the source of all the fragrance of Eden's perfumed garden; who is the storehouse of all the spiritual food and nourishment of the tree of life; who is the fountain of all fountains and of all spiritual drink. We must so draw from the Living Waters and so flow forth that we become like the well-watered garden of Eden where abounded the tall, beautiful palm, whose leaves are ever green, whose branches are strong and stalwart, whose fruit hangs in abundant clusters.

"Thy mouth is like best wine, that goeth down smoothly." The word "smoothly" means wine that has worked itself out; and the mouth, or speech, of God's elect is like the very best wine, the wine from which all fermentation is gone, so that there is no more working or fermenting in it. This is where self comes to an end and CHRIST LIVES. Our own desires, works and words have been put away. Our motives, actions and speech have been purged, and our every expression and speech is like the very best wine, the New Wine of the Kingdom. To the one who is following hard after the Lord, it is truly out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh. Such a one does not always go out with the set purpose of speaking to others about Christ, or some experience in the Lord; but

his thoughts and heart are so full of those things which are above that he finds no joy in speaking of worldly or indifferent things.

What does it mean to have your speech so purified, that your own words are all put away? To have your words so taken hold of by God, that it is the Spirit that speaks through you even in common things? Oh, if all our words were to the glory of Jesus Christ, we should have a mouth like the best wine! How much there is in the Word about our words and speech; from Genesis to Revelation, admonition is heaped upon admonition. Is our "speech always with grace seasoned with salt" (Col 4:6)? It is written that the mouth of a wise man is "like a fountain of life" (Prov 10:11). Is our speech always that of wisdom, which we are told, is "as a flowing brook" (Prov 18:4)? Too often, alas, is the speech of Christians like a flowing brook, only it is like a stream of muddy turbulent water. We are so quick to let our words go forth, to tell all we know, and more that we surmise; to express our opinions, and speak about others as though we were not compassed about with infirmities! We are so ready to criticize and set every one right about small unimportant things, as though we were the people, already perfect, and wisdom would die with us (Job 12:2). But the speech of the wise SHALL CONTINUALLY FLOW WITH THE PURE, CLEAR WATER OF LIFE (Prov 18:4).

Think, for one moment, beloved ones, what it shall mean for the glory of God, when all our words are like a running brook, like a flowing of Living Water, fed by springs hidden in God Himself, pure and sparkling Words that are like such streams that water every place and give Life to everything they touch, as they flow from God's Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This is the thought the Spirit would bid us meditate long upon; only as we are in the place where God can so fill us with Himself, can we know what God shall do when WE BECOME HIS MOUTH, His SPEAKING RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE! He shall so impart the nature and mind of Himself, He will put such heavenly thoughts and revelations in our hearts, He will fill us with His own food and with the Living Water of His Spirit and His Word, that our mouth will overflow out of the abundance of our hearts and the earth shall drink of HIS LIFE.

It is true with those who have entered into the knowledge of God and of His Christ, and have the experimental knowledge that must accompany salvation, that "The wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the sweetness of His lips increaseth learning. Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it. The heart of the wise instructeth his mouth and addeth learning to his lips, pleasant words are as honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones" (Prov 16:21-24).

If by the grace of God the truth of this holy vision can burst upon you, you will know once and for all that the Words of the Speaking River of Life go down smoothly. There is nothing of the flesh, nothing in the life or in the words to cause those who see and hear to stumble; but they go down smoothly, for, as the beloved apostle John has written, these are a "PURE RIVER of the water of life"

(Rev 22:1). There is no carnality nor impurity in such pure water, nothing that would correspond with leaven and to that which causes the wine to work. But it is manifesting out of our BEING, and speaking out of our mouth the Words of Spirit and Truth; letting the hidden springs of God flow out in streams of salvation to those who are thirsty. It is Life to all who are sleeping the sleep of death, who are dead in trespasses and sins, or thirsting in the dry and desolate activities of a Babylonish church system. God's River of Life is patient, gentle admonition and encouragement to those who hear; it goes down smoothly. There is a "judgment company" of the Two Witnesses, but the Words of the RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY do not irritate and burn, they do not choke nor distress; but like costly wine, and like the sparkling waters of Eden's pure river, they go down smoothly and impart the transforming power of the Kingdom of God!

"Let that mighty River flow,
Let it flow, and flow, and flow,
Let that mighty River flow, Oh Lord, through me;
Let it flow, and flow, and flow,
It brings Life where ere it goes,
Let that mighty River flow, Oh Lord, through me!"

Chapter 10

A River Out Of Eden

(continued)

And A RIVER went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and came into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates" (Gen 2:10-14).

In the opening chapters of the Bible we are told about the river God put in the garden of Eden. As it flowed out of the garden, it divided and went in four directions. This is a type or symbol of the life of God, flowing out from the Kingdom of God to the whole earth. The nature of God's wonderful River of Life is that it flows outward. Ezekiel once had a vision of a river that flowed out of the temple and got deeper and deeper as it flowed out to the sea (which symbolized the nations) and it healed the sea or the nations (Eze 47). The minute the river starts flowing inward, there is death. The life always flows out from the source of life: God Himself is the wellspring; Jesus Christ is the fountain, the reservoir of this wonderful life; and the sons of God are the channel or river by which God's life shall be communicated to the arid barrenness of the earth realm. Thank God that this river now flows! The life of Jesus Christ is flowing as a river out from the throne of God. "If any man thirst," saith Christ, "let him come unto Me and drink."

A FOUNTAIN SHUT UP

In the vastnesses of earth's towering mountain ranges there accumulates in each winter season inconceivably massive fields of ice and snow. Many feet thick and extending sometimes for hundreds of miles, these giant expanses of ice and snow lie cradled in the lap of towering mountains or nestled high up on their hoary peaks. Some time ago, while flying across the state of Washington, in awe and wonder I gazed upon the majestic peaks protruding thousands of feet above the clouds like dazzling white pyramids against the blue sky and pondered the omnipotent power that placed them there and the eternal wisdom that designed their function. These enormous stores of ice and snow seem in themselves to be devoid of purpose as they lie confined upon the everlasting hills, but if you will stay around but for a short time you will see that they are not as useless as they appear, for as the spring of the year arrives, from their interminable resources of frozen moisture, warmed by the sun and wind, streams of water commence to

burst forth to rush down the mountain side. Then, flowing together with other streams from canyon to canyon, they become a torrent of precious water which eventually becomes a mighty river flowing grandly across the plains, upon its banks great cities lay their foundations, thirsty for its life-giving power. In every house the water flows to quench the thirst, to bathe the body, to water the lawns and trees and gardens and to make glad the heart of every man, while the same waters gush through the irrigation systems, causing the dry, hard soil to become fertile, filling the land with store and spreading our tables with the delicacies of earth.

In these articles on the River of Life I am endeavoring to show that the primordial river which once flowed from the heights of Eden's fair garden to the breadth and length and depth of the whole earth is but a representation of the out-flowing of God's incorruptible waters of Spirit and Truth which proceed forth from A PEOPLE who abide in the spiritual heights of the Kingdom of Heaven realm unto vast multitudes of peoples who sit in the valley of the shadow of death. The river was not reserved for Eden alone; there was truly a super-abundant overflow! The languages of earth do not contain words descriptive and meaningful enough to adequately describe the power and work of this mighty river, for it is the power and work of the eternal, incorruptible, and omnipotent LIFE OF THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. In this river GOD HIMSELF has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity AS LIFE.

According to the divine and eternal nature of God Himself, God is life. But if God does not flow out, although in respect to Himself He is life, yet to us He is not life. He must flow out; then He will be life to us. Thus the life we receive from God is the flowing out of God Himself. This life flowing into us, His chosen ones, from our side, is the flowing in of God, but from God's side, it is the flowing out of God. Then, when this life flows out of us, it is again the flowing out of God. This flowing out of God began from His throne. First it flowed into Jesus of Nazareth; then it passed through the cross and flowed into the apostles; then it flowed out of the apostles as rivers of living water (Jn 7:38). It has flowed through the holy saints of all ages, and eventually it has flowed into us. Out from us it will flow to millions more and on to eternity, flowing forever without ceasing, just as is spoken in Rev 22:1-2 and Jn 4:14. These incorruptible waters of God's divine and eternal life are more real and sparkling and alive than any river of earth. They pulsate with righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit and vibrate with the sheer, exquisite beauty of the divine nature of our great and glorious God. Its resplendent glory is seen upon the countenances and in the lives of those men and women who have been quickened, renewed, and transformed into the image of God by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

It was a sad day, indeed, for man when the enemy of all righteousness suggested to him that it would be possible, yea, desirable for him to have something apart from God. For the first time a dismal shadow crossed their pure minds, making them think they could have something by themselves, apart from God, and man began his long and disastrous sojourn through the bleak

wilderness of the unwatered and unfruitful kingdom of the carnal mind. Let us consider with careful attention the evil that fell like a cloud upon the human family when through lust Adam turned away from the only Fountain of eternal life. We should not be obliged to present lengthy arguments to prove that man without God is hopelessly dead to all eternal realities, pitifully helpless, and desperately carnal. Without God men are hopelessly in the flesh. They pass their time in the worthless and withering pursuits of the flesh. Their days are spent in vanity, seeking to gratify the five senses of the physical body, wherein is nothing of eternal endurance. All our physical appetites, like the grave, the dry well, and the barren womb, are totally without life. The tree of the carnal mind bears the evil fruit of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, dissension, rivalry, wrath, strife, rebellion, and heresy as naturally as an orange tree bears oranges; but the Spirit of the living God, flowing as a divine River of Life through the banks of the regenerated heart, filling it with the mind of Christ, causes to grow therein the tree of life which bears the good fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness, and temperance.

We know the story of how God drove our first parents from the fruitful garden of the Kingdom of Heaven and shut them out from that blessed tree of life, Christ, and while the record does not say so, yet I am positively convinced within my spirit that it is just as true that God dammed up the waters of the River of Life so that man departed into a desert world in which he survived only by journeying from spring to spring and oasis to oasis. For long millenniums mankind trudged through this barren domain, thirsting, insatiably, yearning within for those times of refreshing that should come from the presence of the Lord.

Reference is made to the verity of this in the Song of Solomon 4:12 "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." In the Hebrew, the word, "is," is omitted making the literal translation read: "A garden shut up, My sister, My bride; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Her beloved is not saying that the Shulamite is the spring shut up, a fountain sealed; rather, he announces it to her, draws her attention to it. This spring that was shut up, this fountain that in the misty past was sealed, is the Fountain of Life, the source of Living Water. It is CHRIST who gives us water so that we shall never thirst. It was He who cried out on the last great day of the feast: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:37-38). "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall not thirst" (Jn 6:35).

Though Christ was ever the great Fountain of Life, until He died, this Fountain was closed toward humanity; from the day when Eden's gates clanged shut behind our banished foreparents. It remained sealed and was not opened until He came in the flesh and died, and was raised from the dead. All men were under the dread sentence of death, and He died that this sentence might be removed, and that all might have life and have it more abundantly.

Jesus Christ was the spring shut up, the fountain sealed. In blessed symbol of this, at the time of His death, His tomb was sealed by the Romans at the request of the Jews, because Jesus had foretold His resurrection on the third day. For three days the great Fountain of Life was sealed in the tomb, not by the Roman seal, but by foreordained plan of God. "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mat 12:40). Only as long as God had ordained, could the tomb contain Him. Though a stone like a mountain were upon the tomb, and though it were sealed with the official seals of all nations of earth; though all the guards of Rome and all the princes of the Kingdom of Darkness stood watch outside the tomb, this mighty, Living Stream would have gushed forth at the appointed hour! When this Fountain burst forth, all opposition of man was as straws before the ocean. Higher and higher does it rise, bringing life and blessing to all who will rest upon its bosom, and drink of its life-giving flow. Though a million worlds should come to drink at this Fountain, its waters never decrease.

It is HE whom the Father hath sealed as the source of eternal life; and He was sealed that Living Water might flow out and water many gardens. We are told in the Song of Solomon 4:15 that it is "a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." The great Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven is made up of many gardens; the great Vineyard of God is made up of many vineyards, even as the great House of God is made up of many dwelling places; but there is only one Fountain that waters, and carries life and refreshment to all. The mountain of Lebanon derived its name from the white crown of snow, which it wore all the time. Streams of pure, cold water flowed down its sides or found their way through underground channels to the thirsty valleys below. These mountain streams never failed, never became stale and tasteless, warm and unrefreshing. From a higher source than any earthly mountain, from the high and holy realm of God's eternal and divine Spirit comes the Living Water with which we are refreshed and quickened unto God. This Fountain has its source in the Holy Mountain of God, it issues from the Throne of God, it comes from the everlasting hills of the heavenlies, and flows down to earth, bringing life wherever it flows, watering the wilderness and making the desert to blossom as a rose.

HE is the Fountain of gardens; every garden and every part of God's Kingdom must receive all its refreshment from Him and Him alone. All our fountains are in Him. He waters the vineyard of your life and mine. It matters not how fierce the wind may blow, nor how hot the valley is through which we are passing, if we keep the connection opened between our souls and the great Fountain of Life, the Well of living streams will ever flow from the throne of God and they never run dry, bless His wonderful name! To many, this Spring is still shut up, this Fountain is yet sealed. Jesus said: "No man can come unto Me unless the Father draw him" (Jn 6:44), but we know that this excludes no one, for again He declared: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME" (Jn 12:32).

Without doubt the apostle Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, perceived the all-surpassing wonder of this fact when he penned these words to the Ephesian saints: "Now He that ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS" (Eph 4:9-10). We know that He is "high and lifted up," and that even the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. He is ABOVE ALL, and yet ever drawing us upward unto Himself. Yet it must be remembered that He also DESCENDED TO THE LOWER PARTS OF THE EARTH, so that His life might fill ALL THINGS. Filling the heavens only with His glory is not filling all things. He has purposed to fill the lowest regions with His glory as well. Sweeter than the dews of Hermon descending upon the mountains of Zion and more blessed than good news from a far country is the wonderful revelation with which He now fills our enlightened hearts, declaring that as water always find the LOWEST LEVEL, so CHRIST BECOMES THE RIVER OF LIFE FOR THE LOWEST HELL! He both descended and ascended that He might fill all things in the heights and all things in the depths with Himself. If we would be that RIVER OF LIFE PEOPLE through whom He must flow, then we, too, must be willing to flow even unto the lowest hell. I must confess that I am deeply grieved in my spirit when I meet these would-be sons of God who look with contempt upon those who still have a passion for souls and desire to see men delivered from the power of the devil. I am aware that the hour has not arrived when God shall deal with all nations, to bring forth His salvation in them, but it is my deepest conviction that one of the sure marks of sonship is THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION. Why speak of our great hope of what God shall do in the ages to come if THE SPIRIT OF THAT HOPE is not now alive in our hearts? It is not the doctrine of reconciliation that shall change the world, but the ministry of reconciliation. I mean what I have said, that if ever I am permitted in the good grace of God, there is not a hell in the universe to which I would not ask to be sent as a revelation of the Christ, that He might fill even that part of the "all things." There is no hell that could be more vile than the hell I see around me right here in El Paso, Texas, the hell of sin, sorrow, torment, fear, drug abuse, demon possession, hatred, murder, strife, rebellion, cursing, nervous breakdown, godlessness and wretchedness. We have a great deal of hell in El Paso, and there are no hells that could be worse than San Francisco, New York, London, Hong Kong and Calcutta. "Oh, but there is a hell that is full of murderers!" you say. Well, these cities today are full of murderers. "But there is a hell that is full of devils!" you say. Well, these cities today are full of devils. "But there is yet another hell that is filled with liars, and fornicators, and blasphemers!" you say. Well, these cities today are filled with liars, and fornicators, and blasphemers. We have lots of hell beyond us, but our work is to follow Christ, to be willing, as sons, not only to ascend the throne, far above all heavens, but to be poured out as a River of Life INTO THE LOWEST PARTS OF THE EARTH, into all the hells, and clean them out by His conquering and transforming life, until there is no hell anywhere. What father would not go to any of the hells of this world, what father would not trudge through the saloons of the Bowery or the sex-filth of Times Square in the hope that he might run across his son or his daughter who is

captive to the devil there and bring them back to God and to the Kingdom? This is the Spirit of the Father who "so loved the world" and it is the Spirit of the Son who "descended into the lower parts of the earth" and it is the Spirit of every son of God, born of the incorruptible seed of a Divine Hope, a Divine Faith and a Divine Love. If you would not walk across the street to see some poor soul delivered and converted by the redeeming power of Christ, don't waste your time relating to me how you have been chosen by God to help in delivering of the whole creation from the bondage of corruption. The Spirit of Reconciliation must reign within our hearts. Rivers of Living Water must, even now, pour forth out of our innermost being.

The thing, however, that buoys up my heart above everything else is the Hope. The Hope that springs perennial in this breast, that I shall behold with my eyes the victory; victory for Purity and Righteousness and Peace and Joy and Love; that I shall hear a song of Universal Joy from the whole earth when they sing with all the Hosts of Heaven: "Hallelujah! For the Lord Omnipotent reigneth, and the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ." Blessed Hope! We must have it! We shall fight it out to the end, and we will win! Sin shall be abolished. Disease, Death and Hell shall pass away. "New Heavens and a New Earth," shall be, "wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet 3:13). Then, O Christ, and then alone, wilt Thou see the travail of Thy soul, and be satisfied. Then, O Christ, and then alone can we, your body, be satisfied; when the last rebel has bowed at Thy feet, and there is no more fight; for there is no more rebellion anywhere. Hallelujah! God shall reign forever! And His blessed River of Life shall never cease to flow!

ONE RIVER IN THE GARDEN

You will notice that inside the garden of Eden the river is one, and that it is only after leaving Paradise that it divides into four branches. "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and came into four heads" (Gen 2:10). ONE river in Eden! As we meditate upon this wonderful fact there can be no doubt as to its significance for in all the languages of earth ONE is the prime number and is always the symbol of UNITY or that which is UNIFIED. As a cardinal number it denotes unity; as an ordinal it denotes primacy. Unity being indivisible, and not made up of any combination, is therefore independent of all others, and is the source of all others. The number one, being the prime number, signifies BEGINNING. Hence ONE stands in Scripture for source, unity, sovereignty, creation, and above all, God, Who is the great FIRST CAUSE and independent of all. I can assure you that every single creature and all things throughout the vastnesses of the universe stand in need of Him, and He needs no assistance from any. ONE excludes all difference, for there is no second with which it can either harmonize or conflict.

When it is written: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is ONE LORD" (Deut 6:4), it not only excludes the existence of any other Lord but just as surely asserts that there is in God a sufficiency which needs no other. It marks likewise the

BEGINNING, for all our words and works must be characterized by the first words of the Bible: "In the beginning GOD" (Gen 1:1). Think, O reader, of the profound depths of truth that lie in these inspired words! It is an eternal never-failing principle that nowhere, in all the unbounded heavens, is anything right or enduring that does not begin with God. HE is the beginning, the source, and the unity of all things. Hear the words of the apostle Paul as he so clearly states: "For it was IN HIM that all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him and in Him and for Him. And He Himself existed before all things and in Him all things consist – cohere, are held together" (Col 1:16-17, Amplified Bible).

The one river in Eden points us to the high and holy and inescapable truth that there can be no flowing out of God as Life from any one who is not walking in UNION WITH CHRIST. The river must continually be united with the vast reservoir of head-waters whence it originates, as also the head-waters must ever be united with the deep hidden springs which are their source. Separate the river from its source and it will speedily run dry. Separate the head-waters from the gushing underground springs that feed them and they will cease to flow out and soon stagnate. The springs, the head-waters, and the river ARE ONE BODY OF WATER. Only in that unbroken UNITY can the river continue to flow. The power of such unity is to be seen everywhere in nature. How feeble is a drop of rain as it falls to the earth. But when the many drops are united in one bounteous stream, and thus become ONE BODY, how speedily the power is irresistible and the sufficiency unlimited! The reason Jesus could say, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (Jn 7:37), was because He was so ONE WITH THE FATHER that His life was the out-flowing of the Father's life.

By the laws of nature upon earth, a river does not part into four rivers. Instead, many smaller streams and rivulets feed into a larger river until joining hands they become a torrent of precious water that is a mighty river flowing majestically until it reaches its greatest size and magnificence just before entering into the ocean. But this river in Eden works just the opposite! The river isn't fed into by tributaries making it bigger all the time, but the river itself is expansive to begin with and then parts and becomes four rivers.

Norene Nichols wrote of this River: "There is a River, the STREAMS whereof shall make glad the city of ELOHIM, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High" (Ps 46:4). "And a RIVER went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was PARTED, and became into FOUR HEADS" (Gen 2:10)

What I am about to write is by no means the full meaning of these verses, for there are so many applications of this river and parted river into four parts, and all that has been given by others bears its true meaning, but there is another facet to be considered. At this time, we would like to turn your attention to this river as it applies to the Family of Yahweh, to the Godhead, using the word "Godhead" only for lack of a better single word.

We have been taught, and it is true, that there was no other form of watering the earth except the mist that went up from the earth and watered it, but it is plainly stated that the garden had a special watering which was the river. Many receive refreshing by the spiritual mist, but there is a refreshing greater than that, and it is connected with this river.

The Hebrew word for RIVER as used four times here in this Genesis account is NAHAR and comes from a root, TO SPARKLE, be CHEERFUL from the sheen of a running stream. It also includes the meaning of ASSEMBLE, FLOW TOGETHER, BE LIGHTENED. In an even more expanded meaning it includes LIGHT or DAYLIGHT. There are two absolute necessities to LIFE and that is WATER and LIGHT, and both are brought together in the meaning of the RIVER.

I would like to suggest to you that this RIVER that flowed out of Eden, which is also known as the Garden of God (Elohim), is none other than the MOST HIGH. He is truly a river of life and light, but He was not satisfied to be just one river for that would only be always and forever a single river, beautiful and wondrous indeed, but lacking in expansion. So we see in this river a parting even as we have discussed the division that took place in bringing forth the Yahweh Family.

The word PARTED in Gen 2:10 means BREAK THROUGH, SEPARATE ONESELF, DISPERSE, DIVINE, SEVER ONESELF. Is that not exactly what happened in the Godhead? The first parting was taking the MOTHER, El Shaddai, out of the Most High bringing forth a FATHER and a MOTHER. Later on we see the further separating to produce the SON and DAUGHTER. Thus no longer would He be but one river though lovely in itself and thus ALL IN ONE, but He parted out of Himself and like the river it became into FOUR HEADS. And, in the eventuality of His purpose He will not be ALL IN ONE, but ALL IN ALL How wonderful! – end quote.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (Jn 15:5,9-10). Meditate deeply upon THE ORIGIN of that life of Christ in the Father. They were ONE – one in life and one in love. The thought is so high that we can hardly take it in, and is yet so clearly revealed, that we dare not neglect it. Do we not read in Jn 6:57: "As I live by the Father, even so he that eateth Me, he shall live by Me"? And Jesus prays so distinctly "that they may be one even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in Me" (Jn 17:22). The blessed union of Christ with the Father is the revelation of our thoughts and expectations in sonship. Some years ago the following words of a chorus were given by the Spirit:

"Bone of Thy bone and flesh of Thy flesh, we are Thine
Out of this union with Thee in Thy glory,
Come sons that are made divine,

Bone of Thy Spirit and flesh of Thy soul,
Following Thee we are being made whole,
Mind of Thy mind and heart of Thy heart, we are one,
Now shall Thy glory and righteous dominion,
In all the earth be known!"

The nature, the words and the works of Jesus were the nature, the words and the works of the Father who dwelt in Him. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me He doeth the works" (Jn 14:10). It is the indwelling Christ that fills us with the very spirit of sonship. It is Christ within that causes the spirit to cry Abba Father. We can never be sons of God until that only begotten Son dwells in us. We should earnestly consider the following question with prayer for guidance and understanding. Why was it that Jesus boldly and truthfully declared, "If ye had known Me ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him" (Jn 14:7)? Why was it He said to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you and yet thou hast not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (Jn 14:9). This passage would be without any hope of understanding were it not for the verse following which says: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?" (Jn 14:8). Because the Father dwelt in fullness in Christ, therefore whoever had seen Christ had seen the Father and Christ never said, "I and the Father are TWO," rather, "I and the Father are ONE." It is equally true that we and Christ ARE ONE, and, when Christ lives in fullness in any human being, controlling and ordering his life, then whoever has seen that man has also seen Christ and the Father.

And if the thought will sometimes come: Surely this is too high for us; can it really be true? Only remember that the greatness of the privilege is justified by the greatness of the object HE HAS IN VIEW. Christ was the revelation of the Father on earth, the outflowing of His life. He could not be this if there were not the most perfect unity, the most complete communication of all the Father had to the Son. He could be it because the Father loved Him, and He abode in that love. The sons and daughters of God are likewise the revelation of the Father on earth, the flowing out of His life. They cannot be this unless there be perfect unity, so that the world can know that He loves them and has sent them. But they shall be it as Christ loves them with the infinite love that gives itself and all it has, and as they abide in that love.

Consider now, how absolutely glorious this union becomes when we enter into the fullness of the experience. "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (Jn 14:20). "I am in My Father," He said. We cannot doubt that! We know that the Son is genuinely ONE with the Father, completely immersed in the celestial glory. But in the same breath He continues, "And YE IN ME, and I IN YOU." Therefore, if the union of the Father and the Son is genuine and exquisite and real and vital and powerful and flowing and life-giving, then the union of the Son and the many brethren is to be JUST AS REAL AND JUST AS GLORIOUS! Recently a brother shared a chorus with us that says:

"I'm created by the Word, resurrected I stand,
I'm born in the likeness of the great I am,
Unveiling the mystery of God's great plan,
I in thee, Thou in Me, we in Him!"

It was from this vital union in God that man departed when he transgressed, and through his separation from the life that is in God the entire creation under his dominion was thrust into desolation. Paul is referring back to the fateful incident in the Garden of Eden when he, in II Cor 11:3, warns the Church at Corinth to beware lest they fall into the same trap that ensnared Eve. "I fear," said he, "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The warning that Paul was issuing to the Church at Corinth, then, was against the possible recurrence of that which happened to Eve in the fall. His concern was that, falling victim to the same trickery, their MINDS should be, as Eve's CORRUPTED. The word translated "corrupted" in this passage is a word meaning "withered" and is used by Jude in speaking of those rebels who pattern themselves after the spirits of Cain and Balaam. Of them he wrote, saying, "These are CLOUDS WITHOUT WATER, carried about of winds, trees whose fruit WITHERETH, without fruit." (Jude 12). If their fruit withers to the extent that they are "without fruit," it can only be said that the fruit has DIED. Eve's mind, then, was not merely corrupted into a state of impurity or mixture, but we find in the implication carried by the Greek word that that corruption is a rottenness that terminates in DEATH. Eve's mind DIED in the fall, and that to which she died was the SIMPLICITY that was in Christ!

A friend has written: "Now, lest we be misled into believing that her mind died to a certain NAIVE or UNSOPHISTICATED condition, let us examine the Greek word translated here "simplicity." The word is HAPLOTES, which means "singleness." That, then, to which the minds of Adam and Eve died was that condition which gives a man light, for Jesus said, "If thine eye be SINGLE, then thy whole body shall be full of light" (Mat 6:22-23). The eye symbolizes spiritual perception. God has so structured our being that whatever we give our attention to, is the thing that governs our lives. Attention is the key. Your will lies in the directing of your attention. Whatever you steadfastly direct your attention to, will come into your life and dominate it. If you do not direct your attention to anything in particular – and many people do not – then nothing in particular will come into your life except uncertainty and confusion; you will be like a drifting log tossed by the waves. If you direct your attention to the outer world of physical things, which in its nature is continually shifting, changing and passing away, you are bound to sink into the bottomless pit of despair, loss and death. But – "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. SET YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE, not on things of the earth. For ye are dead, and your life IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD" (Col 3:1-3). If the Glory of God comes first with you, and to express His will becomes the rule of your life, then your EYE IS SINGLE and your whole body, or embodiment, will be full of LIGHT and LIFE.

“In the dying out to the SINGLENESSE that is in Christ, our first parents died out to the glory of God, and the life that comes in union with Him. All life is dependent upon UNION. A leg that is amputated rots, but the body goes on living. ‘I am the vine, and you are the branches. I am the head, you are members of My body.’ In every aspect of the expression of God there must be union. Turning from a SINGLENESSE OF HEART toward the Lord, Adam and Eve became that which is stated by James in his description of the Adamic man saying, ‘A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways’ (James 1:8). Where there had been UNITY, there was now a breach, and man's heart became divided – having the incongruous desires both to worship and to sin. Warfare had begun. Speaking of the fall, David wrote: ‘Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity (emptiness) everyone with his neighbor – and with a DOUBLE HEART do they speak’ (Ps 12:1-2). UNITY had been slain and DUPLICITY had been born, as man forsook Him the Fountain of Living Waters and hewed him out cisterns, broken cisterns of the carnal mind, that can hold no water. Due to the broken unity between God and man, the River of Life would flow no more out from Eden's lovely land.”– end quote

Simplicity or singleness is the quality of being unmixed, it is the lack of duplicity, it is no longer Christ and I, it is just CHRIST, the ONENESS that God is after. The Ecumenical Movement and the Charismatics of our day speak much of Jesus' prayer "that they all may be one" (Jn 17:21), indeed, this is the Father's will for the body of Christ. There will be disbelief in the hearts of some when I affirm that this wonderful prayer of God's blessed first-born Son has already been answered. The truth is that Jesus never had in mind, when He prayed this prayer, the idea that His body should be made one again, finally, in some far-off day, following two thousand years of apostasy, heresies, strife, divisions, shame and confusion. How clear it is in reading the words of that prayer that He asked specifically that they might continually and unceasingly BE ONE even as He and the Father are unceasingly and eternally one. "I ask in regard to them; not in regard to the world do I ask, but in regard to those whom Thou hast given Me, because Thine they are, and all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I have been glorified in them; and no more am I in the world, and these are in the world, and I come unto Thee Holy Father, KEEP THEM in Thy name whom Thou hast given to Me, that they may BE ONE as we; when I was with them in the world, I was KEEPING THEM in Thy name; those whom Thou hast given to Me I did guard" (Jn 17:9-12, Young's Literal translation).

"When I was in the world I WAS KEEPING THEM." The King James version reads: "While I was with them in the world, I KEPT THEM." In the Greek New Testament "I kept" is in the imperfect tense: I continued to keep. The "I" is emphatic: I continued to keep them, now do THOU continue to keep them! How very important and full of truth are the simplest words of inspiration! The only possible way this prayer could be answered is by the members of Christ's body BEING CONTINUALLY KEPT IN ONENESS, even as the Father and the Son are eternally and uninterruptedly one. Jesus never asked for a REUNIFICATION of His body, rather, an UNBROKEN AND ETERNAL UNITY. If this oneness in

Christ was ever, even once, severed, or shattered, then Christ's prayer was not answered nor could it ever be answered even in eternity.

I do not hesitate to explain to you, my beloved brethren, that the true body of Christ IS ONE and always has been one in union with the Father. It is not the body of Christ that is divided – it is RELIGIOUS BABYLON that is divided into six hundred sixty six different sects, denominations, creeds, traditions and doctrines. The Babylonian religious system itself has invented the impious myth that Christ's prayer must YET BE ANSWERED by all of Babylon's factions joining themselves together, accepting everyone regardless of their practices and "another gospel" which they preach. Thus now with all conviction and solemnity I tell you that ONENESS BEGINS WITH OUR BEING JOINED UNTO JESUS CHRIST IN ONE SPIRIT. Only in the measure we are all joined unto this one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ, in that measure we can be one with each other. "If we walk in the light, (as) HE is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I Jn 1:7). The song so popular among Spirit-filled Christians, "We are one in the Spirit, We are one in the Lord, And we pray that our unity may one day be restored," is a foolish contradiction of terms. If they ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT then there is no unity to be restored, for UNITY IN THE SPIRIT is the highest unity in the universe.

The unveiling and revelation that is coming through the sons of God to one another and to the people of the world will be, and is, the revelation of JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. God purposed to save the world, not by sending salvation, but by sending a SAVIOUR, who becomes our salvation. "The Lord is our light and our salvation" (Ps 27:1). He not only sends light through some inspiration of the scriptures, but Jesus Christ, Who is the light of the world, becomes our light. This is the realm of which it is written: "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor 13:10). Now we understand the exhortation: "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Mat 5:48). Christ is the perfect One, the express image of the Father, therefore the coming of the perfect is the coming of Jesus Christ Himself, the unveiling and the revelation and the manifestation of Jesus Christ.

When that which is perfect is come, when Christ Himself is come and has become our light and our salvation and our strength and our joy and our all in all, then all divisions are gone and everything that separates from one another. The unity is IN HIM. Light from the scriptures separates because one may have more light than another, but when Christ Himself is our light and our life, it unites. There is no division in the unveiling of Christ. "Is Christ divided?" asked the apostle (I Cor 1:13). When CHRIST IS REVEALED the army of Joel goes forward and nobody breaks ranks and nobody thrusts one another, because they have found their union in Him! As long as our union was in our state of development it was based, for example, on the same experience of salvation. But when we were Fundamentalists, rejoicing in our salvation experience, we would still fight! Or, if our union was based on the same expression of divine healing, or speaking in tongues, or water baptism, or even good "end-time

revelation," is it not true that we would still quibble? When our union is in CHRIST and in HIM becoming our light, joy, and salvation, then all pride and division is gone. "If any man be in Christ" (II Cor 5:17). This is the unity Jesus prayed for: "Father be in Me and you in Me and I in you." O, may God bring to full expression this great mystery of the indwelling living Christ! It is such a marvelous mystery that the carnal mind cannot comprehend it!

The body of Christ is a mystery. It is a marvelous temple that God our Father is in the process of building. It is a temple not made with hands. The stones of its all-glorious walls are living stones, each one born of incorruptible seed and knowing in Himself the power of Christ's endless life. The Greek passage (Heb 7:15-17) that says that Christ is a Priest "made after the power of an ENDLESS LIFE," when traced back to its root could also be translated "after the power of a UNITED LIFE." "I and My Father are ONE" (Jn 10:30). In that glorious body, that wonderful temple of sons, there never has been a rift, a schism or division, for it is composed of OVERCOMERS, and from the beginning of the age until now it has been steadily rising on the foundation of the apostles and prophets as each new living stone was readied and permanently placed within its living walls. The body of Christ is unhindered by fire, by tribulation or persecution, unaffected by the squabblings of sects and denominations or those harlot systems without who vainly imagine their hollow man-made structures to be the body of Christ, but rising in the power of incorruption and bound with the everlasting ties of God's eternal Spirit, it is builded a holy and living temple for the Lord. It is from the glorious living temple that Ezekiel saw the Living Waters flowing, deeper and deeper, passing through the desolate land and emptying into the dead sea of humanity's sin and corruption, bringing LIFE where ere it went. Would you be part, dear brother, sister, of God's wonderful RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY? Seek, then, above all else to be joined in eternal union with CHRIST, set your affection on things that are above, that the things of earth may grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. He is made after the power of a UNITED LIFE, and we, too, have been made after the power of a united life in Him. Seek not to flow, seek to abide. Seek not to be a river, seek to be joined in fellowship, communion and union with the Fountain of Living Water. In intimacy of union with Him, as sure as the heavens are higher than the earth, so sure is it that YOU WILL FLOW IN HIS LIFE AND HIS LIFE WILL FLOW OUT THROUGH YOU!

Let it be thoroughly known that God flows as life only through those who walk in union with Him in the Spirit. Our heavenly Father has never throughout the centuries since Christ died and rose left Himself without a channel through which to pour forth His life to humanity. He always has a people of His own, even if it is but one man. The stream of the River of Life has in every age flowed out through those who were walking in the Spirit. God has always accomplished His work through those who walked in the stream of His purposes. Where the stream flows, there is the work of God. This is clear in the book of Acts, a book which speaks to us of the work of God. What is that kind of work which is the work of God? Is it toiling to build larger and larger churches, bigger Sunday schools, more attractive programs? God's work is always in the stream of LIVING

WATER. Where the stream of Living Water flows, there is the work of God. God works by the flowing of the stream of His DIVINE LIFE. If you consider the whole record of the book of Acts, you will see the picture quite clearly. On the day of Pentecost this stream of divine life flowed out of God Himself in Christ with ruling power from the throne. It began to flow in Jerusalem. From there it flowed to Antioch, and then from Antioch it turned to the West; it flowed to Asia, and through Asia it flowed to Macedonia, to Europe. From Europe it flowed to the New World, and it has flowed to every nation, and tongue, and tribe and people on the face of the earth.

Notice that there is no end, no conclusion, to the book of Acts. There are twenty-eight chapters, but in the book of Acts in heaven today may be twenty-eight hundred chapters! The twenty-eight chapters in our Bible are just the record of sixty or seventy years of history. There is an opening, but no closing, no conclusion. This is because the stream of life is still flowing and never stops flowing. This stream has continued to flow right up to this very day, it has finally flowed into you and me, and it shall flow out through us, and from generation to generation, through age after age, until the last enemy has been destroyed and there is no more death anywhere in the universe, and God is ALL IN ALL. Where this stream flows, there is the life of God. Where there is the life of God, there is the unity of God. And where there is the unity of God there is the out-flowing of God.

I cannot even begin to explain the wonder of such a union – ONE WITH GOD! I do know that therein lies the blessed secret to victory and glory unsurpassable. On one occasion Paul wrote, "The God of peace shall bruise satan under your feet shortly" (Rom 16:20). That word peace, in its root, is UNITY. The God of UNITY shall bruise satan under your feet shortly! What vistas of faith and victory are inspired within as we view ourselves ONE IN HIM. Nothing can stand before, over, or against one who dwells in union with God the Almighty. Oh, praise God, He is knitting His own together in Himself in such a way that WHEN HE ACTS WE ACT, WHEN HE SPEAKS WE SPEAK, and WHEN HE SPEAKS ALL WILL SPEAK because of the UNITED LIFE in the Spirit – and not merely a unity of spirit with our brethren in the flesh, but unity with CHRIST and a unity with all who are IN HIM – that great company of Elohim on both this side of the veil and the other – for it is written that "Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator the new covenant. " (Heb 12:22-24).

This Mount Zion, this City of the living God, this heavenly Jerusalem, this Church of the First-born, the spirits of just men made perfect, this Jesus. THIS is the voice of the many-membered Son, the voice that has the sound of many waters, MANY SPIRITS, merged into ONE GIGANTIC WATERFALL – ONE GREAT RIVER OF LIFE! Take the shoes from off your feet, oh saint of God, for the ground on which we stand is holy ground. Put away all lightness and foolishness

that with heads bowed down and hearts lifted up in worship God's Holy Spirit may reveal how the life of God flowing in Christ and the life of Christ flowing through His body is ONE STREAM OF THE WATER OF LIFE. This is the river in Eden, ONE river, the flowing out of God Himself as reality and life from within those consecrated sons of God who are UNIFIED IN HIM.

It should not be difficult to understand that this is the answer to all the world's needs. For this purpose the people of God have been going through all the dealings and workings of God, particularly during the last years, in order that Christ might be fully formed in them AS LIFE. We learn to know the fullness of His power within by the crucible of experience in order that God may have a people through whom He can manifest Himself WITHOUT INHIBITION, WITHOUT LIMITATION, WITHOUT ANY HINDERING OF THE FULL FLOW OF HIMSELF, SO THAT IT WILL BE THE FULL MANIFESTATION OF HIS LOVE, GRACE, POWER, LIFE, SALVATION, AND DELIVERANCE TO ALL HUMANITY. A people no longer conscious of God's works – wonderful though His works are – but conscious of GOD HIMSELF, A RIVER OF LIFE PEOPLE not proclaiming doctrines, creeds, rituals, experiences, ordinances, or works, but just the Lord Himself as light and life and love, GOD manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit.

The Spirit speaks of making us witnesses to the person of God, rather than the works of God (Acts 1:8). In the past, we have borne witness to the wondrous works of God. Yes, His works have been tremendous, but what we are to bear witness to in this hour is the person of God, becoming the expression and out-flowing of HIMSELF that the world may come to know the living Christ, who is manifesting Himself in and through His body in all His glory.

The blood, the sword, the fire, the cross, and the operation of the Spirit have not been working in us through these many years in order to make us ready for a mansion over the hilltop. It has been in order to prepare us to be an habitation of God through the Spirit so that the hour would come that Christ Himself, once fully formed in us, would be able to be manifested not only in His works, but in His person. Until now we have manifested the works of God, we have witnessed to what redemption has done FOR US, but now God wants us to be the revelation of Himself. The works were only to bring us to the person. The hour is upon us when there must be a full and glorious revelation of the person of Jesus Christ through us as Life.

For years we have been saying: "If the world could only see the works of God!" Well, I tell you now that we have shown them His works and it was not the answer, for far too often the works, the signs and wonders and miracles, fascinated the lustful eyes of the curious and blessed the people's flesh, but failed to impart unto them the LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD. God did not save the world by works, He saved the world by A PERSON. "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE through His name" (Jn 20:31). This life is a person – "I AM

the life" (Jn 14:6). Is it not a miracle that God is bringing us to this hour when there is that awareness within us that there must be an unveiling, a revelation, an indwelling and expression and manifestation and out-flowing of the person of God? What a marvelous work is coming in these days! As an evangelist in by-gone years I loved to travel through the country and tell people that there is a remedy for sin in the blood of Christ, and an enduring power in the Holy Spirit. It takes the Holy Spirit to preach the redemption of Jesus Christ. The days which are before us will excel in glory, for now we are going to proclaim and reveal the person of Christ, that men may know the hope of God in Jesus Christ. Opening their hearts to receive Him they will find they have the full effects of His sacrifice, atonement, redemption, glorification and exaltation.

God is breaking forth unto an hour of visitation and expression of Himself. In those blest days ahead at the manifestation of the sons of God the present "in part" realm of the Church age will have passed away, swallowed up in the out-pouring of the FULLNESS OF GOD, and in that day people will find themselves moving into salvation and on into the fullness of the Spirit and on into the glory of the Lord in all its majesty, without any effort, as easily as a man is saved today, because the person of Christ is coming into focus today and He Himself is coming into expression in His chosen ones. The people's bodies shall even be changed to be fashioned like unto His glorious body as the sons of God go forth to DELIVER THE CREATION FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION. What a day! Hallelujah!

Chapter 11

A River Out Of Eden

(continued)

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and came into FOUR HEADS. The name of the FIRST is Pison: that is it which compasseth the WHOLE LAND OF HAVILAH, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the SECOND river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the WHOLE LAND OF ETHIOPIA. And the name of the THIRD river is Heddekel: that is it which goeth toward the EAST OF ASSYRIA. And the FOURTH river is EUPHRATES" (Gen 2:10-14).

In the opening chapters of the Bible we are told about the river God put in the garden of Eden. As it flowed out of the garden, it divided and went in four directions. This is a type or symbol of the life of God, flowing out from the Kingdom of God to the whole earth. The nature of God's wonderful River of Life is that it flows outward. Ezekiel once had a vision of a river that flowed out of the temple and got deeper and deeper as it flowed out to the sea (which symbolizes the nations), and it healed the sea or the nations (Eze 47). Thank God that this river now flows! The life of Jesus Christ is flowing as a river out from the throne of God. "If any man thirst," saith Christ, "let him come unto Me and drink!"

In our last article we spoke of how it is that inside the garden of Eden the river is one, and that it is only after leaving Paradise that it divides into four branches. ONE river in Eden! As we meditate upon this wonderful fact there can be no doubt as to its significance for in all the languages of earth ONE is the prime number and is always the symbol of UNITY or that which is UNIFIED. Hence, ONE stands in scripture for source, unity, sovereignty, creation, and above all, God – Who is the great FIRST CAUSE of all things in the universe. It is an eternal never-failing principle that nowhere, in all the unbounded heavens, is anything right or enduring that does not begin with God. Thus, the one river in Eden points us to the high and holy and inescapable truth that there can be no flowing out of God as Life from any one any where who is not walking in UNION WITH CHRIST. The river must continually be united with the vast reservoir of head-waters whence it originates, as also those head-waters must ever be united with the deep hidden springs which are their source. Separate the river from its source and it will speedily run dry. Separate the head-waters from the gushing underground springs that feed them and they will cease to flow and soon stagnate. The springs, the head-waters, and the river ARE ONE BODY OF WATER. Only in that unbroken UNITY can the river continue to flow. Would you

be part, dear brother, sister, of God's wonderful RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY? Seek, then, above all else in this world to be joined in eternal UNION WITH CHRIST, set all your affection on those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. In vital union with HIM, as sure as the heavens are higher than the earth, so sure is it that YOU WILL FLOW IN LIFE AND HIS LIFE WILL FLOW THROUGH YOU!

The foregoing truth is worthy of our deepest meditation and prayer. Never can we comprehend its forceful meaning to us as sons of God without prayerful, careful consideration. It is not enough that we understand the fact of it with our minds. Here is one sure place where we need that blessed teacher, the Holy Spirit, to "take the things of Christ and show them unto us." How precious to the enlightened heart are the words of the apostle Paul, saying, "He that is JOINED unto the Lord is ONE SPIRIT" (I Cor 6:17). Listen now to these words from the Living Bible: "But if you give yourself to the Lord, you and Christ are joined together AS ONE PERSON." The Amplified Bible reads: "But the person who is UNITED to the Lord becomes THE SPIRIT WITH HIM." In union with our Lord we are THE ONE SPIRIT, the ONE RIVER OF LIVING WATER flowing out of the high and holy realm of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

FOUR RIVERS OUT OF EDEN

It is of special interest to us at this point to prayerfully examine the wonderful significance of the divine fact that this one river, upon flowing out of the Garden, divides and goes in four directions. When man was driven outside of his first blessed home and looked about him, he had no conception of the modern world as we know it. No Copernicus had ever opened his eyes to the vast significance of the universe. To him the world was a great flat wilderness with four boundaries, east and west and north and south. There were four winds from the four sides of the earth. Thus, when he thought of the world he thought in terms of FOUR. FOUR became the cosmic number. The world in which men lived and worked and died, was conveniently symbolized by FOUR.

In common language we speak of "the FOUR corners of the earth" and "the FOUR points of the compass." FOUR is the number of CREATION and marks in a singular way GOD'S CREATIVE WORKS. The earth has FOUR regions: North, South, East, and West. FOUR elements: earth, air, fire and water. FOUR kingdoms: mineral, vegetable, animal and spiritual. FOUR winds: from the four directions of earth. FOUR divisions of our day: morning, noon, evening and night. FOUR phases of the moon: First Quarter, New Moon, Last Quarter and Full Moon. On the FOURTH creative day the material creation was finished (Gen 1:14-19).

FOUR is the number that in Scriptures is associated with CREATION. In Rom 8:19-22 the word CREATURE is used FOUR times in succession. In the Revised Version the word is CREATION, being a more correct translation of the Greek word. Notice: "For the earnest expectation of the (1) CREATION waiteth for the

manifestation of the sons of God. For the (2) CREATION was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the (3) CREATION itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole (4) CREATION groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

In Rev 5:13 the CREATURES in FOUR different places ascribe FOUR words of praise to God and the Lamb: "And every CREATURE which is (1) in heaven, (2) and on the earth, (3) and under the earth, (4) and such as are in the sea and all that are in them heard; I saying, (1) Blessing, and (2) honour, and (3) glory, and (4) power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

The great Gentile World Kingdoms as revealed to the prophet Daniel were FOUR in number: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. These are all EARTHLY POWERS. They were ruled over by the natural man, represented by the number FOUR. Following these FOUR is the FIFTH, which shall be controlled by the SONS OF GOD in that wonderful age soon to dawn. People ignorantly talk about the "age of grace" ending, but I declare unto you that eye hath not seen neither hath ear heard of an age of grace so full and free as that which lies before us in the age of the Kingdom of God. This will be the FIFTH World Empire and FIVE is the number of GRACE! "And He will destroy in this mountain (the Kingdom of God) the face of the covering cast over ALL PEOPLE, and the veil (of blindness) that is spread over ALL NATIONS. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord will wipe away tears from off ALL FACES. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in HIS SALVATION!" (Isa 25:7-9).

The New Jerusalem in the new heavens and the new earth is revealed to be a city FOUR-SQUARE. The best way to come to an understanding of the true meaning of the NEW JERUSALEM, is to go back and consider its shadow, the OLD JERUSALEM. Jerusalem of old was the capital city of the national Israel; and as that old order was but a type and shadow of the new (Heb 10:1; Col 2:16-17), therefore the New Jerusalem must be the capital city, or the ruling element, in Israel today, which is Christ's Kingdom and of which our Lord said, it "is not of this world" (Jn 18:36). In other words, the New Jerusalem is the ruling class, the kings and priests unto God: those who have followed the Lamb whithersoever He goeth and have attained to the highest position of honor and might and true greatness in grace. It comprises those who will rule with Christ upon His throne. We, therefore, who are accounted worthy to suffer with Christ (II Tim 2:12), ARE the New Jerusalem which shall rule over God's infinite realm forevermore. The city FOUR-SQUARE is a PEOPLE.

Thus we see that the New Jerusalem, contrary to the driveling childishness that is taught in the churches, is not a fanciful monstrosity some fifteen hundred miles high, which one day will come floating or crashing down out of the clouds to

settle and rest on the earth like a bump on a little boy's head, throwing it out of balance and off its course. God made this earth complete and as it should be long, long ago. He created it a perfectly functioning reality, and "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it" (Eccl 3:14). Truly, unspiritual men, who walk after the flesh in the vain imaginings of the carnal mind, can invent many fairy tales, and alas, all seem intent upon calculating the expanse of the city in cubic miles or cubic feet as though it were nothing more than a huge metropolis slightly more wonderful than those at present on earth! One speaker waxed eloquent about the size of the mansion each inhabitant would possess, replete with a golden bathtub and fountains and other such childish nonsense. Until our spiritual minds are able to grasp the truth that the BODY OF CHRIST is the temple of God and that every room or mansion in that temple is a LIVING SON OF GOD, a literal habitation for God through the Spirit, and until we understand that the stones of that temple are all LIVING STONES as Jesus Christ Himself, the corner-stone, is a living stone, we have understood nothing at all. The temple of God, indeed, is Christ in all His fullness – the Head and all the members of that body joined as ONE SPIRIT and baptized into one glorious body. Did not Paul, because of the sluggish understanding of the saints, demand in amazement, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" (I Cor 6:19). Oh may the Spirit of God make this a living truth in our hearts!

When this glorious city of living stones is unveiled in all its unspeakable majesty and glory, then will the Spirit and the bride say, "Come," and the nations of earth will enter through its spiritual gates that they may partake of the leaves of its spiritual tree (the Word of God) that are for the healing of the nations. From His exalted throne in its midst the water of Life will ever flow and the ever green tree of life, bearing its twelve manner of fruits, will flourish on either side of the river for healing of all nations who hitherto walked in darkness and the shadow of death. Then shall its twelve gates be opened, and never shall they be closed by day, and there shall be no more night. Then shall the holy voice of the bride, speaking by the Spirit of God, say to the multiplied billions who until now have never heard that God had a Son or that He died to save them all, "Come, for all things are now ready. Come and partake freely of the water of Life! Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of Life freely. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price!" And come they will by the millions and the billions, bringing the glory and honor of the nations into the beautiful city of God. In the light of such all-surpassing promises as these I cannot help but rebuke the gross unbelief of modern Christians who would deny access to God's bountiful River of Life to all but the little hand-full that have drunk during this so-called "age of grace."

As we meditate upon these wonderful truths there can be no doubt as to the meaning of the FOUR rivers which flowed out from Eden in that misty age of long ago. My heart goes out in prayer that the God of all wisdom and understanding will open the hearts of all who read these lines that they may see with absolute

clarity how these FOUR rivers bespeak the flowing out of God's divine Life from the body of Christ unto THE WHOLE CREATION.

The four quarters of the earth, lying without the garden, unto which the four rivers flowed, represent the human condition outside of God, the whole dreadful realm of sin, sorrow, and death. This lower realm includes this world and everything that is beneath it, descending into the lowest realms of the bottomless and embraces the outer realms of darkness. The first river is Pison and is said to compass "the whole land of Havilah." Havilah is an unusually descriptive word in Hebrew meaning: "To twist or whirl in a circular or spiral manner, i.e. to writhe or fall grievously in pain or fear; to pervert; drive away; grieve; be sore pained; be sorrowful; tremble; be wounded." Havilah also means "sandy" and historically its people were desert nomads, wilderness wanderers. How beautiful that God so graciously provides such an abundant RIVER for such a distressing condition! And this divine River not only flows into and through the land of Havilah, but also "compasses the WHOLE LAND!" Such bountiful outflow of life from Eden's fair garden serves merely as a dim shadow of the grand and glorious fulfillment of the awe-inspiring vision of John the Revelator, when on Patmos his wondering eyes beheld and his anointed hand penned these blessed words of eternal consolation and good hope: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God IS WITH MEN, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be their God. And God shall wipe away ALL TEARS from their eyes; and there shall be NO MORE DEATH, neither SORROW, nor CRYING, neither shall there be any more PAIN: for the former things are passed away and Behold, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW" (Rev 21:3-5). Any child in elementary school should be able to compare the list of meanings of the word "Havilah" and the items in the above quoted verses which God says, He shall take away from the midst of men, and easily grasp that the things God shall obliterate are the same as the distressing conditions in the "land of Havilah." No more sorrow, no more pain, no more crying, and, blessed be God! No more DEATH!

Oh the victory of those blessed words of hope written by the apostle Paul: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor 15:26). Most Christians do very careless thinking about death and its conquest. I must confess that I used to believe, as many folks do, that death would be destroyed as soon as the act of dying stopped. How limited a viewpoint that is! In a certain book the author discusses the problem of why a rotten apple in a barrel of good ones will spoil the whole lot, but a good apple in a barrel of rotten ones is powerless to make the rotten ones sound. He says that the good apple has the stroke of death in it. When the stem was severed from the tree its source of life and health and growth was removed. Even a good apple is a dying thing. But he should have added that death was hovering near, yea, present, while the stem of the apple was still fast to the tree. Just let the wind swing the apple against a limb near at hand and break the peel, immediately rot sets in. Let a bird pick a hole in it, or a worm enter its body, at once the forces of decay and death come into manifestation,

and the end is putrefaction. As has been said, "In the midst of life we are in death."

The first warning against disobedience is: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The words "thou shalt surely die" are better translated "dying thou shalt die," or "thou art dying to die." That is, "dying" is both a condition and a process, and "to die" is merely the final act or event in the process. When Adam sinned it was life and vitality that he lost; it was death and dissolution that he received. The word "death" means infinitely more than the act or event of dying; it means not only the state into which one passes in the act of dying but also the **CONDITION WHICH MAKES SUCH AN EVENT AND SUCH A STATE POSSIBLE.**

A man knows absolutely nothing about the awesome realities of life and death until he comes to understand that death is not only a condition or state which affects the physical body; it is primarily the state or condition of the spiritual life in which unregenerated men live. Until men are made alive in Christ by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit they are "dead in trespasses and sins," here and now. This will be the condition or state of the lost also "in the ages to come," "having no hope, and without God in the world," as "the smoke of their torment doth go up to ages of ages; and they have no rest day and night, who are bowing before the beast and his image" (Rev 14:11, Young's Literal Translation). Anybody apart from God in Christ is dead, whether in this life or in any other, whether in this age or in any other. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I Jn 5:12). Physical death is only one of the results of spiritual death. It was not merely his demise after 930 years that constituted Adam's death, but his separation from the life that is in God on the very day he sinned was the inner reality of his death. That separation with its fear, its sin, its alienation from God's love and care and intimate fellowship, is the **REAL DEATH THAT IS TO BE DESTROYED!**

How silly it is to teach then that when the act of physically dying is ended death will be destroyed! If death is the absence of life, and that must be true of anything that ever had life, then death must be destroyed by swallowing it up in life! "Death is swallowed up in **VICTORY**" (I Cor 15:54). Let it be thoroughly known that the only way death will ever be destroyed that "there shall be no more death," is to put life in its place throughout the **WHOLE REALM OF DEATH!** How plain it is that the only way to get rid of error is to supplant it with truth. The only way to get rid of sorrow is to submerge it in joy. So, some glad day, "Death will be swallowed up in victory!" And God will do that by destroying throughout "the **WHOLE LAND OF HAVILAH**" all alienation and separation from God – which is real death, and the origin of all suffering, fear, torment, sorrow, pain and physical death. But that can take place only when the Lord of Life has proven Himself "Lord over death!" Not till then will the Son "deliver up the kingdom of God, even the Father." When that joyous day comes men will answer their own questions: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor 15:55) by the triumphant shout, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory

through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (I Cor 15:57). "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor 15:22). As long as there is one creature anywhere in God's universe abiding in a state of death. DEATH HAS NOT BEEN DESTROYED.

Before passing from this first river, the Pison, we want to consider the positive side of the river as it flows into the land of Havilah. Norene Nichols has penned some beautiful truths from this scene which I am constrained to share with my readers "Now, consider the expanse of the Father's scope, and this also describes the scope of the position and ministry of the company of fathers. PISON means FREELY FLOWING, DISPERSING, SPREADING. And, it COMPASSETH the whole land Havilah. COMPASSETH means REVOLVE, SURROUND, even means A PROVIDENTIAL TURN OF AFFAIRS. His marvelous providence really turns the affairs of heaven and earth. There is really nothing beyond the scope of Himself, and His providence includes all and everything. Such immensity boggles the mind, but it is true.

"The PISON encompasses the whole land of HAVILAH which itself means CIRCULAR or a CIRCLE. Strange is it not that the Father freely flowing and dispersing Himself revolves and surrounds a CIRCLE. On the surface this does not even make much sense, but wait a minute. The term has been used on several occasions of THE LAW OF CIRCULARITY, and this explains much. The Father moves in ever widening circles, circles within circles, each one a perfection or completion in itself but still unlimited, for larger and wider circles of His plan and purpose are always beyond the present circle. Even ages themselves are circles of time, but each circle or cycle of time is within a still larger circle of time. And in each cycle of time a certain plan is outworked, but that is not the end in itself, for that circle is still within a still greater cycle. And so the scope of His purpose and plan keeps on enlarging and enlarging and ENLARGING! And about the time we think we have comprehended such a cycle, we only are jolted into the reality that it is but a segment of what He is really doing. And out and beyond all of this cycling of time and purpose is the river of Himself ever widening out with greater scope and purpose and power" – end quote.

The second river out of Eden is GIHON and is said to compass "the whole land of Ethiopia." Ethiopia means "the land of Cush" and Cush means "blackness." This immediately takes our thoughts back to Gen 1:2, "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep." Here the blackness or darkness was worldwide, but, praise God, into that darkness God spoke forth light. The whole earth has passed through six long millenniums of great darkness and that darkness still hangs as an almost impenetrable shroud over the carnal minds of men. This "land of blackness" is reminiscent of the statement made by the Shulamite maiden in the Song of Solomon 1:5-6: "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." In her

humility and consciousness of her own unworthiness, the Shulamite declares that she is as black or dark as the tents of Kedar. The dark skinned Arabs of the desert covered their tents with black goatskins, a fitting figure of the blackness of sin, and the darkness of the carnal mind, which, in the unregenerate, is within and without. These black tents are in striking contrast to the princely white tent of Solomon the King. It is also a fitting expression of the feeling of unworthiness, which sweeps over every justified believer who, day by day, is drawing nearer to God.

When our hearts really draw near to the Lord, and we begin to breathe the pure air of His presence and to see the light in His light, we see our own unworthiness; we hear our own words; we behold our own actions; and, but for His sustaining grace, we should faint with dismay and distress. Words and actions, feelings and motives, desires and emotions, which appeared worthy and harmless when we compared ourselves among ourselves, and measured ourselves by ourselves, stand out in all their imperfection and sin-marred darkness. How vain is the self-complacency and confidence of him who has not had a vision of Christ, and a revelation of His High Calling! How futile is the rejoicing and boasted victory of the one who lives in head-knowledge but has not entered the battles and contests, through which the overcomer is perfected! How childish and foolish the assumption of knowledge and attainment, in him who has only viewed the land of promises and privileges from the mountain; and who has never walked up and down in the land!

But they who shall make up the ELECT shall not be content with a mere vision of Christ and the glories of sonship in Him. They will tear away every veil that is between them and their Lord, and with unveiled face, they will behold His glory until they are transfigured into the same image, from glory to glory God's chosen ones will not be satisfied with imaginary victory, which is really the deceptive peace of having received a revelation but not entering in. They will strengthen themselves in the Lord and put on the whole armor of God. They will fight the good fight and finish the course. They will not mistake the call and revelation of sonship, for possession. They will not be content with visions and passing glimpses of the land of promise, but by faith will walk up and down through the land and begin to possess their possessions. They will become more than conquerors through Him who loved them.

God is today doing a marvelous work among the apprehended sons of God who are learning to live and walk in the heavenlies At the same time darkness has descended upon the earth-dwellers, and gross darkness upon the peoples. We are indeed living in momentous hours. The great Babylonish image seen by Nebuchadnezzar of old is now standing but shakily on its two unsubstantial feet of iron and clay A spirit of stupidity has fallen upon the leaders of the world, and a spirit of deception upon its peoples, and satan has come down with great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time. Men and nations have become "lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers

of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof; from such turn away" (II Tim 3:2-5).

There was a great and wonderful day when Israel was preparing to leave Egypt, when a great event happened that has its parallel in our day. Just before the Passover when the firstborn of every household was sealed, Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven and there was a thick darkness in Egypt for three days. They saw not one another, neither could any find his way. It was darkness that could be felt. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings! (Ex 10:21-23). In this hour too, God has begun to divide the light from the darkness. There is every evidence that gross darkness that can be felt is descending upon all who love and follow after the spirit of this age, but in the souls of those who are following on to know the Lord there is ever increasing light!

"YE are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (I Thes 5:5-6). I have a strong conviction that the night is far spent and the DAY IS AT HAND. We must now obey the command of the Spirit through the prophet Isaiah: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, DARKNESS SHALL COVER THE EARTH, and gross darkness the people: but THE LORD SHALL ARISE UPON THEE, and His glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa 60:1-2). We must arise and shine and lead the way for all who will follow, and, thank God, this light of His glory upon His sons shall shine even until the thick darkness that can be felt upon all nations shall be dispersed, for "the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev 21:23-25). No more NIGHT! Blessed hope! The only way to get rid of darkness is to obliterate it with light. The River of Life is said to "compass" the whole land of Ethiopia. One of the meanings of "compasseth" in the Hebrew is "to besiege and change." It speaks of that which surrounds and lays siege to a thing, taking it over and making it your own, conforming it to your own ideal God is preparing a LIGHT PEOPLE, a MANY-MEMBERED SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, to arise and shine in such fullness of God's glory that the light will lay siege to the terrible darkness of this wicked age, swallowing up the darkness, until THERE SHALL BE NO MORE NIGHT, not only in the City of God, but among all the nations that walk in the dazzling light of that holy city, and ultimately no more night anywhere, forever, as God becomes ALL IN ALL. And all this the result of that glorious River "that compasseth the WHOLE LAND OF ETHIOPIA," the whole realm of blackness and darkness, blessed be the name of the Lord! This, of course, first becomes reality in a firstfruit company and God is working it in us in this very day.

The third river is HIDDEKEL and "goeth toward the east of Assyria." The Assyrians were not a pure race, being a mixture of Babylonian and Sumerian. They came originally from Babylon and were thus acquainted with the Babylonian inventions, discoveries, and religion. The ancient river Hiddekel, later named Tigris, flowed along the eastern border of both Babylon and Assyria. The simple meaning of the word "Assyria" is "successful." There is no doubt in my mind that this "success" is the success of the Babylonian harlot, sitting upon many waters, arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication, who also saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. The harlot religious systems have indeed been phenomenally successful when measured in terms of untold millions of members, inestimable wealth, costly buildings and ornate temples, impressive rituals and ceremonies, pomp, splendor, and worldly honor.

It is successful because it is worldly minded; it loves pleasure more than it loves God; it loves feasting more than it loves fasting; it loves entertainment more than it loves repentance and waiting upon the Lord. It compasses land and sea to make one proselyte and frequently the proselytes are two-fold more the children of the devil than they were in the beginning. Caught in her web of enchantment, those whom the harlot system "wins to the Lord" by teaching them the word of God according to the precepts of men, these babes are imprisoned in her fortress of forms and rituals and ceremonies and doctrines and organizational structures until they become hideously dwarfed and but grotesque caricatures of what a child of the living God should be like.

The entire Church system is full of professional beggars who will fleece your money from you in the name of their program just as a street beggar will beg in the name of his infirmity. From time to time I receive these automatically-typed lying letters from men I have never met nor seen nor known, who tell me how the Lord has laid me and my family upon their hearts, how they are praying for me, personally, every day, and what wonderful things will happen to me if I will just send them an offering for their work. One dear friend shared a letter with me from a well known evangelist in which he informed her that he had seen a vision of her house with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. He was scheduled to be in Africa within a few days for a campaign, but the Lord had told him, he said, to postpone the campaign until he could write to her and get her most urgent prayer requests to take with him to Africa. If she would only send an offering of \$20.00 along with her prayer requests, he would carry them to Africa where they would be prayed over and she could expect miraculous results. As though God answers prayer more effectively from Africa than in the United States of America! These automated letters are mailed out by the thousands, monthly and weekly, exact copies with only a different name inserted. I suggested to my friend that she write to this evangelist? and tell him she had her \$20.00 ready to send just as soon as he would tell her what her house looks like and what color it is, since he had seen it in a vision! More than one widely known evangelist of our day has become a millionaire, and that

by peddling his religious con games to gullible Christians deceived by their guile even though their wicked devices should be evident to the simplest mind.

Cursed be such wicked men! The Churches today are filled to overflowing with programs born out of carnal minds. Ah, wicked Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth! They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him being abominable and to all true riches reprobate. No wonder Jesus said, "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Mat 7:22-23). No wonder the Spirit inspired John the beloved to pronounce DESTRUCTIVE JUDGMENT against the Great Whore and her daughters.

It is imperative, however, that we distinguish between the system of Babylon which God shall swiftly bring to destruction, and the poor captives of Babylon held within her walls by the craftiness of her false shepherds. There is a great and glorious day coming when God shall bring to utter ruin the whole popular Church system, but, praise the Lord, this shall be followed by a great revival when the whole earth will turn to God and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Yes, beloved ones, there shall yet be a bountiful overflowing of the River of Life even to THE PEOPLE OF BABYLON, for the Lord Almighty and gracious has appointed His River to flow "toward the east of Assyria" and it shall water even that whole land!

Light, illumination, understanding, truth, release of wisdom will flow into the Lord's people who are now chained in that dreadful bondage of ignorance and blindness. Of HIDDEKEL Norene Nickel wrote:

"This river bears a strange name, HIDDEKEL, whose meaning has been rather difficult to find. Strong's Concordance gives no meaning, Young's Concordance says it means RAPID. In breaking that word down, Young's says part of it means LIVELY. If this be so, then lively would come from the word LIFE which surely does fit the picture of the Son of the most High, for 'in Him was LIFE, and the LIFE was the light of men. ' Also, 'when Christ who is our LIFE shall appear...'. We know His purpose in coming into the world was to give LIFE unto all men, so I appreciate the fact that at least part of the word HIDDEKEL means LIVELY, or FULL OF LIFE.

"But two times this word HIDDEKEL used in the scriptures, in the one quoted above and in Dan. 10:4 'And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the GREAT RIVER, which is HIDDEKEL; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude... etc. '. We have seen that Yehoshua is life itself as indicated by the name HIDDEKEL, but in its further use in Daniel, it is plain to be seen that the

Hiddekel is the place of spiritual revelation. So great was the vision given to Daniel beside Hiddekel that he was prone upon his face and left without any strength. So totally drained of strength to even speak was Daniel that three times he had to be touched by the supernatural to give him strength to endure the vision that was to be shown him concerning his people (Israel) in the latter days. He was also told about the great spirit battle in which the Prince of Persia and the Prince of Greece were involved. He was told that it took the great warrior MICHAEL and his hosts to withstand these opposing forces, all of this came by the side of the river of Hiddekel. It is through the SON signified by this third river that such great visions and battles are made known.”

Not only does the river Hiddekel flow to Assyria, but the record is very specific that it “goeth toward the EAST of Assyria.” That important word EAST is most significant. It does not mean east in the sense we think of it as direction, but in position it means “front” or “ahead of.” In other words, this third river flows in front of or ahead of the land of Assyria – those who flow IN this river and AS this river are spiritually in front of and ahead of all who dwell in the bondage of Babylon. This denotes the FIRST FRUITS into God and the Lamb who are also the source of life, blessing, revelation and reality for all unto whom they flow.

Ah, beloved, know ye not that YE are that River? Even as I write these words I am prompted by the Spirit to share with you a prophecy that recently came in a paper we receive, and out of the confidence I have in the ministry of the brother who sent it, I feel true liberty to share it as a Word of the Lord:

"Thou sayest thou hast walked through dry places, yea, and thy soul hath also yearned within thee through the night seasons. Thou hast become weary with thy journey because of that which presseth sore against thee from without. Thou wast grieved in thy spirit because that which was proffered thee for water and yet it was not water, and thy soul was not satisfied therewith. But knowest thou that thy God hath ordained that out of thee shall flow forth that water of life, not just for thine own refreshment, but that there should spring forth in all the barren, dry places wherein thou hast walked this water of life – a veritable fountain to bring forth life to those now swallowed up in the throes of death. Surely the Lord thy God bringeth forth a fountain, and no man shall stop it. Thou sayest, Wherewith shall this fountain be released? The Lord hath decreed that the rock should be smitten, yea, rent, and then shall the waters flow out. Was not the man Moses rebuked when he smote the rock twice (Num 20:11), for God had commanded that he smite it but once? - (Num 17:6). Yea, and so also thy God is rending thy being, once and for all shalt thou be thus torn, and then shall flow out of thee – as a part of that Rock – water that shall bring forth life to those who stand without. For thou shalt become a well-spring that no man shall disannul. For the Lord knoweth the longing of thy heart, and thou shalt be refreshed. Yea, thou shalt be amazed at the truth which floweth out of thine own lips. Thine own understanding shall be enlightened with that which the Spirit speaketh through thee. And thou wilt say in thyself, what is this that I now speak? But it shall be as the Spirit moveth through thee. Wrestlest thou with thy thoughts before God?

Wrestle no longer, but yield thy mind unto thy God, and He will inscribe within thee of His truth and righteousness, and so shalt thou know the ways of thy God. And be thou assured, the waters will flow – waters of HIS LIFE.”

The Lord doth even now prepare a RIVER OF LIFE PEOPLE to flow into the whole land of DEATH (Havilah), into the whole land of DARKNESS (Ethiopia), and into the whole land of SPIRITUAL BABYLON (Assyria). Such love! Such wondrous love!

The fourth river is EUPHRATES. Nothing is said about where it flows; only its name is given Euphrates means: "to break forth; rushing." It comes from a root word which means: "to bear fruit; to bring forth; to make fruitful; grow; increase." Scofield in his notes says that Euphrates means THE FERTILE RIVER. Can we not see by this that all the beauty, fragrance, and fruitfulness of Eden's perfumed garden is abundantly bestowed upon the earth-realm by the mighty rushing waters of the River? The scene is most beautifully described in the Song of Solomon 4:13-15 where we read: "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphor, with spikenard, and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."

Not only does the water of life come forth from this Fountain, but in every place where it has flowed have sprung up beautiful plants, trees of righteousness, spikenard plants and henna; frankincense, myrrh and the chief spices. The tender shoots grow and bear fruit; pomegranates and precious fruits, which come from Christ's Life flowing within. So beautiful and perfect are these trees of righteousness and tender shoots, that the Holy Spirit calls it, as it may be translated from the original, a "Paradise of pomegranates." The "pomegranate" is a symbol of fruitfulness; and all the fruit that comes from Christ living out His life in us, is precious, eternal fruit; hence it is called "A Paradise of pomegranates." These shoots grow in the gardens of the Lord and are watered by the Fountain of all the gardens. Such is the fruitfulness where ever the River flows that there are not only some trees of frankincense, not only a large amount of myrrh, not only some chief spices, but ALL the chief spices! ALL the fullness of God! It pleased the Father that in CHRIST should all the fullness of God dwell, and we are the FULLNESS OF HIM. There is no sweetness, no perfume, no life, no preciousness outside of HIM; only as we are IN HIM and put Him on, do we have any life or any beauty upon us.

The Kingdom of Heaven is a garden enclosed; Christ is the Fountain of Life, the source of its Living Waters. How marvelous that He does not choose to remain enclosed within the garden of His body, the garden of His kingdom, but gushes forth to F-L-O-W so that fruitfulness and fragrance and beauty shall fill every realm! "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the

excellency of our God. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: and THE HABITATION OF DRAGONS (devils), where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall pass away" (Isa 35:1-2,7,9).

THE RIVER OF GOD'S SALVATION

All who have ears to hear must hear what the Spirit is saying in these momentous days. The Spirit is saying that He is preparing a people. He is preparing a body, He is preparing sons who shall be a RIVER OF LIFE. God is preparing a body for that first Son, a river-bed for the flowing of His life, that in and through these sons His salvation should be manifested unto all the ends of the earth. The Lord saith unto His people in this day: "I have set thee to be a light for the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47).

When the scripture said: "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together," which is the vision of Habakkuk, which is the word of Isaiah: "All flesh shall see the glory of the Lord." (Luke says: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God"). God is saying the same to the world today, in saying to us: The sons of God are to be the salvation of God to the ends of the earth. When the Kingdom of God fills the earth, the earth will be filled with righteousness. WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD (II Cor 5:21). When the glory of God is revealed, the earth will be filled with the light of God. WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD (Mat 5:14). When the salvation of God is manifested, the Sons of God will be seen, for WE ARE RAISED UP TO BE HIS SALVATION unto the ends of the earth (Isa 49:6). It does no despite to HIS GLORY that He is bringing many sons unto glory. It only magnifies and enhances His own glory, for all redound to His praise, since all are conformed to His image, sharing His nature. The sons are to become for Him what Jeremiah said: "That they might be unto Me for a people, for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory" (Jer 13:11). "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise" (Isa 43:21).

HE is Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Saviour, and interesting how we find in the Word of God how the sons are to share in all these offices. "And hath made us kings and priests unto God" (Rev 1:6). He is "KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS" (Rev 19:6). There is a whole company of kings and lords, a whole "many brethren" company like unto Himself, but He is The King of all kings and The Lord of all the lords, for IN ALL HE SHALL HAVE PRE-EMINENCE.

He is Judge, for "the Father hath committed all judgment into the hand of the Son" (Jn 5:22). And yet Paul also writes: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? – know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (I Cor 6:2-3). And again, "And judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Dan 7:22). HE WILL DO THE JUDGING, yet this judgment will flow through those whom He has conformed to His own image and made ONE WITH HIMSELF.

In like manner, "HE is the Saviour of all men." And yet we also read, "and SAVIOURS shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's (Ob. 21). Herein is a glorious truth – while Jesus Christ is OUR SALVATION, as we receive of His fullness, becoming one in Him, we, in turn, become the salvation of others. "I will also GIVE THEE for a light to the nations, THAT THOU MAYEST BE-MY-SALVATION UNTO THE END OF THE EARTH" (Isa 49:6). The cry of David was: "O that the salvation of God might come out of Zion" (Ps 14:7). For the SAVING is HIS through those whom He uses to become channels for this glorious ministry of reconciliation. Yes, HE is the forerunner, having entered in for us in advance, and He is now preparing those with whom He shall share the glories of the realms beyond.

Of this salvation Peter wrote: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy begat us again unto a Living Hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a SALVATION READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME" (I Pet 1:3-5). My conviction is that the fullness of the Salvation of Jesus Christ is to be known only in the Last Time. I believe that I am writing in the Last Time. The ultimate of God's Salvation will find expression in these last days. It could not find full expression in Jesus Christ. In Him "are HID all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3), but "to the intent that NOW unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be known (revealed, unveiled) BY THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph 3:10). Through His apprehended ones His own wisdom, knowledge, love, and power is pouring forth and His Salvation shall be expressed.

Two thousand years ago, when Jesus Christ came into the world, the Word did not become philosophy, the Word did not become doctrine, the Word did not become angelic, the Word did not become an alphabet or a book, but the WORD BECAME FLESH. Jesus Christ was a man, born of a virgin, wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, growing as a boy, working in His father's carpenter shop, eating, drinking, sleeping, bathing, the Word of God MADE FLESH. "Who being in the form of God, did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained; but stripped Himself of all privileges and rightful dignity so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born a human being" (Phil 2:5-7, Amplified Bible). Do you realize that Jesus walked as a man and talked as a man? "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?" (Mat 13:55-56). Let it be thoroughly understood that no one knew Him for anything else but a man. He had no piercing gaze, no mystical appearance, no holy robes, no aura of an Indian holy man. In a fleeting moment old Simeon, the prophet, took the baby in his arms and said: "Mine eyes have seen the Salvation of God" (Lk 2:30). But it was because the Holy Ghost was on Simeon! It was not because this baby was different from other babies, not because there was a halo around his head, or because he was born with the ability to speak. It was a totally helpless little baby that drank milk like other

babies, had to be burped and changed. But by revelation of the Holy Spirit Simeon said: "Mine eyes have seen THY SALVATION!"

When Jesus walked with His disciples, they knew not who He was, except by particular revelation of the Spirit, such as when Peter said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said: "Flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in heaven." So it was not easy for Jesus to say: "I am the light of the world!". They took one look at Him and said: "He is blaspheming." When He said: "I am the Son of God," they took up stones to stone Him, saying, "You are making yourself equal with God." When He said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me," they sought to destroy Him. When He said: "Except ye eat My flesh, and drink My blood, ye have no life in you," all the vast multitudes shook their heads in pity and forsook Him. And lest we should have some distorted illusions about the grandeur of being SONS OF GOD, Jesus said: "Marvel not if the world hate you. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" (I Jn 3:13; Jn 15:18-19; Mat 10:25).

God is raising up a body today, sons who are no longer self-conscious. The secret of Jesus' declaration was that He paid no attention whatever to Himself or to what people thought. "Whatsoever I see the Father do, that is what I am doing, whatsoever I hear the Father say, that is what I say." Jesus said: "Into whatsoever city you enter and they receive you not, shake the dust off and say to them: Nevertheless the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Mat 10:14; Lk 10:11). Do not walk out of town silently and say: "Well, they did not realize what we represented, that we are, in expression, the Kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. They did not realize that the Kingdom of God is working and living and expressing through us." There can be no self-seeking, no self-saving in these days. God is not talking to babies today, He is not sending children, He is sending sons, whose only desire is that the Father may be glorified, that the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand, that the will of the Father may be done. What happens to us has no bearing on the situation. He says: "As My Father has sent Me, in this total commitment to His will, so that I desire only to reveal the Father, so I am sending you, in a total commitment to the Father's will, that the Father may be revealed in the multitude of sons."

A blessed hour is nigh at hand! When Jesus came only those who received a special revelation by the Spirit knew that He was the Son of God, the Christ, the SALVATION OF GOD. But now, in these Last Times, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE IT TOGETHER" (Isa 40:5). The word "it" is not in the original, thus the Hebrew reads: "all flesh shall SEE TOGETHER." Let me say today that hour is coming when the whole creation will KNOW THE SONS OF GOD, and the reason the world will know the sons of God

TO BE THE SALVATION OF GOD, is because God shall pour out His Spirit UPON ALL FLESH and ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD. All humanity, with that quickening of the Spirit will have the veil over their minds removed and their eyes enlightened TO SEE IN THE BODY OF THE CHRIST THE SALVATION OF GOD, TO SEE IN THE SONS OF GOD THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE SALVATION OF GOD.

And let me say this: If through one son in the garden of Eden who disobeyed, the whole creation came into bondage because of disobedience; and if through one Son in the garden of Gethsemane and the mount of Calvary, God was able to provide a salvation through the shedding of His blood for all humanity; if God could bring such a revelation of Him through one Son, a Son who was rejected and crucified, whom God raised again and set at His own right hand; what will happen in these last days, when through a multitude of sons who have been identified with Him, buried with Him in His death, raised again in the likeness of His resurrection, anointed with His Spirit, ascended with Him, seated with Him in the heavenlies, glorified with His glory – what is going to happen in all creation, when many sons are revealed in the glory of God as salvation?

Jesus said: "In the same manner in which My Father has sent Me – as a Son in maturity, in full commitment to His will, with the Father dwelling in Me, My eyes fastened on Him and My whole being swallowed up in HIM – as the Father has sent Me to be light and salvation and bread and water and all the world needs – SO SEND I YOU!" God will raise up sons today who do not have to explain anything, defend anything, prove anything, protect anything. If we were a people with our own burden for the lost, to try and help people, we would say: "we tried everything else; we have had apostles, we have had prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers; we have had gifts of healing, miracles, we had everything and it didn't bring in the Kingdom, so let us now try this sonship message!" We are not such a people. Thank God! God has not put on us the problems of the world. God has called us unto HIMSELF, that we may be totally committed to HIM, that He may send us out to BE SALVATION to humanity. He is saying to us: "I am setting you to be lights. I am setting you to be salvation. I am sending you as kings to reign in light. I am sending you as kings and priests to minister the salvation of God. I am sending you forth as bread to be broken and fed to the hungry multitudes. That out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of living water, THE RIVER OF GOD TO WATER WHOLE LAND!

Chapter 12

A River Out Of Eden

(continued)

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and came into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Heddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates" (Gen 2:10-14).

In these articles on the River of Life I am endeavoring to show that the primordial river which once flowed from the heights of Eden's fair garden to the breadth and length and depth of the whole earth is but a representation of the out-flowing of God's incorruptible waters of Spirit and Truth which proceed forth from A PEOPLE who abide in the spiritual heights of the Kingdom of Heaven realm unto the vast multitudes of peoples who sit in the valley of the shadow of death. The river was not reserved for Eden alone; there was truly a super-abundant overflow! The languages of earth do not contain words descriptive and meaningful enough to adequately describe the power and work of this mighty River, for it is the power and work of the eternal, incorruptible, and omnipotent LIFE OF THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. In this River GOD HIMSELF has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity AS LIFE.

WHY JESUS WENT AWAY

This treasure of God's divine life flows within the riverbed of our earthen vessels. The vessel itself is not the treasure. The treasure is the Christ life within the vessel. The alabaster box in the hands of that devout woman of Bethany may have been very beautiful indeed, but the treasure was the ointment within. When Our Lord Jesus Christ walked the dusty paths of this earth, the people recognized Him only as a man. The inhabitants of Nazareth of Galilee knew Him as the carpenter's son. Others saw Him as a very ordinary Jew, while the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him as a dangerous man and one to be feared – a deceiver and a man possessed by demons. But others had fleeting glimpses of revelation as one might through a gap in the mountains catch a glimpse of the coming scene. Thus it was with the old prophet Simeon who in the temple held the tiny infant in his arms and moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God proclaimed, "Mine eyes have seen the Salvation of God!" (Lk 2:30). Years later came the day when Simon Peter, with a conviction as fresh as the winds of heaven affirmed, "Thou

art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mat 16:16). Nathaniel, too, upon hearing the words of Jesus testified, "Master, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" (Jn 1:49). And Thomas, who with questioning mind had walked and talked with the Saviour through out the more than three years of ministry, now for the first time seeing beyond the cloak of His human flesh, with astonishment frozen upon his countenance, with body trembling like a leaf stirred by a summer breeze, burst forth with the ecstatic cry of jubilation, "My Lord and my God!" (Jn 20:28). Hear now the devoted Mary of Magdala, out of whom Jesus cast seven devils, tell how with unrestrained grief she wept until He spoke her name. "Rabboni!" she cried as she fell in worship at His feet, and she, who had known Him only as Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth, now knew Him as the Mighty God, the resurrection and the life. Yea, He was life itself. The incorruptible life, long concealed within the alabaster box of His human flesh, had now at last burst its bonds of death to manifest itself in the magnificent glory of the resurrection, its life-giving power released to flow as the glorious River of God unto the whole creation.

It was on the solemnest of nights that Jesus spoke one of the most marvelous truths concerning the River of God. Some months previous, on the last day of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, He had stood in the temple and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:37-38). This He spake of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive. On the night before His crucifixion Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples. The supper was over; but the band of friends had much to say to one another that night, and they lingered long around the table. They did not know it was the last supper, never dreamed of it; but there had been an unusual sweetness in their intercourse, and they talked on and on. The entire conversation is recorded in the Gospel of John, chapters 13 through 17. The hour grew late, but John still leaned on his Master's breast, and the others, grouped around in the twilight, drank in the solemn gladness of the Passover evening.

Suddenly a shadow falls over this scene. "Little children," Jesus says to His disciples, "yet a little while am I with you. Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" (Jn 13:33; 16:7). The hour is late. With their unspiritual minds they think He is getting tired. He means to retire to rest. But Peter asks straight out, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" Into the garden? Back to Galilee? It never occurred to one of them that He meant the Unseen Realm. "Whither I go," He replies a second time, "Ye cannot follow Me now, but ye shall follow me afterward." Afterward! The blow slowly falls. In a dim, bewildering way it begins to dawn upon them. It is separation.

This truth fell upon the disciples like a thunderbolt startling a summer sky. THREE and thirty years He had lived among them. These past three years they

had learned to love Him. Day after day they had shared together the sunshine and the storm, and their hearts clung to Him with a strange fascination. And just when everything was at its height, when it seemed He would soon be hailed as the King of Israel, when their association with Him was now pledged indissolubly in the most solemn sacrament, the unexpected words come, "I must say goodbye; it is expedient for you that I go away!" It was a crushing blow to the little band. They had staked their all upon that love. They had given up home, business, friends, pleasure, and promised to follow Him. And now He says, "I must go!"

Let us see what He means by it. Why did Jesus go away? We all remember a time when we could not answer that question. In fact, we wished He had stayed, and had been here now. Your understanding will be greatly enlightened when you are able to grasp this simple truth I now bring to your attention: the reason Jesus went away was so He should be very near! It seems a paradox, but He went away to be very near, He ascended far above all heavens THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS!

Suppose, again, He had not gone away; suppose He were here in that same nail-scarred body now. Suppose He were still in the Holy Land, at Jerusalem. Every ship that started for the East would be crowded with Christian pilgrims. Every airplane flying through Europe to the Middle East would be loaded with people going to see Jesus. Every mail-bag would be full of letters from those sick and afflicted, those in difficulty and trial, and gifts of homage to manifest men's gratitude and love. You yourself, let us say, are on one of those planes. The Ben-Gurion International Airport, when you arrive after your long flight, is blocked with planes of every nation. After circling the airport for a dangerously long time you land, and board one of the multitude of tourist buses headed from Tel Aviv up to Jerusalem. Far as the eye can reach, the traffic moves over the highways in an endless stream. You do not mind the scorching sun, the choking dust, the rude drivers, the elbowing crowds. You are in the Holy Land, and you will see Jesus! Yonder, at last, in the far distance, are the glittering spires of the Holy Hill, above the burnished temple dome beneath which He sits. But what is that dark seething mass stretching for miles and miles between you and the Holy City? They have come from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west, as you have, to look upon their Lord. They wish that His hands might be placed upon their head; that His arms be thrown around them. But it cannot be. You have come to see Jesus, but you will not see Him! They have been there weeks, months, years, and have not seen Him. They are a yard or two nearer, and that is all. The thing is impossible. It is an anti-climax, an absurdity. It would be a social outrage; it would be a physical impossibility.

Now Christ foresaw all this when He said it was expedient that He should go away. Observe He did not say it was necessary – it was expedient, a means to an end. The objection to the plan was simply that it would not have worked. So He says to you, "It is very kind and earnest of you to come so far, but you mistake. Go away back from the walls of the Holy City, over the sea, and you will

find Me in your own home. You will find Me where the shepherds found Me, doing their ordinary work; where the woman of Samaria found Me, drawing the water for the noon meal; where the disciples found Me, mending nets in their working clothes; where Mary found Me, among the commonplace household duties of a country village.” Yes, the visible Incarnation of Christ must of necessity be brief. Only a small circle could enjoy His actual presence, but a great and glorious and universal kingdom like the Kingdom of God needed a risen and glorified Lord. It was expedient for the whole body of its subjects that He went away. He would be nearer man by apparently being further. The limitations of sense subjected Him while He stayed. He was subject to geography, locality, space, and time. But by going away in glorification He was able to return as the Spirit, the incorruptible River of God's divine and eternal life, to flow and flow and flow, age after age, unceasingly and untiringly into humanity AS LIFE. MY soul shouts a thousand hallelujahs that He went away!

He went away that the Comforter might come. Oh that the eyes of men might be opened to see that it was expedient that He go away in His visible body of flesh that He might return as the invisible Spirit in order that we might know Him by the Spirit and receive Him as our very life!

FROM FORM TO ESSENCE

I am deeply indebted to my friend, Connie Asbill, for many of the beautiful thoughts in this section concerning form and essence. I do not hesitate to say that the strongest temptation to every man is to guide himself by what he can see, and feel, and handle. This is why the disciples wanted Jesus to remain. This is the core of all ritualism and ceremonialism, of all the blinding creeds and traditions of the church systems, of all the foolishness of candles and crucifixes and incense and altars and images and robes and temples and programs and ordinances and prayer books. It is the essence of idolatry. Men want to see God, therefore they make images of Him, or an object or ceremony or ordinance that He can be present in. I do not laugh at ritualism; it is intensely human. It is not so much a sin of presumption; it is a sin of mistake. It is trying to undo the going away of Jesus the Christ. It is trying to make believe that He is still here IN THE FORM. If men cannot have Jesus in the flesh then they create some fleshly thing to represent Him. And the fatal fallacy of it is that it defeats its own end. He who seeks God in tangible form misses the very thing he is seeking, for GOD IS A SPIRIT. The desire burns within man to see God and this desire is given him to make him spiritual, by giving him a spiritual relationship; and he cheats himself by exercising the flesh instead of the spirit! Hunger and thirst after God are given us by the gracious hand of our Creator to raise us out of realm of the seen and the temporal. But instead of letting the spiritual appetite elevate us into the realm of the spirit where God dwells, we are prone to degrade the very instrument of spiritualization and make it minister to the flesh.

It was expedient in order that the disciples of Jesus should be SPIRITUALIZED that Jesus should become A SPIRIT. This is hard to grasp, we are so earth-

bound, used to visible forms and appearances, and the very word "spirit" leaves one groping for something more tangible. Yet because of His inner moving and the unfolding revelation of Himself within, I have come to realize that to settle for a "form," ANY FORM, is to possess the alabaster box without the higher experience of knowing the fragrant ointment within. It is not the box we want, it is the ointment! Thus we refuse to cling to the "form" for our hearts are crying out for the "essence." God has often accommodated His people in their childishness and for a time provided a "form," but later He shattered the form that they might become aware of the essence. The hour has arrived when every man and woman of God who would follow on to KNOW THE LORD must experience a total breaking forth from every structured form and encrusted tradition, that we might KNOW HIM, the essence. Yes, it is a shattering process, most severe as the forms of rituals, ceremonies, religious systems, creeds, ordinances, ministries, and religious exercises of many kinds are literally swept away that we might now come to KNOW CHRIST ALONE as the inner Reality and Life.

You can be absolutely sure, my brother, my sister, that if you are being drawn in this hour by the Spirit of God unto the blessed reality of sonship to God then you can look into your own heart and mind and life and see how you are moving steadily from FORM to ESSENCE. The word "essence" is from the Latin "esse" which means "to be." Webster defines it as: that which makes something what it is; fundamental nature; the consecrated flavor, fragrance, etc of the plant, drug, food, etc from which it is extracted; true substance. How long we have messed around in the superficialities of the forms of religious exercises while deep in our heart there was a cry for REALITY, for the very ESSENCE OF WHAT CHRIST IS, an insatiable thirsting after the incorruptible WATERS OF LIFE.

II Tim 3:5 reads, "Having a FORM of godliness (godlikeness), but denying the POWER thereof: from such turn away." One has aptly commented on this verse, and I quote: "The word "power" comes from the Greek word "dunamis" meaning ABILITY or POWER, and is the root word from which we get "dynamite." I dare say, we have all seen far too much of this FORM OF GODLINESS without any dynamic life in it. Pious rituals and ceremonies that never disturbed our carnality, never shook up our placid flesh-loving ways, but only provide a false soothing of our conscience, because we had supposedly taken time to worship the Lord together. But there is even more, for "godliness" implies a life of holiness, reverence, or piety. The form of godliness might be viewed as that spiritual sounding word or testimony given in a special meeting, that circumspect appearance with emphasis upon dress, outward looks, actions, speech, shrouded in an array of good works. But the essence of godliness is the inner substance of HIS LIFE abiding in us, daily working its powerful transformation. Our heart cries out for this to be our portion, that we might truly become a partaker of the divine nature. Then, bless His name, there comes the realization that He is removing the pseudo-forms of godliness that we thought made us appear so spiritual, and He implants within us that substance of His divine nature, powerful, sustaining, transforming life."

Form - how we cling to it, how we demand it, our mind grasped for a boundary, so long has it cherished the alabaster box, oh yes, all the time esteeming the value of the unseen and unknown ointment within, but yet unwilling to BREAK THE BOX that the pure ointment itself might be EXPERIENCED!

Nothing has changed since the days of Jesus when He said to the religious leaders, "You garnish the sepulchers of the dead prophets – but kill the living ones!" (Mat 23:29). All that the church today possesses of truth was given to her out of the anointing of God, imparted to her through anointed men, from the days of the apostles on down through all the great revivals of church history, men who walked the paths of discipleship – and these men, Peter, Paul, John, Luther, Wesley, and all the rest of bygone generations, she admires. However, the anointed Word has been so dogmatized, so organized, so programized, so set in concrete in the church systems, and like the REPHAIM – the physicians – of no value who EMBALMED Israel, so have the church systems EMBALMED THE CHRIST – fixed Him in a static position so that He can move no further. Holding the very FORM OF TRUTH, the church systems deny the ESSENCE and LIFE of that truth and boasts of her visible wealth of temples, services, pomp and power, yet, the Lord says, "Because thou sayest, I am RICH and increased with goods and have need of nothing (not even the anointing) and KNOWEST NOT that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked," because of all this, "I will spew you out of My mouth!" (Rev 3:16-17). Even now she holds the HUSKS which have long ago been emptied of the corn! She treasures the alabaster box, little realizing that the essence has dissipated into the air long before this time.

Rom 2:20 speaks of the legalistic teachers of Paul's day and he describes each of them as "an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the FORM OF KNOWLEDGE and of the truth of the law." How well we are acquainted with these who like walking encyclopedia of religion are able to recite by rote the dead letter of the Word, a form of knowledge, yes, head knowledge, but knowing so little of the Spirit, the essence of the Word. This is what Isaiah meant when he said, "The bed is SHORTER than a man can stretch himself upon it and the covering NARROWER than he can wrap in it" (Isa 28:20). The FORM of truth always falls just a little short of the glory, provides a place of rest just a little too small for comfort, and an anointing that leaves some part of our nakedness exposed. A doctrine or ritual, a program or method – these are not sufficient to the task of covering the nakedness of man's carnal mind which has been exposed in the fall. But, blessed be God! "A MAN shall be a covert (covering) in the time of storm" (Isa 32:2) says the prophet, and that man, of course, is THE CHRIST, the ANOINTED ONE, THE LIVING WORD! Covered with ESSENCE – isn't that what happens when the alabaster box is broken?

Ah, yes, there is an inner essence, His divine nature, incorruptible life, the CHRIST WITHIN which needs to ultimately become all in all to every child of God. It is a powerful life, dynamic and full of vitality, rich and fragrant, free and flowing, bursting through the rigid forms of fleshly concepts of spirituality - the River of Life itself! How many of the Lord's precious people still have their source

of life ON THE OUTSIDE. So many are still trying to pray something down from heaven, or are constantly seeking out some meeting, some minister, some prophet, some healer, some new experience from which to DRAW LIFE. And after all their running to and fro, they're still thirsty and needy.

There was a day in which Jesus and His disciples had made it to Jacob's well in Sychar and decided to stop for lunch. Jesus sat in the shade of the well's shelter while His disciples went into the nearby town for food. Through the shimmering heat haze, a woman with a water pot on her shoulder approached the well. She came to where Jesus was sitting, and He asked her for a drink. Her response was brittle with the hatred between the two peoples: "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (Jn 4:9). Jesus was unruffled, offering her the gift He had come to give all men: "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water" (Jn 4:10).

You see, Jesus is saying, "You're the one that needs the water, don't you know that?" She responded by saying in so many words, "You don't have a water pot. How are you going to get water? Why, this well is deep, and how are you going to draw from this well? Have you got some water that doesn't come from this well? Are you greater than our father Jacob who dug this well?" She's a little provoked with this Jew that is speaking to her. Then Jesus tells her a principle that she understands all too well in the natural. He said, "You've been drinking this water all your life, and YOU HAVE TO KEEP COMING BACK EVERY DAY. You know what a wearisome thing it is to walk back and forth through the heat and the dust with that water pot on your head. I do have some water, and if you drink of the water that I give you, you'll never thirst again. Take a drink of this water and it will BECOME IN YOU AS A WELL, a never-ending INTERNAL SOURCE!

Jesus shared with the Samaritan woman one of the most profound and blessed truths of the ages. He said that He has water to give you, and if you once drink this water, you can throw away your water pots, because this water becomes a mighty artesian well WITHIN YOU. As long as the well is on the outside, as long as our source of life is without, then we have to go to the well and get water to satisfy our thirst. And any time you have to go to the well to drink you are going to be thirsty again! And if you stay away from the well very long you will become famished! Is this not a spiritual thermometer by which one can determine just how mature he is? So Jesus asked the woman, "How would you like to have the well on the inside? No more water pots, no more drawing, no more walking back and forth, no more thirst, no more effort and sweat." Let me ask you, dear readers, What would you think if you had the well on the INSIDE? This is what this thing of sonship is all about! It is the well on the inside: "Christ IN YOU the hope of glory." Sonship, maturity, overcoming, perfection, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, life and immortality – all this is found in that blessed realm where we finally know that we do indeed HAVE LIFE IN OURSELVES even as the Father has life in Himself. This is the well on the

inside! And it is high time that we drink until we get the well on the inside! It should be clear to every thinking heart that once you have the well on the inside, not only do you not need to draw from a well without, but you BECOME A SOURCE of life for all about. THIS is sonship!

We see these Christians coming to meetings all the time with their "buckets." "Brother Eby, fill 'er up! I've got to have a whole lot, I've got some real tough problems to face this week and I've got to get enough to carry me through. Fill 'er up! Pray for me, impart to me, I've just got to get a 'touch' from God! Oh, I'm so hungry, so thirsty, help me!" These have no life in themselves, they have never discovered the INNER ESSENCE OF HIS LIFE, so they are always reaching out, grasping about, trying to find the flow of life, hoping to find someone who can share a little water with them. Then there are those saints who have come to KNOW HIM, the inner essence, as all in all. You can tell who these are because you never catch them talking about what they need. You'll never hear them talking about how they need a touch from God! They are not centered in their needs, they are centered in HIS FULLNESS. Now don't misunderstand me! I don't mean that these never experience weakness, problems, pressures, and all those infirmities that are common to each of us. Certainly they do. Jesus did! But one thing they know quite well: the source of life, the answer to the problem, the sufficiency for the need, the strength required is not to be found on the outside, it's ON THE INSIDE, the essence in the box, the river of life within. We praise God for the times of gathering, when the saints come together in precious fellowship, praising and worshiping in one spirit, sharing with one another that which God has been speaking and revealing of His Word, but those who are growing up into Him come finally to that place where they do not need to depend upon what they receive in those moments to assure their victory, for CHRIST, OMNIPOTENT, OMNISCIENT LIVES WITHIN.

God has said that IN CHRIST we have eternal life, the more abundant life. There comes now to our inner spiritual ear the sound of His voice saying, "I live, and ye shall live also." Christ is declared to be our peace, our joy, our strength, our righteousness, our sanctification, our salvation, our hope, our victory over every enemy, He who brings us into the fullness of God. Moving from form to essence our motto becomes: Everything made subject and swallowed up into Him "that God may be ALL IN ALL." Let this desire possess your whole heart and life. In those areas where you fall short let GOD take His place in your heart and life. Luther often said to people when they came troubling him about difficulties, "Do let God be God." Oh, give God His place! And what is that place? "That God may be all in all." Let God be ALL in every day, from morning to evening Let God be ALL in your problems, in your distresses, in your temptations, in your weakness, in your disappointments, in your circumstances, in your hopes, yea, let God be ALL IN ALL I pray God that He may give us such a revelation of the inner essence, His divine nature, His incorruptible life, the CHRIST WITHIN that in the awe-inspiring wonder of His fragrance and glory all else may disappear.

No words of mine can fully reveal this wonderful glory reserved and kept unfading in store for all who follow on to know the Lord. Even now there is a first-fruit company which is breaking through ALL form into the very SPIRIT OF THE WORD, an ESSENCE-MINISTRY that the Father delights to make known in this hour of the approaching Kingdom. God has apprehended a remnant to be conformed to His image, to BECOME ONE ESSENCE IN HIM, and it requires the smashing of all the old forms in our lives that we once thought so spiritual and holy.

THE BREAKING OF THE ALABASTER BOX

Twice, during His life on earth, the body of Jesus was anointed with costly oils, emblems of the fragrance, preciousness and perfection of His character and attributes emanating from the incorruptible life within. The first to thus anoint Him near the beginning of His ministry, was the one to whom He had forgiven much because she had sinned much. The second who anointed Him was Mary of Bethany, who sat at His feet and listened to His words; this was near the end of His ministry, an anointing for His burial, bespeaking His death. Can we not see this that the alabaster box typified Jesus being crushed out of His FLESHLY FORM as a means of releasing the inner essence of His marvelous life?

Why are we so slow to grasp the revealing truth, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit?" (Jn 12:24). Can you now see from the things we have stated the absolute necessity of the death of God's Son and His departure from the earth realm? How else but by death could He release the inner essence of His incorruptible life to the millions who would in the future believe on Him? Had He not died, the living stream of divine life would have been forever locked up within Himself, but the moment He died, His eternal Spirit – yea, His eternal life – was released to go abroad into the hearts of an innumerable multitude of believers who would drink freely of that wonderful FOUNTAIN OF LIFE which He is. It was not until Mary BROKE the alabaster box that the perfume of the ointment filled all the house where they were sitting; and it was not until that alabaster box of His earthly body was broken in bruising and death upon the cross that His Spirit was released to the Father to be sent forth by Him into every believing heart, bringing eternal life, incorruptible, immortal, and unfading. How my soul rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory that I, too, am drinking of that exhaustless fountain of eternal life! And those who drink shall never thirst again, but the water that He gives is a fountain WITHIN THEM, a well of water springing up into life full and eternal.

This is the blessed secret of the Christ life: A life poured out. "If any man thirst, let come unto Me, and drink; He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was NOT YET GLORIFIED" (Jn 7:37-39). They could not receive His Spirit until He was glorified, and He could not be glorified until His

Spirit was released by death. With what wonder and admiration do we behold THE GLORIFIED CHRIST as He appeared in vision to the beloved John who penned this awe-inspiring record of what He saw by the Spirit of revelation: "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow: and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev 1:12-15). Rev 3:4 indicates that His garment was white. Now here is an interesting thing! The word "Adam" is a transliteration of the Hebrew word that means "ruddy" or "red." Furthermore, it comes from a root which means "to show blood in the face, to flush or turn rosy." Thus Adam, when he came forth from the hand of the Creator, was unique among all the creatures that God had made in that he received his color from the blood flowing in his veins and this could be especially pronounced in moments of intense pleasure, excitement, or embarrassment when the blood rushed to his face giving him a crimson tone.

There is a deep meaning behind all this. There is a profound and marvelous significance in the meaning of Adam's name and the marked contrast between Adam's REDNESS OF FACE and Christ's WHITENESS OF HEAD – and may the Holy Spirit give understanding as I explain. In the scripture the blood always stands for the life and a person's name always stands for his nature. The face, in symbolic terms, speaks of the deepest parts of man's being – what we would call the heart, or nature. Here we have a man named Adam, which means "to show blood in the face!". Thus Adam's color and his blood and his face all reveal something about his NATURE – what kind of person he is! The understanding of this one point should make it easy for us to grasp why it was that Adam turned so soon from the way of his Creator to follow after the darkness of THE CARNAL MIND, why he did not live in the garden for at least twenty years, or a hundred years, or a thousand years before succumbing to temptation and plunging headlong into the dismal abyss of self, sin and death. Now since we have seen by divine wisdom that blood represents life, it should not be difficult for any to see that Adam's RED FACE reveals that from the day he breathed his first breath upon earth there was deep-seated within his being this nature to CLING TO HIS LIFE, to exalt HIMSELF, and so he is seen as RETAINING THE BLOOD which represents his soul or his SELF-LIFE. Sin and the fall were the natural result of this condition.

But, the GLORIFIED CHRIST, on the other hand, is always depicted as WHITE: hair as white as snow, head as white as snow, garments as white as snow, everything white, like an albino Why? Because HIS LIFE is poured out, released by means of death! Upon this truth hangs the eternal hope of billions of mankind who have inhabited this earth, and it is even now the wellspring for all those blessed ones upon whom God has breathed the spirit of understanding from on high and quickened together in Christ Jesus. The truth is this: Blood retained is Adam and is therefore death; blood poured out is life! Or, as the apostle Paul

stated it, "To be carnally (self) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom 8:6). Jesus stated it this way: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it" (Lk 9:24).

This poured out life of Christ, eternal and incorruptible, is the River of Life flowing bountifully from God's garden of the Kingdom of Heaven. The mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was the outpouring of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the reservoir of the living water, released His life and the Father pours forth that eternal and incorruptible Spirit into the waiting, thirsting hearts of all who believe. While our Lord Jesus Christ walked upon earth, He alone had eternal life. That eternal life was in His blood and that blood was confined to Himself. Nowhere in scripture do we have any record or evidence that Jesus Christ ever imparted eternal life to any man before His blood was shed. It should not be difficult for any man to see that if Jesus had **RETAINED HIS BLOOD**, as Adam did, if He had **CLUNG TO HIS OWN WILL** rather than becoming obedient unto death, Eden's gates would still be closed and the riverbed of the River of Life would today be as dry as the desert sands of Arabia.

Well did our Saviour know that, as long as His life blood still flowed in the veins of His own body, all the rest of humanity must remain dead in trespasses and sins. Well did He know that, until His blood was shed, there could be no resurrection and no outflow of life to the world. When His disciples mourned at the thought of His death and departure, He told them plainly, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" (Jn 16:7).

THE RELEASE OF THE RIVER

I do not wish to close this article without emphasizing an eternal principle that applies to each and every one who has been made a partaker of the incorruptible life of Christ. It is not enough to understand with natural minds the wonderful truth that the fleshly body of God's firstborn Son was broken in order to release the eternal stream of God's essence-life unto mankind. Behold! I show you a mystery: Know ye not that ye are the body of Christ? May the Holy Spirit give you understanding that, wonderful as is the truth that we are partakers of the divine life of Christ, and glorious as is the fact that the precious fragrance of His essence-life is within us, that life must remain sealed up within us even as it was in Jesus until we, like Him, embrace the cross. When death worked in Jesus Christ, then life worked in me; and when I am delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, then life works in you. In II Cor 4:7-12 Paul shows clearly how it is that the things which lead to the destruction of the self-life are the very things that cause the incorruptible life within us to be released to work life in other members of the human race. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body

the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then DEATH WORKETH IN US, BUT LIFE IN YOU.”

From reading these inspired words can we not see that, just as the crucifixion and death of our Lord Jesus released the eternal Spirit, so now the same divine principle is working in us who have received His life? For, as Paul said, it is when death works in us that life works in others. Matters not how much of the Christ life you have received, nor how deep the inworkings of His nature; the final step in the process of the revelation of Christ through many sons is in those sons being BROKEN! There must be a dying and a breaking before there can be a FLOWING. Why? Because it was the carnality of man's fleshly self-life that BECAME THE DAM shutting off the flow of the pure River of Life from Eden's fair garden so long ago. And now, beloved, the dam must be demolished! Self must be brought to the cross and destroyed. Ah, F-L-O-W-I-N-G time has come. Are WE, I, YOU, ANY, ALL, R-E-A-D-Y? What a treasure the Father has deposited in these earthen vessels, these alabaster boxes!

Alabaster was anciently a stone found near Alabastron, Egypt. The alabaster is usually white, and due to a stalagmite formation, sometimes has streaks of various colors. It resembles the likeness of marble and is capable of a fine polish. The solid alabaster was bored or drilled out to contain as much as a pound of liquid. It was usually fashioned with a narrow neck that could be effectively sealed to prevent the escape of the precious scent. The thing to which the Spirit of God would now draw our attention in this story of Mary of Bethany is found in Mk. 14:3 where we read, "And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she BRAKE THE BOX, and poured it on His Head."

When I read how this devout woman broke the alabaster box I must confess that I thought, as most folks do, that she had broken a seal on the box which kept it air tight so the contents would not evaporate. But how very important and full of truth are the simplest sayings of inspiration! The word for "brake" in the Greek is (suntribo) which means "to crush completely, to shatter, to break in pieces and to be broken to shivers!" No, friends, Mary did not merely open the box, nor did she simply break off the neck, she completely crushed and shattered it, broke it to pieces and destroyed it, thus totally releasing the fragrant ointment within. There was, in fact, nothing left to be appreciated by anyone but the pure essence that FILLED ALL THE HOUSE. Who can fathom the depths of truth set forth in the words of the sweet singer of Israel, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps 51:17). Broken and contrite means BROKEN AND POWDERED, made so small it can never again come together in its first shape. The more broken and contrite we become, the more abundantly are the fragrant oils of His divine life sent forth to bless and quicken those around us.

Why has the expression of Christ been so limited in us? Why has the outpouring of love, mercy, goodness, wisdom and power been merely a trickle rather than the gigantic river it is supposed to be? What draws the barrier? It is SELF which says, "I am not going to suffer any more, I am not going to give any more, I am not going to put up with this any more." Jesus' secret of the life of sonship was: "If any man will be My disciple let him DENY HIMSELF." Not: Protect, defend, uphold and promote himself, or feel sorry for himself. How can you love anyone else if you are busy doing all that? Nor did Jesus say: Deny Hollywood, the liquor store, the dance hall, the card games and the slot machines. Our problems lie not with the theatre, the television, the liquor store, or the gambling dens, but "If any man will be My disciple let him deny H-I-M-S-E-L-F!" Here is the root of the corrupt tree. Nor is it giving up things, whether they be houses, lands, businesses, jobs, servants, family, friends, refrigerators or swimming pools. The problem is not with the things, but with the importance you place upon them and the power they have in your life. In yet another vein, the problem is not with the broken down refrigerator, or the rebellious child, or the unreasonable boss, or the nagging wife, or the insulting neighbor, or the offensive brother or sister, but with the anger and bitterness and frustration in your own spirit as a result of these things. So men divorce their wives, women divorce their husbands, they deny the problem, but they never DENY THEMSELVES!

Why was it that the love of Jesus had no limit and His grace had no measure? Because nowhere in Him could self rise up and say "I have had enough of it." Nowhere in Him could self say, "I should not have to suffer so much." When Judas betrayed Him, there was no place in Him where self could rise up and say, "I trusted this man to be the treasurer and now he has sold me down the river." Or when Peter denied Him: "I gave him the keys and now he denies Me." He could truly say, "The prince of this world cometh, and HATH NOTHING IN ME" (Jn 14:30). There was no ground in Him on which the devil could do His work.

If it was true in the Pattern Son then it must be true in all the many brethren who come to His glory. Someone may say, "I do not believe that God can have a people today that have love without limits." Or, "I do not believe that anyone could pray: 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Well, Stephen did! While the angry mob dashed the stones against his body He said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." There was no limit to Stephen's love, even though it meant his death Like Jesus, he was full of grace.

Some people believe in grace this way: Any mistakes they make, or sins they commit, are forgiven, but there is no forgiveness in them for others whose doctrines, ways, or successes offend them. But Paul has told us, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom 5:20). Ought not the nature of God also be the nature of His sons? If there is grace enough to cover my sins, then there must be grace enough to cover other men's sins. The grace of God has no measure. The love of God has no limit. But, beloved brother, sister, you

will never in a million years convince people of God's love until that love begins to become a true expression in your own life.

We need to be deeply impressed with the kind of death Christ died to self, the very death that carried Him to the cross. It was the breaking of the alabaster box, the shattering of self all the way, both in life and death. Only thus can the essence flow out. This is why we must experience it. All that we have, all that we are, all that we do and all to which we are related must be brought to the cross. The cross is the end of self and therefore the end of all things related to us, for a dead man owns nothing, has nothing, clings to nothing, protects nothing, upholds nothing, promotes nothing and claims nothing. We have to put all things to the cross: our knowledge, our wisdom, our rights, our ability, our hopes, our ministry, etc. This is the principle of the cross. There is no other ground. The box must be so broken to shivers until there is nothing else to be seen or known but the pure spikenard of HIS LIFE. THIS is the River of Life. It is F-L-O-W-I-N-G time!

Chapter 13

Dressing The Garden

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed to DRESS IT AND KEEP IT" (Gen 2:7-8,15).

As we have noted in a previous study, the story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden is the greatest parable in the Bible. It is supremely important because it explains the real nature of our life here on earth. It tells us about ourselves, about our state of being, and how we bring about the conditions in which we live. It is the textbook on spiritual and psychological anatomy. It is the blueprint of man's experience on earth and his destiny in God. When you thoroughly understand the Garden of Eden you will understand the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of satan. This parable is placed almost at the beginning of the Bible because it is the foundation upon which the whole Bible is built; and all the rest of the Bible, to the end of Revelation, assumes an understanding of the Garden of Eden. Indeed, there is only one Bible section before it, and that is the basic first chapter which gives the fundamentals of the creative processes of God.

The book of Genesis begins with man in the blessedness of the garden of Eden, and ends with a man "in a coffin in Egypt" (Gen 50:26). The Bible, however, opens with man in Eden's fair garden and ends with man, the temple and habitation of God, in that blest Paradise, the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Before our eyes can see the glory of God, they must become blind to all things that only seem to be. Before our ears can hear the voice of God, they must become deaf to every earthly voice that clamors for our attention. Before our minds can embrace the depth of eternal wisdom we shall have to strip ourselves of the shallowness of human wisdom and all the limited surface understanding and darkness of the carnal mind.

When we come to the Garden of Eden it is evident that this is more than merely a piece of real estate over in the Middle East. No such place has ever been found, neither the angel with the flaming sword to keep men out. The Garden of God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is a higher existence for man than this cursed state we find ourselves in from birth. It is the state of being that man was in when he was first brought forth from the hand of God and placed upon earth. It represents man in the presence of God, man walking in fellowship with God, man living above sin, sickness, fear and death, man as master over all things! Blessed realities, one and all. The Garden, however, also represents man together with all the factors and conditions, both external and internal, of environment and nature, which were to ultimately lead to his ruin and alienation from God. On the one hand, man WAS

the Garden, while on the other hand, man was IN the Garden. The Bible reveals it as a "garden within a garden." It is a world within a world, a universe within a universe. It is man himself in both a state of being and an environment – the two corresponding.

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. Consider now how great are the words of the prophet: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa 51:3). Of course you know that apples cannot sing, grapes cannot show forth gladness, nor can orange trees rejoice in the Lord! He is talking here about His people, a people that is being comforted while in a wilderness state as waste places, and eventually brought back to a life or state of being known as EDEN, the GARDEN OF THE LORD.

Again Isaiah prophesied, saying, "Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching His Vineyard. My well beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it. and He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem. judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and My Vineyard. What could have been done more to My Vineyard, that I have not done to it? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to My Vineyard. I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns for the Vineyard of the Lord IS THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, AND THE MEN OF JUDAH HIS PLEASANT PLANT" (Isa 5:1-7). And yet again, in mercy, the Lord comforts His people, declaring, "The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be A WATERED GARDEN, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa 58:11).

When the Lord declares that HIS PEOPLE is His Vineyard and His Garden we should understand that His purposes are the same now as they were in the beginning when He placed man IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO DRESS IT AND TO KEEP IT. In the scriptures the Garden of God always represents the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The thought is not only of the Lord's great Garden; but the life of every child of God is a garden within God's Garden. And what a Garden it was! In that long ago beginning when man stood in the holy and beautiful environment of the presence and glory of God, "And the Lord planted a Garden," which does not mean He laid it out like an Italian garden with borders and walks and fountains, flourishing with foliage, blossoms, fragrance and fruit. He planted it. I dare take that word and express it another way. He packed it with potentiality. And all human history has come out of that Garden. Moscow, Calcutta, Cairo, New York, and San Francisco have all come out of that Garden. God put man in the Garden, the most favored environment and state of being in the whole earth, and what had he to do? DRESS IT AND KEEP IT. He was to

keep it, to guard it, to prune and work it, that it might bring forth much fruit. God took one man by the hand, the offspring of God, to be the keeper and ruler of the Kingdom of God on earth.

In the beginning Adam failed to dress and keep the garden of his own soul, and what a pitiful thing it is to see that men through the long millenniums since that day have also wretchedly failed and the world has endured a long night of sorrow and pain. The Shulamite, in the Song of Solomon, at the outset of her relationship with her Beloved confessed her own neglect, saying, "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept" (S of S 1:6). Though the Lord may let us tend a portion of His great Vineyard, though He may let us minister to other souls in different ways, there is a part of the Vineyard of the Lord which He actually gives to each one of us; and that is the vineyard of our own lives.

He would have us care for and guard our heart above all that we treasure and protect, for out of it are the issues of life. It is this hidden place of our innermost being that must be watched and tended more than all that appears on the outside. We cannot judge the condition within, by the exterior; for many times, the outward appearance is either better or worse than appears before the face of God. We must guard and protect the roots and hidden fibers of our beings, our thoughts, our impulses, our desires. Adam was a son of God (Lk 3:38) and was placed in the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. Can we not see by this that all who would be sons of God must put away everything that is not of God that is hidden and unseen, as zealously as we put away the defects that appear on the outside, which humble us when they are seen by others?

Ray Prinzing has beautifully expressed it this way: In our daily overcoming, it is not a going out to fight other spirits, but TO KEEP OUR OWN SPIRIT PURE AND CLEAN. There are so many things these days to stir up and agitate our spirit, until it becomes defiled, unless we place that guard over against the things without – and seek to maintain a meek and quiet spirit before the Lord. The whole teaching of God is, "My little children, KEEP YOURSELVES..." You are the area that is under attack by the enemy because God has purposed that you shall be an overcomer. We are right back to the beginning instruction of the Lord – Genesis 2:15, "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and TO KEEP (guard) it." Your spirit has been placed into an earthen vessel, and your first charge is to keep that vessel pure unto the Lord, to be "meet for the Master's use." And we need to beware lest anything come in that would defile. Thank God, we do not fight this battle alone, but "GREATER IS HE THAT IS WITHIN YOU," who shall become our strength, our shield, our victory. Paul gave clear instruction to Timothy (2. Tim 1:14), "That good thing which was committed unto thee KEEP BY THE HOLY SPIRIT which dwelleth in us." – end quote.

My brethren, if we cannot tend the garden of our own soul and life, we must not think that the Lord will entrust us with the oversight of greater gardens. How can

a man rule over other men's souls, how can he judge angels, how can he rule the nations with a rod of iron, how can he exercise dominion over the vastness of the universe, yea, how can he rule over A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S as God hath spoken – if he cannot rule his own spirit? “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city” (Prov 16:32). There are literally thousands of men and women running about over the face of the earth doing what they call “The work of the Lord,” but it is distressing to see that the vast majority of them were never called nor commissioned by the Lord of the Vineyard in the first place. I am convinced that the first work in the Lord's Vineyard, which He entrusts to us and calls upon us to do, is to care for our own lives and to first partake of the fruit.

Vast multitudes who are caught up in the works of the religious institutional realm, often ignore their inner state of being. In our day every concerted effort is being made to occupy the minds and time and actions of the people of God so that they never concentrate on Christ or come to any real knowledge of Him. Their lives are so crammed and cluttered with the manifold programs of the church system that they will finally awake to the fearful knowledge that they do not know Him. How busy we were in that realm trimming all the vines around us, but our own inner nature was not dealt with. That is the condition that produces the tragedy of men and ministries like Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggert – and thousands of others less known. So it is not at all a strange phenomenon to find that hundreds, yea, thousands of men and women who truly desire to serve God, have over these past several years been drawn aside by Him, to the backside of the desert, as it were, while He now purges and purifies within. It has meant much bewilderment, frustration and perplexity, until they are beginning to see that God IS more concerned with their own vineyard, to deepen and perfect HIS LIFE WITHIN THEM.

Paul Mueller has written: “The principle purpose which is uppermost in the mind of the Father at this time is the growth and coming to maturity of His chosen remnant. Every other purpose under heaven is secondary to this purpose during this exceptional time. Therefore, it is essential that all who are members of this Christ body, the sons of God, should concentrate on their own spiritual maturity. Strive not to do the religious works of man, but seek rather for the fullness of Christ in your own heart and life. There is no other purpose under heaven that can equal this grand and holy purpose of the Father. Put away all the desires and appetites of the world and of the flesh, and seek only to please the Lord. And if you really care for the masses of the world who know not God and His wonderful grace and mercy, then you will seek for His fullness in your life. If you have really heard the groans of a creation that is suffering under the burden of sin and shame, you will cease all your religious activity, which is really only the works of the flesh, and will follow hard after the Lord. Let us seek to please God as Enoch did, and we will witness a glorious manifestation of His life that will set every captive free. God, in His great wisdom, has linked all of creation's needs and travails with the glorious transformation of the bodies of the sons of God into bodies like unto Christ's body. And it is quite possible that when this glorious transformation does occur, the stones, the trees, shrubs, and grass of the field,

as well as all animals life, will lift their voices in praise to Him who has fulfilled His word and satisfied the inherent hope within every created thing” – end quote.

This story is told of a little boy who couldn't play outside because it was raining. His father, who was trying to take an afternoon nap on the sofa, became annoyed, "Go to the other room, son; Daddy wants to sleep. Find something in there to play with." "Like what?" "Anything," snapped the father "There isn't anything," replied the lad. Grabbing the newspaper, the man tore out a page with a large map of the world printed on it. With scissors he cut it into dozens of odd-shaped pieces like a puzzle. "There, see if you can put it together, and don't bother me till you're done." The father settled down on the sofa thinking his problem was solved, but ten minutes later there was a tug on his shirt. "You can't be done yet!" But there on the floor was the neatly constructed world. "How did you do it?" he asked "Easy," said the son "A man's picture was on the back, and when I got the man together right, the world was right." Ah, yes – when God gets HIS MAN put together in the fullness of Christ all the problems of the world will simply fall into place! Let us not expend our energies trying to get the world straightened out and ordered aright in this hour. Let us give ourselves to apprehending that for which Jesus Christ has apprehended us – to grow up into a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then the whole creation will fall into place. Let us not sell creation short!

Israel of old was ordained by God to be a kingdom of priests unto God and unto all the nations of earth. But the men of Israel forgot the vineyard of their own souls and it became neglected, overgrown with thorns and thistles, with noxious weeds; the soil was rocky and unfertile. How easy it is to just lose ourselves in the flurry of activity commonly called "the Lord's work," and give our attention to everybody else, involving ourselves in their needs and problems, rather than facing up to OURSELVES. And while it is true, HIS LOVE AND LIFE flowing through us will give us compassion for others, with its various avenues of service, nevertheless there is a divine principle in the Kingdom of God – a PRIORITY established that we must first tend to our own vineyard. I do not hesitate to say that over the past few years there has been an increasing emphasis by the Holy Spirit, as a TRUMPET thundering out the message, declaring that God is not concerned with where we are GOING (heaven, golden streets, mansions etc.), but He is first interested in what we are BECOMING – OUR STATE OF BEING IN HIM, before all our doing. Is this not because the ministry of the sons of God, soon to arise, shall be a ministry out of BEING, rather than out of GIFTS? A "gift" will function through the most unclean of vessels. The Corinthians were a classic example of this, and we see abundant evidence of this fact all around us in the religious activity going on; but the holy sons of God SHALL BE LIKE HIM and shall rule and reign out of that incorruptible STATE OF BEING, and then, and only then, shall there be a reign so glorious and life-giving that every enemy shall be subjected and even death itself shall be swallowed up in victory throughout all God's creation! This goes hard on all those involved in man's program, and I suppose all the arguments and persuasions in the world will not awaken Christians to the fact that the vast majority of the activities of the church

today are but the works of MEN, but I can assure you that when men stop long enough to quiet themselves BEFORE THE LORD, He inevitably turns their attention from "works" into our BECOMING what He want us to BE.

The blessed age to come shall be governed by those saints who have become OVERCOMERS, who have arrived at maturity of sonship, who have come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Not those who tend the Father's Vineyard negligently, shall be in this company; not those who pamper their flesh and let it overrun their lives, shall be in this company; not those who examine their vineyards only now and then shall appear on Zion's Holy Hill; it is those who dwell in their gardens and tend them day and night, those who ever keep them before their eyes, that shall be well-pleasing to the Owner of the Vineyard and shall be given dominion over all things. You can count on it!

THE GARDEN OF FLOWERS

In the Scriptures the Garden of God always represents the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. I am convinced that there is a significant parallel between the second chapter of Genesis and the book of the Song of Solomon. Let us take particular note that in the Song of Solomon there are four vineyards, or gardens (these words being synonymous), and they all four bespeak the Kingdom of God in different aspects and stages of development.

We read in the Song of Solomon 2:10-13, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (turtledove) is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away." In these verses we find the first mention of the "garden," or "vineyard." This is THE GARDEN OF FLOWERS AND IMMATURE FRUIT. It is the beginning of spring in the Vineyard of the Lord, and we see that there is no ripe fruit, no company of sons has yet come into the full image of that first grain planted at the end of the age of law, there are only flowers which give promise of abundant fruitage. The birds are singing, the green figs are beginning to form, and the voice of the turtledove is heard proclaiming that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Historically, the above verses refer to the transition period at the time of the first advent of Christ and on into the beginning of the church age. John the Baptist first came announcing the coming of Christ and proclaiming that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. It sets forth the doing away of the old dispensation and law of the covenant, which had no power to bring life to dead souls and is symbolized by Winter; and the ushering in of the new dispensation of grace and of the Holy Spirit, which is symbolized by Spring. The law of God has never been fulfilled excepting in Jesus Christ. That which no man could do, Jesus Christ came and did as He walked upon earth in a body of flesh and as He died upon Calvary. The darkness and winter of condemnation, of the absence of God's presence, of

rituals and ceremonies and sacrifices, were done away by the Lord Jesus Christ, who satisfied every demand of the law and fulfilled it perfectly. The rain of the Holy Spirit which came with the passing of the law softened the ground and prepared it for the bringing in of a better covenant.

As we think of the faint light that the people of God had under the old dispensation, we see that it truly was winter. It was like the warmth of the sun in midwinter, when its rays can scarcely penetrate and disperse the frost in the air. There was no more power in the law to give life to one soul, than there is power and warmth in the midwinter sun and atmosphere, to bring out the flowers of spring and the fruits of summer and autumn. There was no life nor power in the law; all was dead and could only point the way to HIM who could give life. All the law could do, was to show man his utter helplessness, his exceeding sinfulness. Even when he would do good, there was no power in man's fallen nature to obey God's commands; he could not work out his own salvation until God had put something in him to work out.

In the individual, this is a picture of the soul who is dead in trespasses and in sins; full of darkness and deadness, full of fruitlessness; whose life is bleak, cold, dead, like midwinter. When the breaking up comes, and the rays of the Sun of righteousness begin to fall upon the winter of death and unbelief, the clouds of doubts and fears begin to roll away and the warmth of God's presence brings life to the soul. It is the rain that comes when winter begins to break up that prepares the ground for the seed of the Christ life and fruitfulness. It is the breaking up, in the godly sorrow that comes to the repentant soul, that prepares the soil of the heart for the implantation of the incorruptible seed of Christ. The rain cannot bring forth fruit any more than can the snow of winter; but it prepares the ground for the seed, which has the power of an endless life in it.

And not only this, but in this first garden the flowers have appeared upon the trees and upon the vines of the heritage of the Lord. As yet there is no fruit, but the flowers give promise of a rich harvest from every shrub and plant, from every vine that the Father has planted in His Vineyard. This is the beginning of the setting up of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. As soon as the seed of the Christ life is planted in the heart of a man, the Lord Jesus Christ begins to lay hold on that man to set up His government in that life. He plans to lift the elements of that man's being up into Himself, to imbue the believer with His mind, with His Spirit, with His thoughts and with His nature until the soul is so transformed that it can with truth be said, "As He is, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD." In this blessed development of the Christ the believer partakes of truth until he becomes truth. He learns wisdom until he is wisdom. Love, joy, peace, righteousness, and judgment become integral parts of his redeemed spirit. All that Christ is the believer becomes. He is a PARTAKER OF THE DIVINE NATURE. He escapes the corruption that in the world through lust. He loses his own will and delights himself in the will of God. In this age of grace THOSE IN WHOM CHRIST LIVES AND WALKS ARE THE KINGDOM over which He reigns. They are the Garden of God, the Vineyard of the Lord, in which grows the

tree of life and from which flows the sparkling waters of the river of life. This may seem to be a very small kingdom for such a great and eternal King, but the garden is planted eastward in Eden and from its portals shall come that MAN, the last Adam, Head and body, whose authority and Lordship is destined to be as boundless as eternity, for God shall put all things under His feet.

"The voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." The turtledove is an emblem of love, and also the Holy Spirit, and he is the first of the migratory birds to return in the springtime; the first to come back to the warmth and to the brightness of the returning sun. Truly did the sound of the turtledove go forth in the land at the time when our Lord was upon earth! And this sound is once again going forth over the earth in these days. The voice of the Holy Dove is heard in our land! The Spirit of God is speaking, as a Voice thundering out the message, through thousands of God's children, proclaiming the imminence of the manifestation of the sons of God and the approaching dawning of that more glorious age of the Kingdom of God. In these last days, and with mighty power these past few years, the sound has gone forth over the whole earth that in the Garden of God the firstfruits of the Kingdom are being matured and ripened for harvest.

But there is a further truth in this. Never since the days of the early church has there been such singing of birds, such pruning of branches, such separating as God has been doing in His Vineyard during these last few years. There is a different note of praise, which has never been heard in the same way before; it seems to well up in the hearts of thousands of saints over the face of the earth. It is as though our glorious Lord has been robbed of glory so long, that the Holy Spirit would literally bring back to Him the glory which, during many centuries, has largely been turned aside to man. But this praise has a quality to it, it is not "fair weather" praise that, when everything is going good and the blessings are pouring down, says, "Isn't God good!" A great deal of the praise that has been heard in the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms has been the praise ascending because of the healings, miracles, answers to prayer, prosperity, cars, homes, jobs, blessings, gifts, etc. As those elect saints, apprehended to sonship, go on to perfection, it is not when everything is going smoothly, that this singing is heard with the most sweetness and power. God is bringing us to the place where we so desire HIM, to be conformed to HIS IMAGE, to be perfect matured fruit of His Vine, that we shall sing with the most abandonment and melody and joy WHEN THE PRUNING OF THE VINES IS GOING ON. When the Father reaches down His hand and begins to cut the suckers from the vines, when He separates us and begins to deal with us, then shall be heard the singing of birds over the whole domain of our beings. Those who go about moaning and repining when the problems come and things get rough are not called unto sonship. That may seem like a hard word, but it is a true word, nonetheless.

After the husbandman has gone through the vineyard and pruned the vines, they look like fields of unsightly sticks stuck in the ground No one would believe that they could ever bear a leaf, much less any fruit, so unpromising do they appear. But when the rain and the sun minister to them, abundant fruit and harvest is

brought forth in its time. So it is with every son. Some years ago a brother shared this experience: Just the other day, I was traveling with a friend through South Carolina, right at the peak of the peach season. We were astounded by the hundreds of acres of land used for the sole purpose of growing peaches. As we rode, my companion pointed out that the trees, because of the constant pruning, were very short, "The reason being," he said, "Is so all the nourishment pulled up from the ground will go directly to produce fruit." We discussed how, on the contrary, in a tall, thin tree the nourishment would be spent on the long limbs and excessive foliage, leaving little for the fruit.

We continued to ride, and as we did, I felt the Lord speaking to me, showing me the parallel between the natural laws for raising high-quality peach trees and the spiritual laws for cultivating a fruit-bearing saint. I looked again at these trees, studying their characteristics closely. They were short, perhaps, but stout, sturdy, and laden with priceless fruit. I could just imagine the picture underground – numerous strong roots reaching deep in the earth, digging past the sandy dirt into the rich, fertile soil. Imagining the nourishment rising into the tree, I saw that it had nowhere to go except into the fruit. I took notice of the minimal amount of leaves, realizing that the purpose of the tree was not to be attractive or beautiful, but to bear fruit – good fruit. I tried to picture in my mind a peach tree which was either allowed to grow wild, or was pruned only once in a while. I envisioned a tall, leafy tree which, from a distance, appeared magnificent and authoritative. Looking closer, looking past all the greenery, it was obvious that the tree's limbs were scrawny and weak and the roots were shallow. The fruit, if any, was twisted and diseased, lacking in nourishment.

The comparison I saw between these two types of trees and believers today was shockingly close. If we, as children of God, would only be willing to let the Lord be our husbandman; if we would realize that our sole reason for living is to fulfill his purposes! We must allow Him to prune us regularly, so that we might bear much fruit. If we do otherwise, we will be frail and weak and void of fruit. By the same token, we must regulate our growth upward in the world by our growth downward into the Lord. We will otherwise be as the tall tree whose shallow roots would prove defenseless against a raging storm – end quote.

Ah, my brethren, let me assure you we are not nearly stripped yet, the times of real tribulation, trouble and testing are yet ahead of us, but our Father Husbandman would have us anoint our heads and praise and worship Him when we are going through the hard things, so that it would be a veritable singing of birds. How often when we are in this pruning process, we put on sackcloth and ashes and say with every action, if not in words: "The Lord is dealing with me, I am going through such hard things; pray for me that I'll hold out." Our adorable Lord would give unto us such "Songs in the night" of sorrow and trial, of affliction and tribulation, that though we pass through continual Valleys of Weeping, we shall make of them all Places of Springs, until every spot is covered with the blessing of the Water of Life.

THE GARDEN OF SPICES

THE GARDEN OF SPICES. This is the second garden mentioned in the Song of Solomon. In chapter five, verse one, the King announces: "I have come into My Garden: I have gathered My myrrh with My spice; I have eaten My honeycomb with My honey; I have drunk My wine with My milk: eat, O friends: drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." It was while He was on earth that Jesus Christ began to gather those precious spices. He ever yielded to the will of God, was ever learning obedience through the things He suffered, and always expressed the life and nature of His Father. At last He could say: "I have gathered My myrrh with My spice, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do, I have glorified Thee on the earth."

When God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion," it seems that God made a mistake. When He made him out of dirt – out of the dust of the ground – and fashioned him with the kind of human body we have, flesh and blood, soul and body, with all the appetites, desires and weaknesses we have, all the frailty, all the ability for twisting, warping and spoiling things, when He created man like that and then thought that in such a physical, human, natural, dirt-made body HIS IMAGE COULD BE MANIFESTED, it seems that God was indulging in foolishness! Could that human creature, limited like us, rule the world and rule over angels and be master over the whole universe? Did not the devil intrude into the garden and spoil the whole hope, forever proving that man could never fulfill such a high and holy calling?

When the apostle James stood to speak in the council at Jerusalem, he made this remarkable statement: "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). It is true that the God who said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have dominion," is the very God of omnipotence and omniscience who has known all His works from the foundation of the ages, for it was God who framed the ages and appointed what should be done in each one of them.

In due time, man's weakness and the devil notwithstanding, God said, "I will invade humanity and come down in the Person of My Son, limit Myself to a human, physical body just like man has, with all its appetites, desires, weaknesses, possibilities of suffering hunger, fatigue and death, and I will demonstrate the character, the life, the love, the righteousness and the power of God on the human level." My earnest prayer to God is that those who read these lines may quickly come to see that THE INCARNATION WAS GOD MANIFESTING HIMSELF WITHIN THE LIMITATION OF HUMAN BODY. When Jesus the Lord came to earth, He could not fly like birds, He could not see any further than any other man's eyes, He could not run faster than the other young men in His day, He got as tired and weary and exhausted as anybody else, He got hungry and thirsty, fell asleep and snored, could be mocked and spit upon and finally killed. Yet in Jesus Christ you had THE PERFECT BODY FOR THE EXPRESSION OF GOD, and Jesus could say, not after the resurrection, but in

His body of flesh and blood and limitation, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father" (Jn 14:9).

What is the importance of the earthly life of the firstborn Son of God? It means that the Spirit of God, the Son of God, GOD HIMSELF can live and express Himself in a physical human body. When God invaded humanity in the body of Jesus Christ, taking upon Himself human nature and limitation, being in the likeness, not of glorified flesh, but of sinful flesh, and for thirty three and a half years lived and walked and slept and died in that body, manifesting God in the scope of humanity, it meant that God can, by His Spirit – Jesus can by His Spirit – come in and live in these human bodies of ours, living in us, loving in us, being righteous in us, and manifesting Himself, even though we are compassed about with infirmities! The Bible says that Jesus Christ was Himself tempted in ALL POINTS like as we are, and He learned obedience through the things He suffered. Even though we suffer being tempted, even though we suffer the weakness and limitation of a flesh body and human nature, even though we have a broken bone or a broken heart, compassed about by problems and limitations, ah, beloved, CONSIDER HIM that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, HIM whose back was beaten, His brow was crowned with thorns, His hands, His feet, His side were pierced, and He shed His blood. Yet, dying on the cross in agony with the spittle running down His face, GOD WAS LIVING AND MANIFESTING IN HIM!

Being mocked, God was living in Him. Asleep in the bottom of a boat, God was living in Him. Hungry, weary, and sorrowful, God was living in Him. Hated, persecuted, spit upon, nailed to the cross, dying, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. Do you see what God did? He made it possible, through Jesus Christ, for Himself to be at home in human bodies. The voice John heard from heaven declared: "Behold, the TABERNACLE OF GOD IS WITH MEN, and He will dwell with them" (Rev 21:3). Not with angels, with man! The same beloved apostles said, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And the Word was made flesh AND DWELT AMONG US" (Jn 1:14). In Jesus' physical body was the tabernacle, the dwelling of the believer. And it is no mere figure of speech when Paul writes of the believers, saying, "Know ye not that YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? What? Know ye not that YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST which is in you?" (I Cor 3:16; 6:19).

"If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn 14:23). The word "abode" in the Greek means "a residence, a home." "The Father and I will come and make our abode – be at home – with you." Not to be a visitor but to settle down, without conflict. The Spirit will abide comfortably within you, so that the mind of the Spirit flows through your mind normally and naturally, and the nature of the Spirit is expressed through your actions naturally, without pretense. The Spirit AT HOME in us, naturally and normally. The Spirit living and manifesting naturally through our bodies and faculties. It seems that some prophecy cannot come forth

unless the speaker starts to shake or change his tone of voice. Don't you know that God was speaking through Jesus all the time? The authority of Jesus was not in how violently He shook or how loud He shouted, or how many "thus saith the Lord's" He inserted. In all His living, and speaking and doing God was living in Him. God was speaking through Jesus when He said to His neighbor, "I would like to buy those boards from you, so that I can make a table for My other neighbor over there." If you have trouble seeing how it could have been God who said that through Jesus, think for a moment how differently Jesus would have said it had it been the devil saying it through Him!

The meaning of the incarnation is that God came and made Himself AT HOME in the human body of Jesus Christ. The wonder of the incarnation is that God could drink out of a cup if Jesus drank out of a cup, God in Him learned to crawl before He learned to walk, God learned a language and talked "baby talk" in the process; in the mind and soul of Jesus there was a continual increase of the ability of God to be manifest in and through Him. When God comes to dwell in us, it is not something foreign that invades us, making us strange and weird. Paul did not say, "For me to shake and speak in tongues and act spiritual and get into the 144,000 is Christ." He said, "For me TO LIVE is Christ!" (Phil 1:21). Living for Paul did not mean merely those supernatural moments when he was seeing visions, falling prostrate, hearing voices or being caught up into the third heaven. It meant for Paul to walk from one town to another on the dusty roads with Christ walking in him. It was speaking to people and manifesting the love and the will of God as he went. The everyday living of his life was the living out OF CHRIST.

"Christ LIVETH IN ME" (Gal 2:20). That is the revelation of this age. That is the divine secret of sonship. Man and God become united. We repeat over and over that familiar phrase, "Ye are the body of Christ," oft times little realizing the truth of it and the power of it. Those blessed ones who have been born of the incorruptible seed of the Christ are tangible, living, pulsating body – flesh and bones and blood and mind of Jesus Christ – and God is in them, manifesting through each one every minute, bringing all the conditions of our being into harmony with His will and His mind. God's purpose is not to make us automations. We see a ventriloquist operating a wooden dummy, and the dummy's lips move; it looks as though it is talking. He is just moving in obedience to another power. God has a higher purpose than making man an automation. God's purpose is to bring out all the qualities of God in your own soul and body until all your individuality and personality are the nature and substance of God.

So now God can feel at home in us, without any strain or abnormality. The Son of God can live in us, can manifest His life in us in the office, in the shop, in the super market, in the home, on the freeway, in every relationship of life. Some people think that there are areas, particularly to do with our bodies, our appetites, our functions, with which God does not have anything to do, or with which God can not live comfortably within us. I meet people who have the idea that in order to be a son of God they should overcome sex and not fulfill the sexual relationship in their marriage. I have a word for that: bologna! hogwash! I will

believe they have a revelation from God when they also STOP EATING, STOP DRINKING, STOP SLEEPING AND STOP GOING TO THE BATHROOM. God has fashioned our bodies to function in particular ways and He will live in our bodies and manifest His life through us on this human level until we receive our glorified bodies in which to manifest God on that level. Christ was made with a body like ours and He demonstrated God in every facet of His life, spirit, soul and body. He ate, He slept, and if the Father would have so willed He could have had a wife and known the joys of such a physical relationship. God dwelling in our physical bodies does not make angels out of us, but establishes RIGHTEOUSNESS in and through our bodies. We do not stop eating, we eat RIGHT. We do not end the natural, normal physical relationship between husband and wife; rather, it is enriched by the love of God and the holiness of God. A man can enjoy the physical love of his wife IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, or he can enjoy the physical love of somebody else's wife IN UNCLEANNES. God in us makes us do what ever we do – RIGHT! That is RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Through all His life Jesus Christ walked in the Garden of God, that blessed realm of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He came as a man, in human body, with all its physical functions and limitations; but reached out by the Spirit and gathered the fragrant spices of the divine life and nature of His Father; He ate the honeycomb with its honey of incorruption; He drank the wine of joy and revelation and the milk of the Word of God; He emanated the precious essence of the life of God in the midst of a dark and dismal world where immorality and cruelty was the normal everyday way of life. The Corinthian believers came out of the depths of depravity, some had been the scum of the earth, yet God said, "I will dwell in them" (II Cor 6:16). He went right into the midst of them and transformed them and indwelt bodies that were marked by sin. Many of the early Christians were slaves, they had been beaten, marred, some had their hands cut off, rings in their ears, but God did not refuse to indwell them. Most of them were the poorest, most despised of men, but God came to dwell in them. He came to indwell some in Caesar's palace in Rome, where people were twice as vile as those in Corinth.

How could God dwell in and live in them? I will tell you how! Do you know where HE was born? Do you know any place worse than a stable for a delivery room? Any town more despicable than Nazareth? Any death more ignominious than the death of a cross? Born and raised in the worst possible circumstances with everything against you, and God says, "I am going to show that with the wrong birth in the wrong place in the wrong town in a corruptible body of flesh under the wrong circumstances I CAN STILL LIVE IN YOU AND BE AT HOME IN YOU." "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and YE SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor 6:17-18). Can you imagine that? Jesus is the firstfruits of this sonship. In the frailty, nature and limitation of a human body He gathered the spices of THE GLORY OF THE FATHER and enveloped His whole being in them. Right here upon the earth HE BECAME the planting of the Lord, the Garden of God, the Essence of the Father's Life.

Ah, yes, the Father has planted a garden – the Garden of Spices – not in some far-off heaven somewhere, but here, in the midst of man's sorrow, darkness and death. The myrrh and frankincense, the chief spices, which came from the life of Jesus Christ, did not stop with His life upon earth, nor with His death upon the cross. There is a precious harvest of perfume and incense, which is still increasing and being perfected through the other members of His body, as they yield to Him, and enter into the fellowship of His sufferings and come to know Him in the power of His resurrection life.

Again I would quote a precious portion from the writings of Ray Prinzing. HE COMES INTO HIS GARDEN, He comes into the beds of spices – and there he feeds!

There is no way that words can be placed upon paper to fully describe or tell what it means to MINISTER TO THE LORD, to offer upon His table that which brings delight to His heart. To offer that worship that draws Him to us, as we are drawn to Him. Yet somewhere in all this allegory we sense that which bespeaks of the stirrings within us. With the words of the chorus we pray:

“O to be filled with His presence, O to be lost in His love,
O to know Jesus my Saviour, O to be found in God.”

There are spices of camphor, spikenard, saffron, calamus, cinnamon, myrrh, aloes, frankincense. They all have their particular meanings and symbolism, their uses, for perfumes, anointing, etc but they also bespeak of the many crushings needed to bring out their fragrance, to release the inner aroma. We find them in the embalmings, self not only brought to its death, but there is to be no stench of its decay. We find them in the sacrificial fumigation, to counteract the smell of burning flesh, making the sacrifice a sweet savor to God. We find them in the anointing oils to permeate the being.

Interesting that Song of Solomon 4, lists 8 special spices. Eight is the number of resurrection, new beginnings, the new creation. Out of all the death throes, of the turbulent winds, the stormy trials, there will be a release of the fragrance of HIS INWORKINGS, and we will be brought into the resurrection, to share that FULLNESS, that ONENESS, that enduring knowledge that I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine “I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I AM, there ye may be also.” (John 14:3).

“Wherefore, having put out of the way once and for all everything that would impede the free action of your mind, be calm and collected in spirit, and set your hope perfectly, wholly, and unchangeably, without doubt and despondency, upon the grace that is being brought to you upon the occasion of the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:13, Wuest Expanded). Let the winds blow, let the spices flow out, HE shall come into His garden, to the bed of spices, and we shall be joined together in the rapture and delight of His glory. Praise God! – end quote.

We are standing today, beloved ones, IN the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven and AS the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven, where abound the spices of His heavenly life, the fragrance of which has reached down through the ages and now clings sweetly to us. But is it not true that at times alas! instead of gathering myrrh, we gather thistles and thorns. When we should be gathering the spikenard of humility, we are gathering the vile smelling weeds of pride; when we should be gathering the precious attributes of Christ, we are holding on to the poisonous weeds of our own flesh; when we should be laying in the fragrant oils of the fruit of the Spirit, we are holding on to our fleshly works. By His grace we are determined to gather the spices of HIS GRACE AND GLORY until their fragrance sweeps up to heaven like the smoke of the continual incense before the face of God, yea, until their odors pervade the whole atmosphere of this earth realm in which we walk that HE MAY BE GLORIFIED! To this very end God has planted HIS GARDEN!

THE GARDEN OF NUTS

This is the third garden in the Song of Solomon "I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded" (S of S 6:11).

There is a remarkable truth which the Holy Spirit would impress indelibly upon our minds. It will make a universe of difference to our understanding, and to our spiritual growth and progress when our minds grasp the fact that each and every word of Holy Scripture contains both an outer and an inner meaning. Behind the literal words lies another range of meaning, another form of knowledge. Every story in the whole Bible conveys another knowledge – a meaning quite different from the literal sense of the words. The story of Adam and Eve in the garden, the story of Noah and the ark, the story of the Tower of Babel, the story of Jacob and Esau and the mess of pottage, the stories of Joseph, Moses, Elijah, David, Solomon and every other story and experience and historical event recorded in the pages of Holy Writ contains an inner spiritual meaning far removed from their literal level of meaning.

In the Gospels the parable is used in a similar way. As they stand, taken in the literal meaning of the words, the parables refer apparently to vineyards, to householders, to stewards, to spendthrift sons, to oil, to water and wine, to seeds and sowers and soil, to rich men burning in hell, and many other things. This is their literal level of meaning. The language of parables is difficult to understand just as is the language of all the Word of God. Taken on the level of literal understanding alone, both the Old and New Testaments are full of ambiguous, confused, and often cruel and repulsive meaning.

When asked by His disciples why He taught in parables, Jesus clearly indicated the divine principle of the Kingdom of God. He answered them, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mat 13:11). Any man by the use of his carnal mind can understand

the surface meaning of the parable of the sower and the seed, but only the SPIRITUAL MIND sees the deeper underlying SPIRITUAL TRUTH. The truth which lies buried as a treasure beneath the surface dust is the meaning the Lord would have us see and, until we thus perceive, all our spiritual understanding lies dreadfully confined and straitened, leaving us to grope among the surface stones for priceless gems to enrich the inner man.

Jesus spoke of the absolute necessity of an inner quickening and transformation called THE NEW BIRTH. Said Jesus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (Jn 3:3-8). The wind, phantom symbol of the breath of God, the life-giving Holy Spirit, blows where it listeth, awakening the souls of men long dead in trespasses and sins, and moving on the face of the deep darkness and death in our spirits, causes the light that shone out of darkness to shine into our hearts, quickening and imparting life, giving us by its power the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That blessed Spirit one day moved upon me, bless His name, and at my behest He came in as a mighty rushing blast of the breath of the Almighty, dispelling the shroud of darkness and the power of sin and death that I might be reborn, a marvelous NEW CREATION in Christ Jesus.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot SEE, and certainly cannot ENTER, the Kingdom of God. The wind is the Spirit of God and the water is the living Word of God. If there could be one reason above all others that would loudly proclaim the necessity of a new birth, it would be this: "Except a man be born again HE CANNOT SEE (or ENTER) THE KINGDOM OF GOD." There is no more spiritual life in the unregenerate man than there is life on mars. Therefore it can also be asserted that there is no more spiritual understanding in the carnal mind of the natural man than there is intelligence on mars! Surely, Oh man, thou who art born anew through the implantation of God's divine life, your spirit should now grasp the significant truth of the words of our Saviour when He declared, "except a man be born again, he CANNOT see the Kingdom of God!"

The idea behind each and every word of the Holy Scripture is to convey a higher meaning than the literal words contain, the truth of which MUST BE SEEN AND EXPERIENCED BY MAN SPIRITUALLY, INTERNALLY. This higher, concealed, inner, spiritual meaning, cast in the words and sense-images of ordinary events, can only be grasped by the quickened spirit and the renewed mind, and it is exactly here that the difficulty lies in conveying the deep spiritual things of God to the natural man. A person's literal level of understanding, regardless how educated or intellectual he may be, is clearly not equal to grasping SPIRITUAL TRUTH. This is why Jesus, after speaking a parable, so often said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat 11:15). Let us be absolutely sure of this one momentous principle of the Kingdom of God: It is not the surface meaning that

has any importance, but the golden nugget of spiritual truth which lies in the mine beneath the surface is that alone which is able to enrich the inner man of the Spirit.

It is written of our Lord Jesus Christ before He ascended to the Father: "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the scripture the things concerning Himself." "Then OPENED HE THEIR MIND, that they might UNDERSTAND the Scriptures" (Lk 24:27,45). One blessed moment spent in the dazzling light of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God will teach us this truth: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerning" (I Cor 2:14). As nuts cannot be eaten in the shell, neither do they show the sweetness of the meat within until the shells are broken, so it is with the precious truths and realities of the Word of God. Unless the Lord opens up our understanding, it is impossible to know those things that pertain to the Kingdom of God.

It is from man's interpretation of the Word of God, that so many strange doctrines have been brought forth in all ages. When man brings his human reason and wisdom to bear upon the Word, and the Word is not spiritually discerned, it can be made to prove almost anything. All the gross foolishness of the religious systems with their candles, crucifixes, incense, altars, images, robes, programs, ordinances, missals, ceremonies and creeds are but products of carnal minds applied to the Word of God. And some of the wild ideas advanced by "end-time" groups are just as void of truth and reality! When the Spirit, however, who is the Teacher and the one who LEADS INTO ALL TRUTH, reveals God's thought and purpose to the man or woman who humbly waits in God's holy presence, such treasures are uncovered. As "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man;" the heart rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory at the unfolding of the Father's magnificent purpose of the ages. God reveals to those who love and fear Him, the deep and wonderful treasures in this GARDEN OF NUTS.

It is the blessed Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God that ushers one into the Garden of Nuts. With deep reverence and gratitude, we praise God that the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; or, literally, THE DEPTHS OF GOD; and He reveals them to us. The Word of God has neither sweetness nor juice, neither food nor strength, to those who do not feed upon it continually, to those who do not approach it prayerfully, alone with God, away from the crowd, away from the babbling voices of Babylon's merchants, away from the table, away from the television, in the presence of God's indwelling Spirit with the determination to come to the sweet, nourishing meat that is hidden away in every hard nut that it contains. To those who yield to God in humility and prayer and earnestly seek to claim and possess HIS FULLNESS, the Word of God is made LIFE to the inner man and the Word has a glory that increases as one enters more and more into its mysteries.

As the Spirit graciously leads us in the Garden of Nuts the letter (the outer husk or meaning) is done away that we can arrive at the hidden spiritual meaning, the kernel of the nut. The letter of the Word has no nourishment nor power to transform one son of Adam's race, any more than the outer shuck of a nut has sweetness or nourishment to sustain life. But when the Holy Spirit OPENS UP THE WORD, there is richness, and nourishment, and power, hidden away at the heart of every Word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. God is the only one who can break these hard nuts of His Word, He is the only one who can take away the outside meaning of the letter, and introduce us to the Word of God; and take heed that no imaginations of our own get in. Let us not draw back and insist upon remaining in only one small corner of the Word of God; let us be so pliable in His hands, that He can lead us on into all the orchards of His Garden, into all the riches of His truth.

Chapter 14

Dressing The Garden

(continued)

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed to DRESS IT AND KEEP IT" (Gen 2:7-8,15).

As we have stated repeatedly in these articles on the Garden of God, the gardens and vineyards of the scriptures are synonymous, meaning, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN on earth. In this very hour the hand of God is planting the plants which He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, each a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified (Isa 61:3). Consider now how great are the words of the prophet: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and thou shalt be like A WATERED GARDEN for the Lord shall comfort Zion and He will make her wilderness like EDEN, and her desert like the GARDEN OF THE LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa 58:11; 51:3).

When the conception of the Kingdom of Heaven begins to be grasped, a new and startling meaning of life dawns in the mind. The first parable given by the Lord Jesus Christ is that of the Sower. It is not merely about the experience of salvation, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or the church, or heaven. It is about the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus says of it that it is the parable of parables and unless it is understood other parables cannot be. You must realize that all the parables in the Gospels are about the Kingdom of Heaven and the parable of the Sower is the first. It is the starting point of Christ's teaching about the mystery of the Kingdom. In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, the Lord begins to speak in parables to the multitude. Why? Because He is beginning to speak of the Kingdom of God. His disciples ask why He has suddenly begun to use parables and He says: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath to him it shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Mat 13:11-13).

What is the first mystery that He reveals about the Kingdom? "And He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat 13:3-9). In the parable of the sower it can be seen that the first mystery is that MEN ARE SOWN AS MATERIAL FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. To call it the parable of the SOWER and the SEED is misleading unless it is understood that man is the seed. Actually, there is no mention of seed. You will note that in the King James Version the word "seeds" is in italics, meaning that the word is not in the original and is supplied by the translators. In Mat 13:3-4 it is said in the Greek: "Behold the sower went forth to sow and as he sowed some fell by the wayside." The word "seeds" is added in the English translation, so that it reads: "and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side." What is really meant? What did the sower sow? He sowed MEN!

Jesus begins the interpretation thus: "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When anyone heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side" (Mat 13:18-19). Greek scholar M. R. Vincent in his WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, states that the literal, and much better, translation of the phrase "He which receiveth seed" is "He that was sown;" identifying the seed of the parable with the kind of man signified. There is a sense in which the "seed" is the "Word of the Kingdom," however it is plain that in a stricter sense men are meant, and it is interesting to note how verse 19 is translated in different versions:

"While everyone is listening and not comprehending the word of the Kingdom, there comes the Pernicious One and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. THIS MAN IS HE WHO WAS SOWN AS SEED along the footpath." – Wuest.

"When anyone heareth the word of the Kingdom and understandeth it not the wicked one cometh, and catcheth up that which hath been sown in his heart, THIS IS HE BY THE PATHWAY SOWN." – Rotherham.

"When anyone hears the word of the Realm and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away that has been sown in his heart; THAT IS THE MAN WHO IS SOWN ON THE ROAD." – Moffatt.

In all these translations Jesus goes on to speak in verses 20-23 of "he that was sown on rocky ground" and "he that was sown among thorns" and "he that was sown upon good ground." This is the first startling idea, hidden in the parable. Men are sown on earth as material for the Kingdom of Heaven - some by the wayside, some on rocky ground, some among thorns and some on good soil. It is

only those in this last "good ground" class that are capable of flourishing as tress in the Garden of God, the Kingdom of Heaven realm!

The whole earth has been sown with men of various kinds What kinds? God sowed humanity, a nation, and His Son.

(1) HUMANITY "God hath made the world and all things therein and hath made of one all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the whole earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:24,26). "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely THE PEOPLE IS GRASS" (Isa 40:6-7).

(2) THE NATION ISRAEL "Now the Lord said to Abram, I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen 12:1-3). "Yet now hear, O Jacob My servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up among the grass (humanity), as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another surname himself by the name of Israel" (Isa 44:1,3-5). "Thou hast brought a VINE out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and PLANTED IT and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river" (Ps 80:8-11). "The Lord called thy name, A GREEN OLIVE Tree. Thou hast PLANTED them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit" (Jer 11:16; 12:2).

(3) HIS SON "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son." (Gal 4:4). "For HE shall grow up before Him as a TENDER PLANT, and as a root out of a dry ground. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa 53:2-3). "I am the TRUE VINE, and My Father is the husbandman. I am the VINE, YE ARE THE BRANCHES: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples" (Jn 15:1,5,8). "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME" (Gal 2:20). "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until CHRIST BE FORMED IN YOU" (Gal 4:19).

The good seed, the True Vine, Jesus Christ, was sown, and a whole new creation shall arise and be harvested, "that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom 8:29). He who sowed HIS SON shall reap MANY SONS. "For it became Him in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb 2:10). Who can today comprehend that many-membered-body of Christ of which He is the Head? It is true, Jesus has His own body that was raised from the dead and transformed into an eternal body of glory, but there is also this body of His sons, in whom He dwells by His

Spirit, in whom He is being formed in all His character, wisdom, and power, and it is a GLORIOUS BODY! The Father has long waited for this harvest of MANY SONS. "Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until He receive the early and latter rain" (James 5:7). It is my deepest conviction, beloved, that his harvest time is drawing very near and should not tarry many more years.

Ah, yes, the whole earth has been sown with men of various kinds, but in the blessed revelation of the book of Genesis we see that "the LORD GOD PLANTED A GARDEN eastward in Eden" and this Garden bespeaks a special and most favored "planting" of the Lord - the sons of the Kingdom! The soil in this blest Garden of God is neither uncultivated, stony nor thorny, for it has come under the hand of the Husbandman, being dealt with that life may spring forth abundantly. Thus the prophet by inspiration wrote: "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the (seed) this also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isa 28:24-25,29). Ah, this explains much of the process through which God's elect has been passing, for the Lord purposes to bring forth a crop, full fruitage, even to an hundredfold, therefore there have been these tremendous crushing experiences which have broken up the hard clods of our pre-conceived ideas and opinions, the rocks of our stubborn self-will, and the imbedded roots of our own fleshly desires and the carnal traditions of religion which resisted the inworking of truth. Deeper and deeper have dug the plowshares of the Spirit, breaking up the fallow ground, grinding, smashing, tearing, loosening, breaking up the self-life until all is subdued before Him, until nothing remains but the fine soil for the seed to grow in. The plowman has not been plowing in us all this time just for the sake of plowing, but the preparation is that there might be the sowing of HIS LIFE, that there might be brought forth a harvest of the same kind. The Christ-life is being sown, and this means the growing up of a WHOLE NEW SPECIES, a new creation which shall ultimately come forth in the image and likeness of God, to the praise of His glory.

Many of the Lord's precious apprehended ones have wondered why we were plowed so deeply, why God allows us to be broken up to the deepest recesses of our beings, but it is that HIS LIFE MIGHT FASTEN ITS ROOTS DEEP WITHIN US, so that from deep within, from our very nature, would spring forth the fruitage of Himself.

THE PLANTING OF THE LORD

One of the beautiful operations of the Spirit of Truth is the way in which the words of scripture contain so many varied facets of meaning and application, each sparkling as a brilliant display of spiritual reality, as a many-faceted diamond reflected the diverse colors in light. One glittering gem of truth concerning the Garden of God is found in these words: "And THE LORD GOD PLANTED a garden eastward in Eden" (Gen 2:8). It becomes very clear in this verse that

GOD DOES THE PLANTING in His Garden. Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke this same truth when He said, "The good seed are the sons of the Kingdom. He that SOWED the good seed IS THE SON OF MAN" (Mat 13:37-38). The prophet adds his inspired testimony: "to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the PLANTING OF THE LORD, that He might be glorified" (Isa 61:3).

Popular religion teaches that a man becomes a child of God "because" he believes, but there has been a childish lack of understanding on this point. A man does, indeed, begin to be a partaker of Christ WHEN he believes, but not because – for the FIRST CAUSE IS ALWAYS GOD, our believing serves as a point of contact, the incorruptible seed of the Christ-life is implanted in our earth when we believe, but the Cause is God. HE initiates the whole process and does the plowing of the field and the planting of the seed, blessed be His wonderful name! Have you considered how great was the truth Jesus uttered when He said, "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw Him" (Jn 6:44). So first of all we must recognize that our being PLANTED IN HIS GARDEN IS TOTALLY OF THE FATHER. He has chosen and called us, the transformation of our lives from earthly to heavenly is the result of His operation, He is working in us, and we rejoice in it! Notice also how the Word declares that "we are HIS workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph 2:10). Since it is true, as Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should bring forth fruit," (Jn 15:16) we ought not to be surprised at any of the processings which He brings our way – but learn to see the hand of God in all these things, knowing that in due time they shall work into good, and redound to His praise. More and more we are becoming aware of the fact that it is GOD who places each of us in our own particular set of circumstances and life situations. How we love to blame the devil! But RIGHT WHERE WE ARE is where He can best deal with each of us individually, enabling us to truly become overcomers.

One day while traveling along the road to Damascus the mighty hand of God was laid upon a son of Israel, Saul of Tarsus, and after his conversion he wrote: "But it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to REVEAL HIS SON IN ME" (Gal 1:16). Paul's conversion is a most remarkable demonstration of the sovereignty of God who "worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will" (Eph 1:11). It is quite evident that Saul of Tarsus was not on his way to a revival meeting when the Lord struck him down on the road. Saul made no premeditated "decision for Christ" before his conversion. PAUL's WILL was set on the destruction of the Church. But the WILL OF GOD was that the enemy of the Church should become an apostle of Jesus Christ! No mention is made of Saul's "profession of faith." We are merely informed that he received his sight, was filled with the Holy Spirit, arose, and was baptized. So Saul, the "chosen vessel," bore the name of Jesus unto the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). Paul had total faith in Jesus Christ and was motivated by the love of Christ, yet he never considered himself a

"volunteer" for the Kingdom of God. He did not volunteer! He described himself as a "conscript," saying, "Not that I am already perfect, but I press on to lay hold of and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus has LAID HOLD UPON ME and MADE ME HIS OWN" (Phil 3:12, Amplified Bible). Paul also explains to the believers at Corinth: "For I take no special pride in the fact that I preach the gospel. I feel compelled to do so; I should be utterly miserable if I failed to preach it. If I do this work because I choose to do so then I am entitled to a reward. BUT IF IT IS NO CHOICE OF MINE, but a sacred responsibility put upon me, WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN THE WAY OF REWARD?" (I Cor 9:16-18, Phillips). It becomes clear from reading the above verses that Paul did not "volunteer" his services of his own free will, so he explained that he was not entitled to any reward for his ministry. He had no more choice than does a slave, it was a sacred trust placed upon him by his LORD, Jesus Christ.

Let it be known in this day of Babylon's religious systems and hirelings – GOD DOES NOT USE VOLUNTEERS in the sacred work of His Kingdom! It is not something one enters as a vocation, a way to earn an easy living, etc. In God's work you are never "voted in" or "voted out" by the people, neither do you set a price upon your ministry, nor do you work by contract. All such hirelings are SERVANTS OF BABYLON, not servants of God, and will fall with the system, receiving of her plagues, suffering loss and ruin, as all their multiplied works go up in the swirling smoke of her judgments. GOD CHOOSES WHOM HE WILLS. It is just like the advice I heard an old preacher give to young people about marriage when I was a small boy. Said he, "Stay unmarried as long as you can: but when you fall so deeply in love with someone until you are utterly miserable and can't stand to be away from them for another moment – then get married!" Ah, beloved, God chooses whom He wills, and SO LAYS THE CALL ON YOU THAT YOU ARE MISERABLE UNTIL YOU GIVE OBEDIENCE. It is a commission from God, not a calling self-assumed. They who take it upon themselves, verily, they HAVE their reward – the clerical reputation, the esteem of men, the good salaries, the pride they take in their vocation, the public homage of being called "Reverend," "Father," or "Pastor," the good works, etc ARE THE REWARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS. It becomes an earthly call, and it gains an earthly reward.

Beloved, have you ever wondered how it is that out of the billions of people on earth you have come into a living relationship with Christ? Have you wondered why it is that out of your own family, perhaps, or out of your church background, you are the only one (or of the few) that has received the call to follow on to know the Lord in the blessed walk of SONSHIP? Is it because you are more open by nature, or more inquisitive, or smarter, or more worthy than the others? No! Here's why: "And it was of HIS OWN WILL that He gave us birth as sons by His Word of Truth, so that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures – A SAMPLE of what He created to be consecrated to Himself" (James 1:18). Glory!

Oh my soul! Yield yourself to the mighty influence of this word that echoes from Eden: "and the LORD GOD PLANTED A GARDEN eastward in Eden." Take time to meditate and to worship, until the light that comes from the throne of God has shone into you, and you have seen your deliverance out of the kingdom of darkness and your planting in the Kingdom of Heaven as indeed the work of the Almighty Father. And now in this blessed knowledge, with deep gratitude and unrestrained praise and thanksgiving, take time, day after day, moment by moment, and let, in your whole life, with all it has of claims and duties, of needs and wishes, GOD BE EVERYTHING.

DRESSING THE GARDEN

As the pattern of things in the book of Genesis progresses, we see unfold before our wondering eyes a word which, in the strictest sense, can only be a Principle of the Kingdom of God. This word reveals the grand and glorious truth that just as surely as GOD PLANTED EDEN'S LOVELY GARDEN, so certain is it that He then placed Adam in the Garden TO DRESS IT AND TO KEEP IT (Gen 2:8,15). As surely as the planting is the Lord's, the dressing and keeping is committed to Adam. These words are far too potent and full of meaning to be read over carelessly, or considered merely as some statement of historical fact to be lightly laid aside and forgotten. Herein lies the source of a river of wisdom and spiritual understanding. This is a gate through which God's chosen ones pass on our way to the treasure house of the knowledge of God. Here are things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man. Here are wonderful and priceless principles by which the Kingdom of God is developed as a living and quickening reality in the lives of God's sons.

When the Lord declares that HIS PEOPLE are His Vineyard and His Garden we should understand that His purposes are the same now as they were in the beginning when He placed man IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO DRESS AND TO KEEP IT. In the scriptures the Garden of God always represents the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The thought is not only of the Lord's great Garden; but the life of every child of God is a garden within God's Garden. It should be evident to all who have eyes to see and hearts to understand that it was the garden of his own life and soul that Adam failed to dress and to keep. The Shulamite, in the Song of Solomon, at the outset of her relationship with the King confessed her own neglect in this respect, saying, "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept" (S of S 1:6). Though the Lord may let us tend a portion of His great Vineyard, though He may let us minister to other souls in different ways, there is a part of the Vineyard of the Lord which He actually gives to each one of us; and that is the vineyards of our own lives.

Adam was a son of God (Lk 3:38) and was placed in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven to dress and to keep it, but falling to attend to the garden of his own soul, to prune away the desires of the carnal mind, to dig up the weeds of his self-life, he became unfruitful, ready for cursing, as was the tree upon which Jesus found no fruit. Under the curse Adam withered and died, alienated from

the life that is in God. Can we not see by this that the first work in the Lord's Garden, which He entrusts to us and calls upon us to do, is to care for and guard our own lives and first partake of the fruit? How very important this becomes in the light of the wonderful truth that the Garden of the Kingdom of God is planted eastward in the Eden of God's great and eternal domain and from its portals shall come that many-membered MAN, the LAST ADAM, the corporate SON OF GOD whose authority and Lordship is destined to be as boundless as the heavens, for God shall put all things under His feet!

GOD'S PURPOSE IN THIS AGE

God's purpose for this church age is not the conversion of the whole world. This never was His plan. God's purpose for this age is to take out a people for His name (Acts 15:14). Let me make it perfectly clear – IF it were either God's plan or His desire to bring the whole world to repentance in this age, then the whole world WOULD COME TO REPENTANCE in this age! God is either God or He isn't. If He is God, He is in control of His universe and able to do all His will in heaven above and in earth beneath. If He isn't in control of His universe or can't fulfill all His desires, HE ISN'T GOD! I am thoroughly convinced that GOD I-S GOD.

God's purpose, then, in this church age is to call out a people for His name. Out from the billions of earth God is choosing an elect company to bear His name. The very word "church" means "the called out." These are ones who are now being called out of sin, called out of the kingdom of darkness, called out of the world, called out of Babylon's religious systems, called out of every nation, called out of the Gentiles, called out of Israel until there is a multitude singing a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev 5:9-10). Passing among the nations, God calls out all those who were chosen IN CHRIST before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love: being predestinated unto PLACEMENT AS SONS, according to the good pleasure of HIS WILL (Eph 1:3-5). The rest He leaves to fulfill His purposes in the ages to come.

How sad it is that multiplied millions of Christians have for centuries been taught the religious fable that their hope was to die and fly away to heaven where they would spend eternity waving palm branches, playing harps, dangling their feet in celestial waters, and skipping up and down Hallelujah Boulevard with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in! Oh how much precious truth and glorious and eternal reality is missed under the blinding shroud of the doctrines of men! This is not and never was God's purpose for saints, but the grand and glorious truth is that the Kingdom of God, the Sovereign Reign of Christ is being set up in the hearts and lives of His yielded and obedient sons. As God commanded Adam the first to subdue and have dominion over all the earth, so He is now preparing and

processing the many members of the body of the LAST ADAM for the government of the world when the time is ripe for it. Yes, beloved, the TIME IS NEAR TO BEING RIPE, the nations are now being shaped, and the "many brethren" are, even as I pen these words, being brought to His image and glory "for such a time as this."

THE PREPARATION OF THE SONS OF GOD

It would take hours and days and months and years without number to write of the infinite preparation taking place in the hearts of those saints who are to rule and reign with Christ. Since the reign of Christ is to be one of increasing peace, judgment, righteousness, equity and love, it is necessary that the LORD OF THE KINGDOM should take whom He has chosen to rule as His sons and plant these in the Garden of His Dominion, that there they may be nurtured and dealt with, that their hearts may be prepared to reign with Him in the same spirit and wisdom and righteousness and knowledge that He Himself possesses. What a blessed preparation!

The first step in the preparation of the sons of God is when we are lifted out of the vineyards of the world and planted in the Garden of God. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus as soon as we are saved; but through the control of sin, there are warped and weakened places left in our human nature and upon our members and faculties, which will hinder the plan of God being carried out in our lives. It is to these defects, weakness, and blights, we must die daily. The defects and blights, which have been left upon our human nature through being controlled by sin, and through tending the vineyards of the world, do not disappear as soon as we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. If this were so, we would be faultless at once, and there would be no necessity nor room for going on unto perfection. There would be no need of the cross, there could be no progress nor going from glory to glory. At the new birth, we become new creatures in Christ Jesus, and every faculty and member, every avenue of our being, is delivered from the yoke of bondage and sin; and we begin to walk uprightly. Each faculty, member and power begins a Spiritward and Heavenward journey, traveling toward the place where they will all be brought under the control of the Spirit.

Many and varied are the ways and paths by which the Lord in faithfulness prepares the people He has chosen. A most enlightening aspect of this preparation is found tucked away among the priceless gems in the treasure house of truth in the Song of Solomon. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (S of S 2:15). The Shulamite's Beloved warns that it is not enough to dwell in the Garden and admire the beauty of the flowers and trees and smell their fragrance. It is not enough to listen to the singing of birds and look forward to the harvest. It is not enough to rejoice that we have been made meet to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, that we have been delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love. We must be up and doing; we must

keep the vineyard of our own lives and souls! And we must take every fox, especially the young foxes that hide away and eat the vines, stripping them of the bark and destroying them.

The word "take," means "to seize and hold fast; to catch;" and the adjective, "little," has a most significant meaning, which contains a solemn warning and revelation concerning the cause of much of the fruitlessness in our lives. It not only means small because they are young and weak, but it means the very smallest and least important; those that we look upon as hardly worthy of notice because we consider that they are too insignificant to cause any harm or trouble. Let us notice that nothing is said of the large foxes. We are solemnly warned to hunt out and take those little foxes which we have been overlooking, and which we have allowed to remain unmolested among our vines.

At pruning time, if the dead twigs or branches, the rubbish that is cut from the vines, are left upon the ground, the old fox will hide away her young at the roots of the vine, and the little foxes will eat the tender shoots and the bark until the vine is girdled and spoiled; and vine or tree that is girdled, loses its sap and dies. The old foxes eat the grapes; and the young foxes spoil the vines; but they also become full-grown and multiply! Ah – it is not the great things in our lives that cause us to miss the mark the most. When we are faced with something formidable, we know that it must be overcome; and we draw upon the grace and power, which are in the Lord, to do this. It is the little things that we do not think amount to anything which are going to stop us from arriving at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. It may be along the lines of habits, words, attitudes, emotions, old natural ways, which have been with us for years; and which are so a part of ourselves that we are hardly conscious they are there. And we are to "take" these little foxes, seizing them and holding them fast, exercising dominion over them, until they are brought to death and eradicated out of our lives once for all!

Whatever the blockage is, you must clean it up. It does not matter how large or small it may seem. Remember, beloved, the tiny mosquito blocked the construction of the Panama Canal for years. A delicate snowflake defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. I read of a large cathedral whose massive air-conditioning system went out, and they spent thousands of dollars on experts until finally one of the janitors found a dead spider in the thermostat. A brother related the following story; I was preparing one of my favorite meals – a baked potato. I picked out the biggest and fattest potato we had, then scrubbed it, and put it in the microwave. While it was baking, I decided this was going to be a deluxe baked potato. I went through the spice cabinet and decided to sprinkle some sesame seeds on it as well as bacon chips. Then I saw the can of dill. I love dill!

The potato finished baking I chopped it open, let the steam out, and put on all of these little goodies I sprinkled the dill on last. It looked and smelled wonderful,

but some of the pieces of dill were a little darker than others. Then they started moving!

I took the potato and showed it to my wife. I said, "Honey, how does my supper look? She glanced at the potato and said, "It looks wonderful! I could see that she hadn't taken a very careful look. "Take a good look, Arvella. Suddenly she noticed the squirming bugs that had infested my dinner. She shivered and squealed, "UGH! OH! GET IT OUT OF HERE! A live bunch of tiny insects from a dill bottle ruined my whole supper! -End of quote.

The apostle admonishes, "But now ye also put off these; anger, wrath, malice, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Col 3:8). PUT OFF – meaning lay aside, put away, seize hold of and put off – these instructions were not written to the ungodly, but to those who are believers, following on to know the Lord in deeper measures. The more obvious sins were readily dealt with long ago, and no one teaches SONS that they must not murder, rob banks, consort with prostitutes, bow down to idols, etc. By regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit we have been washed and made partakers of the divine nature and as the inner Christ-life takes hold of our beings there is no inclination to practice such gross sins. But now, what about the more subtle defilement – little resentments, inner agitations, ill-feelings, bitterness, criticisms, hurt because people will not receive your revelation and message, because they disagree with you, shun you, spread false rumors about you, disappoint you. Oh yes! God is making ready a people for a FULL MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF, and the plowshares of the Spirit are probing deeper and deeper, and tearing up and exposing more stones and roots and clods than we ever thought heretofore.

One might soar high on the sweet wine of revelation and understand all the mysteries of how the saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom, how they shall conquer death, how they shall judge the world and angels in that blest age soon to come, how they shall rule and reign upon His throne and minister deliverance to the groaning creation, and this is all truth, for it is a pure vision which shall be fulfilled. But I cannot be too forceful in my effort to show you, beloved ones, that long before man is ever to be a partaker of such marvelous realities, he will have been thoroughly dealt with by the hand of God, the self-life being abased before the Lord, every rock of pride and every root of self-ascendancy purged out, so that our only desire will be to see the LORD glorified. Before we ever share His throne we will have learned quite well what the Spirit meant when He inspired the man of wisdom to pen these words: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov 16:32).

Learning to rule ones own spirit is not easy, in fact it requires that our spirit be joined to His Spirit, so that we are fortified and strengthened in the inner man, and thus able to gain control over all our impulses and emotions. The varied dispositions of human nature are not easily bridled or broken. The restlessness, the defensiveness, the quick reactions to pressures, frustration and anger in

problems, fear, worry, hurt, and self-assertion all must be overcome, conquered, rendered inactive by the overwhelming reign of HIS LIFE within. Many like to govern others, issue orders, call the shots, manipulate, control what is going on about them, in the church, etc., while they cannot bridle their own thoughts, moods and emotions, nor crucify the lusts and passions of their own flesh.

Oft times saints go to the Sunday meeting, sing the songs of Zion, raise their hands in praise and worship, weep, speak in tongues, prophesy, exhort and teach, maintaining an image of spirituality, and then fuss and argue and yell and fight with the wife and kids all the way home! One wonders how they expect to enter the Kingdom of God, and bring PEACE ON EARTH, when they cannot even speak peaceably to their husband or wife or children. The hour is at hand when all who would be sons of God must recognize that it is RIGHT HERE WHERE WE ARE, in our present circumstances and life situations, under the pressures and problems of the job, the family, the boss, the nagging wife, the screaming brats, the obstinate husband, the broken-down car, the unpaid bills, etc., that the qualifications are being made for the spiritual positions of glory and honor to be revealed in due time. Oh yes, we would like to be recognized as overcomers, sons of God; so we glory in our gifts, revelations, ministries, knowledge, abilities. But the real proof of our overcoming is not in how gifted we are, how deep and profound our revelations, how long or loud we pray, how many days we fast, how fluently we speak in tongues and prophesy; but how we live and walk and act and react among those with whom we live day after day. May the Spirit impress deeply upon our minds and hearts this one obvious truth: Overcoming begins at home! We may portray a certain image to others outside the home, but those who live with you get a truer and clearer picture. Just ask the husband, the wife, the children, the cat, the dog, the neighbors, the boss, if this one is such a saint.

Praise God! He is stripping away all the masks, all the false-faces, all the play-acting, and we are being brought face to face with reality – with ourselves. And what a revelation, and I dare say, not always a pleasant one, as we discover the Lord God walking through His Garden turning the searchlight of His Spirit on the rubbish lying at the root of our being, exposing all the little foxes hidden there. What remains unseen to those about us is not unseen to Him. It is that which springs from this inner realm that must be pure, so that our whole being, without and within, BECOMES THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.

God warns us to catch every fox. We must not leave the old ones alive to eat the fruit, which the Holy Spirit is working in our lives; but above all, we must catch the smallest foxes lest they destroy the vines themselves. Those "little foxes," if left hidden within us, would eventually rise up to destroy the Godly vine that we really are. We are to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us. The characteristics of the "fox," reveal that it is not easy to be faithful in this, as might appear. No animal is more deceitful and cute, more treacherous and sly, than the fox. And nothing in our lives is more deceiving and treacherous than those little habits, words, attitudes, moods, emotions, weaknesses, which appear

as nothing in themselves; but it is they that are literally sapping away our spiritual life and strength. We cannot pity one of these little foxes, no matter how harmless or even attractive it may appear. It always happens, that as soon as we get any little fox out of our vineyard, God lets us see the havoc it has wrought; and it no longer appears small and unimportant to us.

There is a further, and perhaps more startling, application of the "foxes" in our lives. It is not only in the fleshly emotions of anger, bitterness, resentment, etc. ; nor only those who have allowed their lives to become encumbered with earthly toil and earthly play who are robbed of entering into the prize of HIS FULLNESS; but thousands of Christians today are so busy here and there with every manner of RELIGIOUS WORK that all spiritual growth has come to a standstill. Do you keep forever on the run for myriad church activities and needs of the people until all your spare time is taken up going and doing as is so common among Christians in our day? If so, you are not growing in wisdom and knowledge and intimate relationship with Christ and, I dare say, while you are so busy WORKING FOR GOD, you will one day wake up to find that HE is gone, HE has moved on, and you are drowned in your activity. God does not want your work. He wants YOU! Beware of these foxes.

In this hour there is a precious thing being formed, a new thing, a new day, and a new people who are of the day, even the firstfruits of the Kingdom. The thing God is doing today cannot be compared with anything He has done in the past in the religious systems and church revivals. The only pattern is CHRIST. It seems that always when men pray for a fresh moving of God in their midst, they begin to examine all the former "revivals" of church history and try to find the "key" as to what will bring the glory of God, as if God will ever repeat the past. But HE declares of this day: "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a NEW THING; now it shall spring forth..." (Isa 43:18-19).

As long as we are deeply enwrapped and entangled in the old, yea, even those OLD THINGS GOD HAS DONE, we cannot ever behold the new, for our eyes and hearts are blinded by the cloak of the old. There are no little foxes anywhere more cute, deceitful or treacherous than these little foxes of THE OLD WAYS OF BABYLON which cling to the vines of our walk in God. How cunning they are! The little foxes of the religious systems prey upon the sentimental senses of our soul, with their music, programs, ordinances, activities and entertainment. But, blessed be God! By the eye of the Spirit I have come to behold the formations OF A COMPLETELY NEW MOVE OF GOD to be birthed, ere long, in the earth. I do not hesitate to declare it. I do not condemn any of the present orders of meetings and worship – hymns and choruses, prophecies and prayers, exhortations and teachings, sermons and altar calls, Sunday Schools and Bible Schools, elders and fellowships, for we know that God uses them all; yet, the Spirit is speaking, stirring, dealing, quickening, convincing our hearts that we must be alert to the little foxes of the OLD ORDER THAT IS PASSING AWAY and must not allow the ways, methods, traditions and practices of the old to so

cling to us that they choke and strip us even as our hearts cry out for the NEW and the tender grapes of HIS LIFE appear on our vines.

The Spirit bids me share even this further admonition. Indifference concerning a close walk with God; compromising with those who are not walking in the Spirit, and who are not moving forward in God, will lay waste a vineyard that is in blossom; destroying not only the fruit, but the vines themselves. Wasted time and foolish talking, lack of diligence, neglect of prayer and of the Word, will strip the bark from the vines, so that the sap, which is the life, will run out; and the vines will die. My heart is made heavy when I see Christians caught up in the pressures and spirit of the age, constantly running to and fro, from activity to activity, from job to job, so busy that they have no time to pray, too filled with earth's trash to enjoy conversation about eternal things, too pressed to read the scriptures, too involved with petty things to sit at Jesus' feet and wait in His holy presence, TO LEARN OF HIM as did Mary of Bethany. So many are like the good Martha and are always busy serving, but ever missing that vital union with Him which is of such transcendent importance and without which true sonship cannot be attained.

He is ours to love and worship, to adore and learn to know and obey; He is ours that we may let Him fill our lives and hearts, that we may draw upon His strength at every step. His beauty and attributes are for us that we may put them on. He is all we need for He is our precious Storehouse, and in Him are hidden all God's riches in glory. Do we need wisdom and knowledge? All the riches of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him, and He is ours! He is our righteousness and sanctification and redemption, He is our refuge and strong tower, He is ours!

Time is rapidly fading away, the things of the earth and of the natural are sinking out of sight and becoming shadows. Darkness is spreading over the earth and gross darkness over the peoples, and even the leaders of our own nation are groping and stumbling about in the hideous darkness of this night that is creeping down on America and the world. At the same time there is a glory falling upon our union with the Lord, which is shining more brightly as the days go by. It seems that there are only a few more mileposts to pass, only a little more of the earthly to be taken off, only a little more time in which to perfect our relation to Him and our separation from all else, and then we shall behold His glory bursting forth from a PREPARED PEOPLE; Eden's gates opened wide, not, this time, blessed be God! to drive out the wretched man who failed to tend his garden; but gates opened that all creation might come and behold HIS GLORY and partake of the fruit of a bountifully overflowing harvest of HIS LIFE.

Truly, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," for the saints of God. Already we begin to see the faint signs of the dawn and many are arising to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morning! As the shadows and darkness of the sin and iniquity of this world system increase about us, we are aware of the arising of His glory upon a many-membered-son company. Our souls cry out: "until the day break and the shadows flee away" (S of S 2:17). It is His inworking into our

hearts that has given us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and which is preparing us for the full day. It is the outshining of His glorious presence at the unveiling of the Sons of God that shall make every shadow flee away, and shall usher in a NEW DAY over the face of the whole earth!

Let us tend to the garden of our own lives with all diligence.

Chapter 15

DRESSING THE GARDEN

(continued)

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed to DRESS IT AND KEEP IT" (Gen 2:7-8,15).

In these articles on DRESSING THE GARDEN I am endeavoring to show that the lovely garden which God planted in Eden at the beginning of human history is a divine representation of man's state of being when first brought forth from the skillful and loving hands of his Creator. Adam was placed in this garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and was told to "dress" and to "keep" it. The word "dress" is the translation of a Hebrew word meaning "to work, to serve, to till, to be a bondsman, a husbandman – a gardener." The word "keep" actually means "guard," and the idea conveyed is to protect the precious plants and trees of the garden from every enemy, exercising a careful and loving stewardship over it, keeping it beautiful and orderly and flourishing, with every component in place and in harmonious relationship with the whole, that the fruit thereof might abound.

It would be a beautiful thing if all the saints of the Lord could have the spirit of revelation that would enable them to understand how the life of every child of God is a garden within God's garden. Though the Lord may let us tend a portion of His great Garden, though He may let us minister to many souls in different ways, there is a part of the garden of the Lord which He actually gives to each one of us; and that is the garden of our own lives. He would have us care for and guard our hearts above all we treasure and protect, for out of them are the issues of life. It is this hidden place of our innermost being that must be watched and tended more than all that appears on the outside. We must guard and protect the roots and hidden fibers of our beings; our thoughts, our impulses, our desires and motives. And the purpose of all this tending, dressing and guarding is that every plant and tree in the Garden shall bring forth FRUIT.

WHAT IS THE FRUIT?

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth MUCH FRUIT: for without Me ye can do nothing. Herein is My Father glorified, that YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT" (Jn 15:5,8).

Now the question readily arises, what is the fruit to be borne? Everywhere today carnal men with carnal minds have spawned many mis-conceptions concerning

the holy things of God. Oft times people have looked at some zealous evangelist or devoted missionary and piously exclaimed: "May the Lord give you a harvest of many souls" – as if this were the fruit for the preacher to produce! Truly, we rejoice with the angles in heaven over every sinner that comes to repentance (Lk 15:7,10), and there is a special joy that attends the birthing of a new life into the family of God; but I do not hesitate to declare to you, beloved, that winning souls to Jesus has nothing to do with "bearing fruit." To bear fruit is to produce a harvest, and a harvest speaks of gathering that which is MATURE, FULLY DEVELOPED, BROUGHT TO PERFECTION. Bringing souls into a salvation experience has little in common with this type of maturity and perfection, for such newborn babes in Christ are mere beginners, not mature ones; and BABIES ARE BORN, NOT HARVESTED. Paul wrote, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor 4:15). How clear from this verse that A NEW LIFE IS BROUGHT FORTH THROUGH THE TRAVAIL AND BIRTHING PROCESS, and such is not a harvesting of "maturity" but the beginning of a new life which must grow and develop unto maturity, that there may be fruit. All fruit is borne in maturity; such is the law of nature.

We all know what fruit is. The produce of the branch, by which men are refreshed and nourished. The fruit is not the same as the branch, nor is it for the branch, but for those who come to carry it away. As soon as the fruit is ripe, the branch gives it off, to commence afresh its work of beneficence, and anew prepare its fruit for another season. A fruit-bearing tree lives not for itself, but wholly for the owner of the orchard and for those to whom its fruit brings refreshment and life. And so the branch exists only and entirely for the sake of the fruit. To make glad the heart of the husbandman is its first object, its safety, and its glory; and to bless those who partake of its fruit, the second. With these facts in mind, how easy it should be to understand that the fruit we bear is not the souls we save, but that which is BORNE OUT OF OUR LIVES which is then the possession of the Owner of the Garden, to be distributed as He chooses to MAKE IT LIFE UNTO OTHERS. Souls are not the fruit; they eat of the fruit, are blessed by the fruit, and are quickened and nourished by the fruit.

The more we study the Bible and the more we see its themes unfold, the more we will discover that its many truths are in fact one truth. They are like the countless boards, nails and bricks that, though they be so many, and so diverse, make up one building. So is God's great and eternal storehouse of truth. As we consider this great truth of fruit-bearing in the Garden of the Lord, we cannot disassociate the fruit from the vine and branches that bear it. Twenty-five centuries ago Zechariah prophesied of One who should come, saying, "Behold, I will bring forth My servant the BRANCH" (Zech 3:8). This remarkable prophecy is amplified in its glory, majesty and wonder by these words of inspiration from the prophet Isaiah: "In that day shall the BRANCH OF THE LORD be glorious, and the FRUIT of the earth shall be excellent and comely" (Isa 4:2).

There are many descriptive terms which are used in the Word to speak of God's chosen ones, His elect. They are variously designated "the firstfruits," "the elect," "the body of Christ," "sons of God," "kings and priests," "army of the Lord," "kingdom of God," "temple of God," "arm of the Lord," "Zion," "city of God," "the anointed," "the Garden of God," "the little-stone" company which shall be used to smite all the kingdoms of this world, and bring forth the glorious Kingdom of our God, etc etc. This company is also called THE BRANCH OF THE LORD. Jesus said, "I am the Vine, YE ARE THE BRANCHES" (Jn 15:5). This is the Branch in the Garden of God, to be dressed, and tended, and guarded, that it shall bring forth much fruit, even a hundred fold.

May the blessed Holy Spirit give the reader eyes to see and a heart to understand that this is not usurping the place of our precious Lord Jesus Christ, when we speak of God's elect as THE BRANCH. All those who love God and revere His Word know that this title refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, for IN ALL THINGS He must have the pre-eminence; nevertheless, is it not the same God who inspired these words: "He that is joined to the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT" (I Cor 6:17). All of that called-out company of which He is the HEAD, and who are vitally joined to Him AS ONE SPIRIT, who also bear His name and share His glory and throne, are the BRANCHES OF HIM WHO IS THE TRUE VINE, the planting of the Lord.

Prov 11:28 says, "The righteous shall flourish as a branch." The word "flourish" is translated from the Hebrew word (parach) meaning "to break forth as a bud, to bloom (with fruit in view), to spring up, to spread abroad." This Branch of the Lord is a SPRINGING UP, GROWING, INCREASING, BLOSSOMING, FRUIT-BEARING Branch, rising up in the power of His resurrection, advancing from glory to glory, from strength to strength, from faith to faith, from fruitfulness to fruitfulness. So much of what we called fruit in the past, our multiplied works, efforts, promotions, organizings, and doings oft times withered and died, being consumed by the fire of God's testing; it perished with using, for it had no eternal quality in it, because IT SPRANG FROM SELF. But now that God is planting us in His Garden, making us the keepers of the Garden, that fruit which grows out of HIS GRACE, HIS LIFE WITHIN, will be abundant, and will remain, bless His name!

And what is the fruit to be borne by this flourishing branch? The answer is found in Jer 23:5-6 where we read, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a RIGHTEOUS BRANCH, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." The Branch of the Lord is called a "righteous Branch" and His name is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. "The RIGHTEOUS shall flourish as a BRANCH" (Prov 11:28). Righteousness is not soul winning, preaching, prophesying, speaking in tongues, healing, casting out devils, establishing churches, doing good works, nor any of the thousand and one other things mistakenly imagined to be "fruit." Righteousness is, first of all, a STATE OF BEING. Righteousness is, above all

else, a NATURE. Righteousness is not merely what a person does, but what he IS. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that WE MIGHT BE MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD in Him" (II Cor 5:21). It follows, however, that there is a doing of righteousness which proceeds from the being of righteousness.

What does righteousness mean? What is righteousness? "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but RIGHTEOUSNESS in the Holy Ghost" (Rom 14:17). Righteousness is RIGHT-BEING right living, right attitude, right desire, right motive, right actions, a total rightness in all things according to God's standard and as expression of God's nature. When you receive a new spirit, or right spirit, or Holy Spirit, you are destined to right being and right doing; you are destined to righteousness. David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a RIGHT SPIRIT within me" (Ps 51:10). Right being and right doing is attainable on this earth right now because of the right spirit. Who is the right spirit? Christ is the right spirit, a new spirit, the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit, the spirit of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The realities of the Kingdom of God are not to be found in the things you know about God nor in the knowledge and understanding you acquire even of the "deeper truths" of sonship, etc. One knows that a person is in the Kingdom of God because of the LIFE that emanates through him by the inworkings of the Spirit of God. Ah – God's chosen ones are plants in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, destined to bear fruit, even a hundred fold. To explain what the Kingdom of God is, sometimes it is important to know what the Kingdom of God is not. "For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (I Cor 4:20). The Kingdom of God is NOT IN WORD. You mean if you can preach like Paul, understanding all the mysteries, explain all the deep revelations, know all about pre-existence, the pre-Adamic creation, where Cain got his wife, how the different races of men originated, who are the lost ten tribes of Israel, who is the antichrist, what is the mark of the beast, when the tribulation will begin, how the sons of God shall conquer death, the mysteries of the Kaballah, the collapse of the international money system, the Illuminati, pyramidology, etc etc – the full and correct understanding of all these things is not the Kingdom of God? No! "The Kingdom of God is not in word (understanding, teaching, doctrine), but in POWER." If the Kingdom of God is in power, what kind of power would that be? It would have to be GOD POWER. The Bible reveals that God is a Spirit; therefore, the Kingdom of God would be SPIRIT POWER. God is love. I ask you, Is there power in love? Is there power in peace? I would say there is power in peace! Is there power in joy? If you have joy, you are not going to be sobbing and crying for fear of being destroyed, or because somebody did you wrong. There is power in joy! It is contagious. There is power in peace. It is contagious. There is power in love; power to soften the hardest heart, to reconcile the bitterest foe, to transform the wickedest of men! There is power in temperance. There is power in gentleness. There is power in faith. There is power in goodness. There is power in patience and longsuffering. There is power in righteousness. There are nine virtues of the fruit of the Spirit and each one is a spiritual reality, and this is

the very power that constitutes the Kingdom of God – the power that is destined to change the whole world even as it has and is CHANGING YOU. The Kingdom of God is not in word, but it is in power. The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but is righteousness – or RIGHT BEING AND DOING. It is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost!

What does your life emanate to others? What flows from your lips, your moods, your disposition, your actions and reactions? Can those who draw nigh to this Garden where you are planted see or sense peace, joy, love, life and righteousness? Is there power, a Godly power, a divine power, coming from your life? Forgiveness, mercy, humility, godliness, THIS is what the Kingdom of God is, and this is the FRUIT to be borne upon the branches of your life and mine.

Abiding in HIM, He will cause to increase the fruits of your righteousness. That which springs out of "man" will fade and fail, for the natural is but a shadow soon dissipated. That which is produced out of the carnal mind holds within it the sentence of death, for to be carnally minded is death. But that which springs forth from our spirit, which has been quickened by the Spirit of God, this fruit, this generation of HIS NEW LIFE will grow, expanding our righteousness, increasing the characteristics of Himself, which redounds to His praise.

Ah, yes, the FRUIT of the Vine is the product of the life in the Vine, taking of that life and producing from it a substance that can be visible to others and of which they can eat and live. Is your life influencing other people for God? As a son of God you will find there is life flowing through you. This is merely the presence of Jesus Christ within you, and the divine realities within this presence are the fruit that is being formed. He who bears such fruit, amid all who surround him, becomes a Tree OF LIFE of which they can taste and be refreshed. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me" (Jn 15:4). All fruit is the expression, manifestation and outflow of HIS SPIRIT OF LIFE DWELLING WITHIN. The seed of life is HIS, the growth is HIS, the fruitage is HIS, and we are but the earthen vessel which He has energized and nourished to bear the fruit. And what is the fruit, Souls? No! "THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal 5:22-23). The fruit is WHAT HE IS, manifested in our lives and made edible to those who so desperately need to partake of HIM!

There is a beautiful parallel between the second chapter of Genesis and the book of the Song of Solomon, chapter two, verse thirteen wherein we read: "The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell." Another translation reads: "As for the fig tree, it has gained a mature color for its early figs; and the vines are abloom, they have given their fragrance." The Hebrew indicates that the fig tree, upon which abundant fruitage has been preparing during the winter, has begun to "make red" her green figs, bringing into manifestation the CONDITION OF MATURITY and fullness. It is interesting to

note that the fig is a winter fruit in Palestine which remains on the branches until spring. This denotes a fruit which has passed through the winter of testing and has survived, bespeaking the fruit we acquire in our lives through discipline and severe trials, but which, when spring arrives, comes forth in luscious rich sweetness. Figs need more moisture than most, and the spiritual application is clear, those who come to this maturity require the full measure of the water of the Spirit and the Word. The figs must be well tended to hasten their maturity. There was an ancient custom to hasten the maturity of the figs which consisted in dropping a drop of pure olive oil on the eye of the fig. Beautiful image of God's elect – anointed with the pure olive oil of HIS SPIRIT, watered with the pure water of HIS WORD, well tended, cultivated and guarded – an abundant harvest of HIS LIFE!

"And the vines are in blossom; they give forth their fragrance." "The vines," symbolic of the true Vine, are laden with fragrant blossoms. This symbolizes the birth and pure, fragrant life of our Lord when He was upon earth. The flowers on the vine have their place, and Christ's holy, spotless life had its place; but if there were only blossoms on the grapevine, with no fruit, the blossoms, however fragrant and beautiful they might be, would profit nothing. Even so with the true Vine. If the pure, fragrant life of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth were all, then there would be no fruit; and His life would have profited nothing in the redemption of the human race. But our Lord's life on earth was perfected, the fruit was perfected and gathered, and the juice of the fruit flowed out when He hung upon Calvary. It was only as He died that He opened up the way for bringing MANY SONS to glory. It was as He died that the incorruptible seed of His perfect and divine life was taken from the fruit of His being to be planted in all who receive of His life by faith. Those who do not understand the greatness of God's purpose in sonship, those whose eyes are blinded to the realities of this hour, those who comprehend not that there shall come forth in this hour a many-membered body IN HIS LIKENESS, CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE, the COMPLETENESS OF HIM, really exalt the flowers of His historical life above the fruit, which comes forth more abundantly as His life flows through the many branches and is there formed into a substance of beauty and sweetness and nourishment.

As with our Lord who is the true Vine, so with the believers who are the branches; the blossoms, however beautiful and fragrant, profit nothing if they wither away and fall off, and there is no fruit. Experiencing His blessings, however beautiful and enjoyable, profits nothing except His life be formed within. We are warned that those that have no fruit shall be taken away; but the great Husbandman prunes those that show signs of life, and have even a little fruitfulness. He purges and cuts off all suckers and fruitless wood that they may bear more fruit; and if they abide in the Vine, Christ, they shall bear much fruit.

Already the Kingdom of Heaven is beginning to show promise of a great and eternal harvest. Already the warmth and light from the "Sun of righteousness," who has arisen with healing in His wings, has moved upon our hearts, and the hearts of many thousands of God's people across the land and around the world,

moving upon that which was dead and dormant; and in the place of dry, dead branches, tender shoots are springing forth. Out of the dry ground of our humanity has a "Root-sprout come forth" (Isa 53:2). Ah, beloved, a Shoot has come forth, and a Branch out of His roots which shall bear fruit (Isa 11:1). This Root-sprout is Jesus Christ, and the Branches are the many sons He is leading to glory. Arise! Behold the dawn! Drink of the intoxicating freshness of the morn! Walk up and down through the Garden of the Lord and smell the fragrance that fills the air from the blossoms upon the Vine, the sweet savor before God of the "beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" being formed in the "many brethren" that follow the Lamb. This sweet savor ascends from every branch that abides in Christ, and from those heavenly blossoms, which shall become fruit for eternity unto the glory of God.

THE KEEPERS OF THE VINEYARD

"Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; everyone for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver. My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred" (S of S 8:11-12).

The literal meaning of "Baal-hamon" is "the owner of a multitude." Solomon typifies the Lord Jesus Christ and the vineyard corresponds to the garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Not only is the Lord Jesus Christ the owner of a multitude, but He has planted His Vineyard in the midst of this multitude; and from the multitude men are taken and planted in His Vineyard. In the Old Testament, the people of God were as the sands of the sea; and throughout the Book of Revelation, we see that the Redeemed throng is pictured as "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev 7:9). Then – beyond the great multitude, there is a more select and favored class – the 144,000 chosen ones, having the Father's name written in their foreheads, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth (all the way with God), being the firstfruits (of the matured ones) unto God and to the Lamb (Rev 14:1-5).

In the above verses quoted from the Song of Solomon it is stated the Vineyard of the Lord was "let out unto keepers." The keepers are the sons of God, for Adam of old was a son of God (Lk 3:38) and was put in the Garden "to dress it and keep it." We are appointed to till, keep, prune, nurture, and care for the Lord's ground and plants, and He will presently reward the faithful keepers with the increase of the fruits. The keepers were to bring to Solomon a thousand pieces of silver for the fruit of the Vineyard, representing the full value of the fruit.

ONE THOUSAND (and all the zeros of the thousands) is the number in scripture connected with THE GLORY OF GOD. The highest number referred to in any way in the Bible is ten thousands times ten thousand, and the whole picture

surrounding this number bespeaks the majesty of the GLORY OF GOD. "I beheld till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels like burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand(s) times ten thousand stood before Him" (Dan 7:9-10). "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels (messengers) round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand(s) times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev 5:11-12).

Interesting that in connection with the "thousand years" in chapter 20 and 21 of Revelation, John was carried away in the Spirit and showed "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, HAVING THE GLORY OF GOD: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Rev 21:10-11). As you study these things you will notice that the scriptures show conclusively that ONE THOUSAND is the number of THE GLORY OF GOD. There is a most significant truth here, to which the Spirit of God would draw our attention. When the keepers of the Vineyard render a thousand pieces of silver to the Lord of the Vineyard, this price represents the FULL VALUE OF THE FRUIT, signifying that they return unto the Lord all He has inworked into their lives, the price of all the fruitage borne, so that HE RECEIVES ALL THE GLORY for all that has been wrought! A thousand pieces of silver, all the glory of the fruitage, rendered unto the Lord, for He is worthy, bless His name.

Now notice that the value of the fruit of the Vineyard is a thousand pieces of silver. Silver is a symbol of redemption, and full redemption means deliverance from all the power and effects of sin and death – spirit, soul, and body. Here we have the blessed end to which Christ and life in Him leads. The word redemption, though many times applied to our deliverance from the guilt of sin, refers to our complete and final deliverance from all its power and consequences, when the Redeemer's work shall become fully manifest, breaking all the power of the carnal mind and nature of the soul, even to the redemption of the body itself.

Andrew Murray has written: "'But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption' (I Cor 1:30). Christ is made unto us REDEMPTION. The word invites us to look unto Jesus our forerunner, not only as He lived on earth, teaching us by word and example, as He died, to reconcile us to God, but as, sitting at the right hand of God, He takes again the glory which He had with the Father, before the world began, and holds it there for us. His glory consists in this, that there His human nature, yea, His human body, freed from all the consequences of sin to which He had once been exposed, is now admitted to share the divine and eternal glory of GOD. As Son of Man, He dwells on the throne and in the bosom of the Father: the deliverance from what He had to suffer from the power of sin and death is

complete and eternal. The complete redemption is found embodied in His own glorious Person: what He as glorified man is and has in heaven IS THE COMPLETE REDEMPTION. HE is made of God to us redemption!

“We are in Him and He is in us as redemption. And the more intelligently and believingly we acknowledge Him as our redemption, the more shall we experience, even now, of “the powers of the age to come.” As our communion with Him becomes more intimate and intense, and we let the Holy Spirit reveal HIM to us in His heavenly glory, the more we realize how the life in us is the life of the One who sits upon the throne of the heavens. We feel the power of an endless life working in us. We taste the eternal life. We have the foretaste of the eternal glory. It is here! He is made to us redemption – now! The sanctification of the soul, the transformation of the body is no longer a barren doctrine, but a living expectation, and even an incipient experience, because the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in our bodies as the pledge that even our mortal bodies shall be quickened. This faith exercises a sanctifying influence in the willing surrender of the sinful members of the body to be mortified and completely subjected to the dominion of the Spirit, as preparation for the time when the frail body shall be changed and fashioned like to His body of glory.”

Thus now with all conviction I tell you that when the keepers of the Vineyard render unto the Lord of the Vineyard a thousand pieces of silver, they present before Him THE FINISHED PRODUCT OF REDEMPTION, which is naught but THEMSELVES CONFORMED INTO HIS LIKENESS, spirit, soul, and body. And it is a thousand pieces of silver, for it is ALL TO HIS GLORY, as it is also the manifestation OF HIS GLORY. “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18). “Who shall transform this body of ours which has been humiliated by the presence of indwelling sin and by death and decay, so that it will be conformed TO HIS BODY OF HIS GLORY” (Phil 3:21, Wuest).

The prize of sonship to God is a prize beyond the scope of human imagination. To be a son of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ that “as He is so are we in this present world” is a hope which defies all possibility of description. The hope that burns perennial like a fire within the breasts of God's elect sons is the inspiration that inspires them to tend the gardens of their lives, to prune and purge and purify their hearts that they might be pure even as He is pure. These are filled with holy zeal and determination to faithfully dress and keep their vineyards, that they may bring forth fruit unto God, fruit that will redound TO THE GLORY OF GOD, and to HIM alone!

Every man and woman who in this hour cherishes the hope of sonship rejoices that God has called him to be conformed to the image of His own dear Son; and in order that he may do this, God has given him the needed tools of the Spirit and the Word, with which to guard and tend every avenue of his life. He rejoices that the Lord has really given him this sacred trust as “keeper of the Vineyard,” and he determines that it shall ever be before his eyes; he will not neglect nor lose

sight of it day nor night until the fruit thereof has been brought forth and the Lord of the Vineyard receives His "thousand" – ALL THE GLORY.

Those apprehended to sonship are not busy working for God with the motive of self-interest, nor for what it will bring them. They are not thinking of joy and all those other spiritual blessings that come from obeying the Father and doing His will. We scarcely realize the mixed motives that oft times defile our prayers and even enter into our obedience to God. We think we desire only His glory; but we become taken up with the satisfaction we shall have when we are overcomers, with the joy that will be ours when we reach the place where we live and walk in the Spirit continually, and with the power that shall flow through us when we rule and reign with Christ in the Kingdom. We pray for healing and think that we want it for God's glory, but we are really taken up with the advantage it will bring to us, the ego of our faith, our victory, etc and even the earthly things we shall enjoy once we are well! We pray for God to use us in the saving of souls and think that we desire this for His glory, when we are really concerned about the apparent "success" of "our ministry" and its enhancement as we quote to others the "statistics" of how many people we have won to Christ. We seek after gifts and manifestations, for God's glory we think, while beneath lurks the secret desire to appear "spiritual" before men, and the satisfaction of the esteem and recognition the gift brings.

There is nothing in the whole world so deceiving as our innermost motives! We pray that God will save souls, that He will supply our needs, that He will bring us into closer communion with Himself; we pray for so many things that are right and legitimate and would be for His glory; but if the Spirit searches out our innermost and deepest motives, we should be dismayed how much SELF INTEREST has entered in. Why do you long for the flesh and the moving of the self-life to be put away? Why are you praying that the Holy Spirit shall take full control of you, enabling you to continually live and walk in the Spirit? Why have you desired to be a joint heir with Christ, to share His throne, reigning in the Kingdom? Why have you prayed all those prayers of the past, which have gone up before the face of God, bearing such great petitions and such magnificent promises? Has your motive and desire been for FRUIT and only that GOD SHALL BE GLORIFIED, or have you looked at the benefit that would come to you?

Why have you grieved that there were so many waste places in your life, so many unworthy things, so much that was un-Christlike? Has your one sorrow and grief been, that your Lord has not been glorified in you as God had planned? Or was it regret for your own failures and humiliation, because of the effect they had upon your prestige and influence with others? "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred" (S of S 8:12). Too often we are concerned that the thousand shall be ours, and we give the two hundred to the Lord. We want all the joy, the blessing, and we are thinking of our own delight and the increase in our own lives; but we forget that ALL MUST BE GIVEN TO OUR SOLOMON, all

must be for HIM and for HIM alone, and He gives back to us the two hundred; for it is we who tend the Vineyard of the Lord.

How remarkable that the keepers of the Vineyard receive back, out of the thousand, exactly TWO HUNDRED pieces of silver. The spiritual significance of the number two hundred is most meaningful, being 2 x 100. ONE HUNDRED is the number that stands in the Scriptures for THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE, or THE SONS OF GOD. Isaac, a child of promise, was born when Abraham was a hundred years old "And Abraham was an HUNDRED years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him" (Gen 21:5). Isaac was a type of the children of promise, or the promised seed, Christ, Head and body, that company of kings and priests destined to bring deliverance to the groaning creation, the many-membered SON. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28). "In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom 9:7-8). The number ONE HUNDRED is connected with Isaac's sowing and reaping, and God's blessing, even a hundred fold fruitage: "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an HUNDRED fold: and the Lord BLESSED him" (Gen 26:12). Isaac received this HUNDRED FOLD in the harvest time, the time of MATURE FRUIT. In His parable about the tares Jesus said, "The good seed are the children of the Kingdom the harvest is the end of the age. THEN SHALL THE RIGHTEOUS SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN IN THE KINGDOM OF THEIR FATHER (Mat 13:38-39,43). The Lord roots out the tares, but gathers His wheat (matured sons) into His barn (as provision for the world's hunger).

Jesus likened His apprehended ones unto an HUNDRED sheep gathered into a fold. He is not speaking of the conversion of unbelievers, but of His dealings with HIS OWN SHEEP, the children of the promise. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? If a man have an HUNDRED sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Mat 18:11-12). "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be ONE FOLD and ONE HUNDRED" (Jn 10:16). The number ONE HUNDRED also appears in a number of significant places in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness.

I dare not attempt any detail here, but the number TWO is the number of WITNESS. TWO HUNDRED is TWO TIMES ONE HUNDRED. So putting these meanings together, ONE HUNDRED standing for the children of promise, the sons of God, and TWO standing for witness. The number TWO HUNDRED reveals THE WITNESS OF THE SONS OF GOD, or GOD'S SONS AS HIS WITNESS. Isn't that beautiful! It is completely impossible to over-emphasize the importance of this great truth: it is given to us to become the sons of God, the expression and witness of God in the earth, that is our two hundred – but to HIM belongs the thousand, to GOD BE ALL THE GLORY, in all things, at all times,

forever; for all that we have and are and shall ever be are OF HIM and FROM HIM, and FOR HIM, and TO HIM, blessed be the name of the Lord!

It is through the inworkings of God in our lives that the increase is brought forth for the Owner of the Garden. Every time some measure of His life is worked in us through the dealings that He brings our way, every time faith and love are increased, every time we partake of the working of the cross and put off something of the flesh, every time the mind of Christ rules in our lives a little more, we add a piece of silver to the revenue that He has a right to expect from the vineyards and gardens. He has planted, for He becomes more and more GLORIFIED IN US. As we die daily that His life may be manifested, we add piece by piece to the increase that we have covenanted to give to Him. Let it encourage our hearts to remember that every time we put to the test our union with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection, we are depositing precious pieces of silver, the outworking of His redemption, to redound to His praise and glory. The two hundred which is given back to us is of the thousand unto Him, so that, precious and wonderful as it is, all we have and are is ENTIRELY BY HIS GRACE and UNTO HIS GLORY.

To the keepers of the Vineyard comes this word: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; BREAK UP YOUR FALLOW GROUND: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hosea 10:12). The deeper the plow goes, the more the ground is prepared, the more abundant the crop. If we refuse to submit to the plow, is it any wonder there is little fruit? Praise God, though the processing has not been easy upon the self-life, as HIS DEALINGS have faithfully come upon our lives, He surely has been causing our fallow ground to be thoroughly broken up, breaking the hard clods of our pre-conceived ideas, dislodging the rocks of our self-will, tearing out the imbedded roots of our own fleshly desires and the carnal traditions of religion which resisted the inworking of truth, and thus enlarging the field for a greater crop of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Turn to the flesh, follow the ways of the carnal mind, as did Adam in his garden; try to become something in yourself, and you will ultimately wither right in the furrow where you tried so hard to become a plant of beauty. It is high time to SEEK THE LORD till HE rain righteousness upon us! Turn from all of man's programs and efforts, turn from the frenzy of religious activity promoted by church systems, for many of the Lord's people let the so-called work of the Lord steal away the anointing and unction that would transform them into the image of the Son. Many let the energy and activity of running here and there, doing this and that "for God" soothe them into a vain belief that all this religious fervor is really speed in following Jesus Christ. There is a true work of the Lord, that which is WROUGHT BY HIS SPIRIT through us, but let me assure you that Babylon's confusion will not produce true spirituality, nor will any of her ways and manners. But they who seek the Lord, turning to HIM with all their heart, find that God will plow, cultivate, water, settle, prune and bless His Garden until every plant and vine and tree shall flourish and be found to His praise and glory. It requires a

separation from all that lies without His Garden, from all the rest of the world, to be cut off from the thoughts and reasonings and methods of this world's systems; but it also means to be renewed INTO THE MIND OF CHRIST, praise God, until HIS MIND operates in you as the very normal out-living of His life, will, and purpose.

Yes, beloved, let us find ourselves in the Garden of the Lord, let us see ourselves under the mighty hand of the Master Husbandman as the keepers of the Garden, and may we determine to tend well this garden of our lives in Christ. As this evil age comes to its climax, every allurements of the world is exerting itself, to entice mankind. The kingdoms of this world seek to swallow up even the elect in their grasp. But there is another, higher Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, which is not of this world, a realm of life which is not derived from this world's systems and orders. Thus this becomes a day of crucial decision – not just for the baby Christians held captive within Babylon's walls, but for the deepest saint – to which kingdom are we totally committed? Those called to maturity can no longer stand with one foot in the Garden of the Lord, and the other foot planted in Babylon. There must be a renunciation of all that is not of the SPIRIT, a deliberate stand for truth, a separation unto GOD, abandoning all else, to FOLLOW THE LAMB WHITHERSOEVER HE GOETH, renouncing all other paths, and it is here, in the good soil of the Kingdom of God that we will find hundred fold fruitage, for when HIS WILL and HIS WAY is our supreme desire, it becomes the fertile field of rich growth and increase of HIS LIFE.

Chapter 16

DRESSING THE GARDEN ***(continued)***

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed to DRESS IT AND KEEP IT" (Gen 2:7-8,15).

As the pattern of things in the book of Genesis progresses, we see unfold before our wondering eyes a word which, when perceived, is seen to be one of the great Principles of the Kingdom of God. This word reveals the grand and glorious truth that just as surely as GOD PLANTED EDEN'S LOVELY GARDEN, so certain is it that He then placed Adam in the Garden TO DRESS IT AND TO KEEP IT (Gen 2:7-8,15). As surely as the planting is the Lord's, the dressing and keeping is committed to Adam. These words are far too potent and full of meaning to be read over carelessly, or considered merely as a statement of historical fact to be lightly laid aside and forgotten. Herein lies the source of a river of wisdom and understanding. This is a gate through which God's chosen ones pass on their way to the treasure house of the knowledge of God. Here are things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man. Here are wonderful and priceless principles by which the Kingdom of God is developed as a living and quickening reality in the lives of God's Sons.

Adam was a son of God (Lk 3:38) and was placed in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven to dress it and to keep it, but failing to attend to the garden of his own soul, to prune away the desires of the carnal mind, to dig up the weeds of his self-life, he became unfruitful, ready for cursing, as was the tree upon which Jesus found no fruit. Under the curse Adam withered and died, alienated from the life that is in God. Can we not see by this that the first work in the Lord's Garden, which He entrusts to us and calls upon to do, is to care for and guard our own lives and first partake of the fruit? How very important this becomes in the light of the wonderful truth that the blessed Garden of the Kingdom of God is planted eastward in the Eden of God's great and eternal domain, and from its portals shall come that many-membered MAN, the LAST ADAM, Head and body, the CORPORATE SON OF GOD, who is the image of God, whose authority and Lordship is destined to be as boundless as the heavens, for God shall put all things under His feet!

DEALINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE GARDEN

The first step in the preparation of the sons of God is when we are lifted out of the vineyards of the world and planted in the Garden of God. Then, many and varied are the ways and paths by which the Lord in faithfulness processes and develops the people He has chosen. A most important aspect of this preparation is found tucked away among the priceless gems in the treasure house of truth of the Song of Solomon "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my Garden, that the spices thereof may flow out" (S of S 4:16).

A number of the thoughts I shall share concerning the winds that blow upon the Garden of the Lord, and the majesty of the palm tree in His Garden, have been either inspired by, or gleaned from, the writings of C H Macllraavy (out of print).

Let us try to understand what it means, this cry of the heart, "Come, O wind; blow upon my Garden." In becoming partakers of the realities of the Kingdom of God, there is a work God does and a work we have to do. God does His work by moving us to do our work. The work of God is hidden and silent; what we do is something distinct and tangible. Conversion and faith, prayer and obedience, putting off the carnal mind and putting on the mind of Christ, forsaking the traditions of religion and walking in the Spirit, are all conscious acts of which we can give a clear account; while the spiritual quickening and strengthening and direction that come from God are secret and beyond the reach of human sight, wrought deep within the spirit of the inner man. It is the work of God to cause the believer to hunger and thirst for fuller measures of HIS LIFE AND REALITY, and this work is not effected from without, but from within, as the Spirit of God, dwelling in the quickened spirit of the child of God, stirs him from the inner depths of his being to desire a further dealing, unveiling and experiencing of God. Out of this secret and hidden moving of God bursts the heart-cry: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my Garden, that the spices thereof may flow out!"

The word, wind, in both the Hebrew and in the Greek, is the same word that is translated, "Spirit," in other places. When the rains had ended in the days of the great Flood, God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters were assuaged. Wind often serves in type of the moving of God's Spirit. "There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2). Let it be clear – though the time has often seemed long in God's dealings within us, and while the vision tarries, we have to hold steady and just WAIT FOR IT – things which the Spirit has spoken in our hearts that He will do IN and THROUGH a people – yet He knows the hour when the SPIRIT OF GOD SHALL BLOW ACROSS OUR LAND, bringing the creative power of God in victory and fulfillment in Christ.

The way into the Kingdom of Heaven was opened up through Christ's first advent, by His death and resurrection. When the time of His departure drew nigh, He promised His followers that He would not leave them desolate, or orphans; but that He would pray the Father, who would give them another Comforter, even the Holy Spirit; whom the world could not receive. It was not until Jesus had

opened up the way into the Garden of the Lord, and was glorified, that the Holy Spirit was poured forth and began His work (Acts 2:32-33; Jn 16:8). When the clouds of sin and darkness and death and unbelief have hidden the sky, "The wind (or Spirit) passeth, and cleareth them. Out of the north cometh golden splendor; God hath upon Him terrible majesty" (Job 37:21-22). Thus is it with that working of the Holy Spirit, which is called the "North Wind." He comes, blowing upon our Garden, convicting, judging, shaking, stirring, blasting, reproofing, dealing. It is He who convicts us when we are not walking in the Spirit; it is He who teaches and stirs us up to press on; He shows us where we are slack and where we must put off the flesh, that we may put on Christ. He moves upon the dark clouds of the carnal mind, He moves upon the fog of man's traditions and theories and self-righteousness. Out of the north, He moves upon all that hides the truth from our vision; and as He clears the spiritual atmosphere about us, the golden splendor of the light of God shines into our lives, with the revelation of His terrible majesty, His awesome greatness!

It takes both the cold north wind and the warm pleasant south wind to bring the spices to perfection. A flower garden is more than a pretty sight. It is a place of fragrance. "Camphor with spikenard, and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices..." (S of S 4:13-14). We are not only to look good to others, but also to smell good to them. Since the seeds that the Lord plants in the garden of our hearts are of divine impartation, it naturally follows that the flowers that bloom will give forth a rich, heavenly perfume that is out of this world! If the seeds are from out of this world, so is the fragrance. Oh, what a lovely parable God has chosen to depict the redeemed heart and life in which Christ is being formed! Have you ever been in a store or on the street, when a girl passed by so deliciously perfumed that the air was filled with the sweet fragrance, and if you had dared, you would have asked her the name of the perfume so you could secure some for yourself. It should be the same with every child of God – we should be so saturated with divine aroma that it flows out to be noticed and enjoyed by all creation.

May the garden of my heart, O lovely Christ
Be fragrant with the odors of thy grace;
May sweet perfume of blooming flowers
Make pleasant, Lord, Thy dwelling place.

May fruitful vines and trees abound,
Lest tares spring up to spoil or mar;
For the beauty of Thy fruitful garden
Must waft its perfume near and far.

Send heavenly mercy drops of rain
To water off its flower and trees,
The buds and blooms shed forth perfume
With every south wind's gentle breeze.

O let the cold north wind flow, too,
That fiercer blast may have their part
Within Thy fenced-in dwelling place,
The garden, Lord, of mine own heart.

– Eldora E. Taylor

That is the purpose of the wind – to blow upon the Garden in order that it might reach down inside the flowers and bring up the aroma, so that it might be carried to others. And that is the reason that God who holds all the wind in His hand, released one of them in your direction or mine – in order that the sweet fragrance of the divine nature might be wafted on the ether waves to others. “Awake, O north wind... blow upon my garden.” Who would ever pray for a North Wind? But, whether or not you ever pray for it, it is apt to come anyway. Hardly a day goes by in the life of any son of God that he is not visited by some contrary or stormy wind. They come unexpectedly, often leaving us upset, confused and worse. “O that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; yea, I would wander afar, I would lodge in the wilderness, I would haste to find me a shelter from the raging wind and tempest” (Ps 55:6-8). We, too, would many times like to escape from these harrowing winds, but cannot. God is in the wind and His word is faithfully and powerfully wrought in us by the wind. The prophet Nahum writes: “His way is in the whirlwind and storm” (Nahum 1:3).

We are the Garden of God, and He sends the cold winds of persecution, adversity and trials, to blow upon us to help perfect the fruit in us and to disperse the fragrance of Christ. The north wind will certainly strip us – leaving a veritable picture of frustration and devastation in its wake. But God does not send the chilly blasts against us because He is angry with us, or because He delights in punishing us. As Bill Britten has written, “These things are necessary in order to bring us to His glory. He put the gates on the north side of the City of God for a purpose. In our reluctance to suffer, we would rather He had just built a strong wall on the north side and put no gates in it. But His wisdom is greater than ours. Thank God, He also put gates on the south side. That lets in the blessings, prosperity, the warmth of His presence and His peace. These and many more of the good things of God are necessary also to our growth. It would be a cold hard journey if it was all trials and no blessings. Open the south gates, friends, and enjoy the goodness of God! But do not run and hide when the northern gale blows fierce through your land.” And so it is that even though you do not pray for the north wind to blow upon your Garden, if God, in His infinite wisdom, sees that that is what is needed “that the spices thereof may flow out,” you can put it down for certain that the north wind is going to blow!

The spices in the garden of life only flow out when the winds blow. No wind – no fragrance. There are rich treasures hidden within the new creation life within which would remain undiscovered forever if the blast of the winds did not disclose them. There is more power and divine life in every one of us than we ourselves know. We have not begun to explore the potentialities of the Christ

within. There are latent within vast susceptibilities, boundless aspirations, intense powers of loving and working; but we ourselves are ignorant of their presence and scope until the winds blow. We wait for the breath of heaven to disengage the perfume that lies in our flowers of life; we need the north wind and the south to blow upon our garden that the spices thereof may flow out. There are some folk who adapt a sort of philosophical attitude when the north wind blows and their little world closes in around them. In the midst of all the turmoil and upheaval they say, "Well, I suppose God is working out something in me, doing for me something that He sees needs to be done." "For me!" Why can we never get beyond "me"? Me, me, me. Always thinking of "me." Did it ever occur to you that God has others in mind besides you? True, He allows certain episodes to take place in your particular sphere – and there is, certainly, much to be accomplished in your life, a great deal of advancement and perfection – but, after all, there are others, too, a whole creation groaning and travailing for the manifestation, the out flowing of God from His sons. That is what both the fruit and the spices are for. The perfume is to flow out! So when He desires to awaken a person to the power of His life, He can send the north wind upon your garden and let that other soul watch you and your reaction. He puts you, or your garden, on display, and says, "Look over there if you want to see what the grace of God can do in a life, that is processed by Me. Look at the wind blow. Look at those flowers. Do you smell that perfume? It is divine. It is out of this world! and the fruit – it is the fruit of a divine life. Eat of it – and you, too, will live!

It is not the severe episodes through which we sometimes go, that are an end in themselves, but rather the means to an end. Do not magnify the means, or the wind, but meditate deeply upon the eventualities. Think of the objectives, the ultimate outworking of God. By faith look down through the vista of all God's dealings and we see what a glorious accomplishment will have taken place. "Stormy wind fulfilling His word" (Ps 148:8). Instead of becoming too preoccupied with the individual notes played by one instrument, anticipate rather the grand finale of God's majestic symphony when all of His instruments combine to produce heaven's harmony in one last melodious chord of glorious triumph! Then you will be glad that the winds blew.

It has been said that variety is the spice of life. The wind does not always blow with the same velocity, nor from the same direction. After so long a time there is a change. Our loving heavenly Father who holds all the winds in His hand is omniscient. He knows just when to cause one wind to cease blowing and when to turn another loose.

Blessed be God! the Holy Spirit comes to God's elect, not only as the north wind, but also as the south wind. It is after the work of conviction, stripping, and purging, that the Holy Spirit comes as the Comforter. It is after man's unworthiness is uncovered, that the spirit comes as the balmy south wind. With warm rain and gentle breezes, He brings encouraging movings within us as we listen to His voice and yield to Him. As the south wind, the Holy Spirit woos us on

and reveals our destiny in Christ, bringing to us a deeper apprehension of the magnitude of the grace of God, the gracious purpose of God for His entire creation, and the high and holy calling with which we are called as sons of God.

It is after He has come with convicting and purging power, showing us our shortage and the vanity of our confidence in ourselves and of all our efforts and abilities, that He comes with encouragement, enlightenment and quickening and points to OUR SUFFICIENCY IN JESUS CHRIST. It is when, as the north wind, He has blasted all our self-activities; and, through a revelation of ourselves, He has brought us low in the dust of humiliation, that He comes as the gentle Spirit of consolation and faith and reveals to us that CHRIST WITHIN will do all and must be our all in all. Then He blows upon that which remains after the work of purging and pruning, He gently waters it with warm, refreshing rains, He reveals Jesus Christ as all we need; and the blossoms that are left, begin to grow and bear fruit. The spices begin to send out their fragrance.

The south wind melts the snow and ice. Frigidity is gone. No more icicles; no more frost. No more chill. The soft, balmy southern breeze brings about a thawing, a melting, a flowing together. "And... the south wind blew softly" (Acts 27:13). "For, lo, the winter is past... the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine with the tender grape gives a good smell" (S of S 2:11-13).

"The Garden," which both in Genesis and in the Song of Solomon has the significance of the Kingdom of God, has been set up on earth by the work of Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. In this Garden, God has planted precious plants, stately trees, costly spices and aromatic herbs. This "Garden" is not only the universal Kingdom of the Lord, not only do we live and feed and work in this Garden, but we are part of it. Each of our lives is a little vineyard which is a part of God's great Vineyard, a little garden which is a part of God's great Garden. Thus we pray earnestly that the work which the Holy Spirit must do in our "gardens," may be done to the glory of God. Very often, we are more inclined to ask God to bless us, supply our needs, heal, perform miracles, flood our souls with glory, than we are to pray that He will deal and uncover all that is hindering Him from perfecting that which concerneth us. Ah, the blessings will come, the glory will be revealed, the fullness will break upon us, but the north wind must blow first!

Dear reader, are we crying from the depths of our hearts, "Awake, O North Wind"? Are our hearts longing for Him to blow upon our gardens in stripping and dealing and testing, however hard it may be on the flesh? Can we pray most fervently that God will send His Spirit, as the north wind, to search out the pride, to search out the self-interest and self-will, to search out the unholy passions, emotions and desires, to search out even the hidden spirit of Babylon that remains; and that He will blow upon it until it is blasted and drops off, and we are clothed in humility and righteousness and the mind of Christ?

Are we praying that the Lord of the Vineyard will send the Holy Spirit, as the north wind, and strip away the false assurance that believes we have more than we have, and mistakes revelation for possession? How many times we assumed that we had entered into possession of those things that God had showed us and called us to begin to possess. How many times God has let us see the blessedness of the path in which we walk alone with Him, and we thought we were walking in it. But when He sent the Spirit to blow upon our lives, we found that HE WAS NOT OUR ALL IN ALL; that we were yet depending upon some one else, or something else, be it our feelings, our works, gifts, ministries, meetings etc rather than upon the Lord.

How little we recognize our own plans and desires, which are as suckers in our spiritual lives. How little we appreciate the place we give the flesh and our own interests, our likes and dislikes, our experiences and self-absorption, our religious activities and multiplied works, which eat the strength and life out of our relationship with God. When God sends the Holy Spirit as the north wind, He comes and uncovers our nakedness, exposing the fleshliness of our thoughts, acts and position. With a blast of conviction, He blows upon those suckers, and like a mighty wind He sweeps down upon them to try them. As they fall off, we are left apparently stripped and bare; but, in reality, we are in a better condition to bring forth blossoms and fruit to His glory than we have been before.

Can we look into His face with confidence and say: "Awake, O North Wind, and blow upon my garden? Lord, send the testings and processings that you see I need; send the hard things that are needed to try every blossom. Blow upon the blossoms in my life that are so beautiful and look as if they would bear luscious fruit for Thy glory; blow upon my gifts, and ministries, and works, and doctrines, and plans, and hopes, and ambitions, and doings and prove them whether they will abide, or whether they have no beginning of fruit in them." How many of God's dealings and revelations have been rejoiced in, how many of His callings to higher places in Him have made much show before our eyes, how we have reveled in the knowledge of His High calling, of sonship, of the Glory to be revealed in us, of the great and powerful ministry to come with His Fullness, of the throne to be shared in His Kingdom, but how often we have not yielded that God might make these things FRUITFUL, and they remained only dealings and revelations, head-knowledge and dreams, and never became possessions in some measure for the todays.

God also sends the Spirit, as the north wind, to blow upon every relationship in our lives; upon those relations we deem harmless, but which come between God and us, sapping the spiritual life out of us, and robbing God. Upon every relationship that is not of His choosing and to His glory, He sends the wind. He separates us from every one and everything that is harming our vineyards; He blows upon our human affections, both in us and in those who have a place in our lives; and before His north wind human love withers up. Not one thing of eternal value that has been inworked in our lives can be harmed by the north wind of God's dealing, which only blasts and withers the superficial and unfruitful;

and the sooner these fall off the better. The sooner we see ourselves stripped of our self-confidence and blindness, our false hopes and delusions that we are far beyond the place to which we have really attained before God, the better.

He blows upon our involvements with religious systems, our feverish "church activity," our running hither and thither doing the so-called work of the Lord, our trotting from meeting to meeting, from preacher to preacher, from revival to revival, and before His north wind the anointing upon these avenues of service lifts and we are left with a bare branch from which the superficial beauty and fragrance has been stripped. It is the strong blasts of the north wind that drive our roots down deeper and deeper into the soil of HIS LIFE, until that which has gone down and is out of sight, is greater and stronger than that which appears above the surface. We are astonished and disheartened as we behold some of the most beautiful blossoms in our lives drop off; those in which we had placed much confidence. But the very blasts of sharp conviction and dealing that destroy the fruitless blossoms, also cause the roots of the spiritual life to go down deeper INTO CHRIST; and they become firmly rooted and grounded IN HIM. Thus stripped and with our roots going deeper and deeper, we learn to take the time to wait on God long enough for HIS LIFE TO ARISE WITHIN US, long enough to hear HIM SPEAK and have Him divulge HIS WILL to our seeking hearts.

To every apprehended son of God who purposed in his heart to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, God will send the searching north wind of the Spirit that his garden may be stripped and prepared for further processings; and so that nothing of SELF may be encouraged to remain. When He has dealt with everything, He will send the south wind of the Spirit in wooing and encouragement, in warm showers of faith and glory, which will refresh and entice the fruitful buds to come out and develop into fruit for the glory of God. The more testings the Lord sends, the stronger the searching north wind blows upon our garden, the more spices and fruit are perfected, and the more fragrance and glory flow forth from our lives.

The love of God must be perfected in us; the love that suffers all things and is kind, the love that shall flow out to reconcile all things back to God, must be tried in the furnace before it comes forth as gold. Many times our love toward God and toward man is tried to the uttermost through the pressures and circumstances that crowd in upon us, but, beloved ones, the DIVINE LOVE that comes forth from the heart of God and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, will remain and increase. And, under the testings of God, it will begin to send forth such fragrance as it has never had before.

Come smell the spices that abound in the Garden of the Lord!" Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." It is not the gentle, soothing south wind that wafts abroad these costly spices of His divine nature. It is the north wind that whips and beats it fine, that proves whether it is divine spice, or merely a "fair weather" imitation of man's soul. As the spices are bruised, the perfumes come forth, for it is the hard things that make the

spices give out their odor. Let God send the north wind upon our lives until His eye sees that it is enough; and then let the south wind blow that the spices may flow out. Thus the heart of the Lord is made to rejoice as He walks through His Garden and smells the fragrance of our spices; as He beholds the fruit that is being perfected within our lives through the working of His Spirit. It is His Garden and not ours; they are His precious fruits and spices and not ours. Though they are perfected in our lives and borne upon our branches and are sometimes spoken of as ours, they are really HIS; and they are perfected in us through the work of His cross and the power of His resurrection as we come into union with Him, blessed be His name!

THE GARDEN OF THE FIELDS

In a previous Study of this series I wrote of how there are four Vineyards or Gardens presented in the Song of Solomon, and they all portray the Kingdom of God in different aspects and stages of development. I have already pointed out some of the precious truths contained in three of these Gardens. Let us now prayerfully and reverently consider the fourth and final Garden in this magnificent book - THE GARDEN OF THE FIELDS.

"Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us go up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish; whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: the mandrakes give a good smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved" (S of S 7:11-13).

We see that in this Garden, there is the bud and the flower, the newly ripened fruit, and the old preserved fruit. All the characteristics of all the Gardens and Vineyards are to be found in this Garden of the Fields. In another verse of the same chapter we learn that one of the trees in this Garden of the Fields is the palm tree, and concerning God's elect it is written: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree" (S of S 7:7). Hear now what the sweet singer of Israel sang of the chosen ones of the Lord: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree... those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing to show that the Lord is my rock" (Ps 92:12-15).

There are many meanings connected with the palm tree, all of which wondrously set forth the attainments and beauty, the fruitfulness and strength of God's elect. The palm tree always grows beside springs of clear, living water. The weary traveler in the desert is encouraged to press on, as he sees in the distance groves of stately palm trees; even one palm tree gives him courage, for it is a sure sign of water. These palm trees of God, these trees of righteousness, give the water of life to every burdened soul that comes to them for help, BY POINTING TO THE ETERNAL SPRING WHENCE THEY DRAW THEIR OWN REFRESHMENT AND LIFE. As the palm tree beckons to the traveler in the desert, and ever points to the springs at its roots, so the body of Christ is a

channel through which living streams, which have their source in the throne of God, flow out to those that are thirsty. The weary children of God who are weak and worn, who are pressed down by many cares and by the heat of the day: those that have not gone far in the spiritual journey into the fullness of God, may hasten to the grove of strong living trees, and may be refreshed and encouraged to press on.

They can lean upon those whose faith has been strengthened by many testings, for if a storm sweeps through a grove of palm trees the trees bend low to the ground, swept this way and that before the fury of the gale and so do not break. Afterwards they at once regain their upward position, unharmed, as the wind dies down and all is peace again. The weak can lean upon these whose love never fails to encourage the faltering soul to press on toward the goal.

There is not only water where the palm tree is found, but there is shade from the heat of the sun. The roots of the palm tree send out shoots that spread abroad near the ground and make grateful shade for the weary traveler, and thus shall the righteous "flourish" like the palm tree. The weary, tired soul finds rest and a quieting power with those who have entered into the rest of God, and whose lives are fed from the hidden springs that flow from their union with God. The rest of God, which is manifested in their lives, flows out to those who are wearied; and the young and the weak are led to the Fountain where they, too, are refreshed and find life more abundant.

The palm tree never grows earthward but heavenward. The date palm groves of the East inspire awe and wonder as you walk through the long trees. The trunks are uniform in height and symmetry, resembling the pillars of a great cathedral, upright from their root to the leafy capitals which spread out fanwise and from which hang large, reddish clusters of dates. No pressure nor weight, however great or heavy, that is laid upon the palm tree, can bear it down or hold it near the earth. It will not be bound down, but in spite of all opposition, it keeps its face looking upward, and pursues its heavenward course. This characteristic of the palm tree brings deep conviction to our hearts as we remember how the weights of the pressures, problems, and circumstances of life have many times borne us down! How we have grown earthward because of the pull of the flesh, the power of soulish emotions, the love of the things of the world! How many times we have bowed down beneath the testings and pressures that have come against us, the weights that even our families and friends and jobs have fastened upon us, so that in place of growing straight upward toward the heavenlies, we have bent and have become crooked or deformed in some way.

But it shall not be thus with the sons of God! God is preparing a people, the planting of the Lord, the good seed of the Kingdom, trees of righteousness, whom no weight of earth, however heavy, shall be able to hold down or bend earthward! Though the weight of influence and earthly love should cling to these sons of God; though the pressures and problems and perplexities of life should crowd in upon these; though the fear of man and desire to please man should

strive to impede their way; though adversity, calamity, sorrow, tragedy, reversal, and trouble should howl at their heels, none of these weights shall be able to hold down, overcome, discourage, intimidate, upset, frustrate, perplex or in any way affect these who dwell in union with THE LIVING GOD, who follow on to know, experience, appropriate HIS GLORIOUS TRIUMPH as overcomers to the glory of His name. Though all hell should strive to turn these palm trees of God downward, it shall not avail; though every foe and earthly friend should conspire together, it shall but make the sons of God keep their faces more prayerfully and constantly looking UNTO HIM, their forerunner. As these look away from all else to Jesus, they grow heavenward! Heavenward!

The palm tree is one of the most stately of all trees. It does not spread out its leaves and bear its fruit near the earth, but it is in its highest branches that it spreads out and becomes strong. We lived for some time among the coconut palms in Central America, and I soon learned that if you wanted to partake of the fruit, you had better learn to climb! Thus is it with the sons of God! They do not send out large, fruitful branches near the earth, so that all who pass by can pluck them off and devastate their beauty; but they mount up toward heaven, and abide in the pure air of the presence of God, and they send out strong branches that bear much kingdom fruit of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Through storms and pressures and multiplied experiences these have grown higher and stronger and have spread their branches out to a greater distance; and it is the highest branches that spread out and turn their leaves and fruit upward. It is self evident that those that pass by cannot partake of their fruit, neither can they find support in the branches that have grown up high and spread out heavenward, WITHOUT CLIMBING UP TOWARD HEAVEN! None can pluck the fruit with which these trees are loaded, until they have been lifted up from the earthly atmosphere and gone up into the heavenly realm of their branches!

How different are these PALM Tree SONS OF GOD from the crop of religious hawkers that fills the land today, bearing their fruit close to the earth, as with their carnal programs, ceremonies, rituals, denominational systems, promotions, drives, invasions, concerts, puppet shows, money raising schemes, and divers activities of fleshly appeal, they bear fruit on such a low level as to be plucked carelessly by any who pass by, without ever raising them up out of their attachment to earth into the spiritual heights of THE MIND OF CHRIST.

The so-called "gospel" of this hour is fashioned to "appeal" to the CARNAL MIND, offering men blessings, prosperity, instant solutions to all problems, rapture out of tribulation, a miracle a day, ease and comfort and all good things, but men do not have to climb very far heavenward to pluck the fruit of these earthbound bushes, for the benefits are all EARTHLY, not heavenly. I do not err when I say that if all the prayers and faith that are exercised daily for EARTHLY THINGS, blessings of money, jobs, cars, homes, clothes, physical healing, comforts, luxuries that pamper the flesh, etc were stripped from most Christian's prayers, their prayer lives would be reduced by at least ninety percent!

Yes, much fruit is borne near the earth, so appealing to the carnal mind, so easily accessible, without effort and with no heavenward climb. This "easy" gospel is presented to the poor sinner in this way: "You are a sinner; Christ died for sinners; therefore, Christ died for you; believe this, confess it and you are saved." So easy! The disciples of this easy gospel pick a scoundrel from the streets, pass him through this plausible formula, get him to repeat the words, and turn him out a convert in the space of as many minutes as it takes to tell it. I do not hesitate to declare to you that this is nothing but SALVATION BY FORMULA! The zeal of those who propagate this easy gospel, assuredly, is not to be questioned: their instincts are right, and their work is sometimes not in vain. But the carnal mind is always looking for that which will work automatically, easily by method, technique, formula, close to the earth. Someone will certainly ask, "But isn't it written, 'By grace are ye saved through faith,' 'not of yourselves, not of works, lest any man should boast,' and 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life?' To which, however, I also answer in the words of scripture, "The devils also believe," and "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." But without seeming to make text refute text, let us ask rather what the supposed convert possesses at the end of the process. That Christ saves sinners, even scoundrels from the street, is a great fact. But in ordinary circumstances, with no searching conviction of the Holy Spirit, nor any deep dealing of God, the person is rapidly urged through the above piece of logic, appealing to his carnal mind, four simple steps to heaven! And then informed that all his past is blotted out, and all his future secured, by a hasty application of a FORMULA. Not so! I do not hesitate to declare it, for it is a believing alright, a mistaken believing, the giving of MENTAL ASSENT, a believing with the MIND, but believing with the mind saves no man. Did not Jesus say, "Out of the abundance of the HEART the MOUTH speaketh," and Paul explains what this means in terms of a man's salvation, declaring, "If thou shalt confess with thy MOUTH the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine HEART thou shalt be saved. For WITH THE H-E-A-R-T MAN BELIEVETH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS; and with the MOUTH confession is made unto salvation" (Rom 10:9-10). In true conversion the mouth confesses what the heart, the deepest part of a person's being, believes. The heart! not the mind. It is deeper than mental assent, mere superficial persuasion of the mental faculties, acceptance of a formula, with no deep working of the Spirit in the inner man.

I now venture to say that vast numbers of those who have embraced this "Salvation by Formula," giving mental assent to the "four things you know to be saved," even repeating the sinner's prayer, and carrying a Bible about, are not truly converted at all, but have had their conscience' soothed with the promise of such an easy escape from hell, for when faced with the prospect of hell, man's chief end is to "get off." And those who pass through the Salvation by Formula process feel "safe." Their minds are worked through a chain of phrases in which the words "sin," "hell," "believe," "saved," and "heaven" are the conspicuous terms, and giving mental assent to this, applying the formula, by all logic, their future is guaranteed! They take out, in short, an insurance policy, with one easy installment, by which they are instantly and infallibly secured eternal life at death.

Ah, beloved, salvation is far more than a passport out of hell! It means DELIVERANCE; the Greek, in fact, denotes a DELIVERANCE UNTO WHOLENESS – deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of sin, darkness, bondage and death – it means a trusting in Christ, not as a fire-escape, but in order to likeness to Christ, a transformation of nature, our spirit quickened by the Holy Spirit, translated into the high and holy realm of the Kingdom of Heaven as an entirely NEW CREATION IN CHRIST.

There is an ever greater abomination abroad in the land today. I speak of the "Holy Spirit by Formula" delusion practiced by many in the Charismatic movement, as people are "coached" in how to receive the blessed gift of the Holy Spirit and are then "taught" how to speak in tongues by repeating some strange sounding syllables after someone else! Is not this one of the lying wonders of which Paul warned us in II Thes 2:11-12 by which thousands, yea, millions will be deceived? In my mind there is no doubt about it. Cursed fruit! I believe in speaking in tongues, and might well glory with the apostle Paul that "I speak in tongues more than you all," but I do not believe that repeating gibberish after any man is speaking in tongues by the Spirit of God. Furthermore, no man can speak by the Holy Spirit and still be a worshipper of idols and continue to pray to the Virgin Mary, light candles, count beads, exercise false gifts, and follow after the traditions and foolishness of the religious systems. The holy things of God are today made so easy to attain, so appealing to the carnal mind, as fruit borne close to the earth, to be plucked and possessed by any unclean hands or unsanctified soul that passes by!

God has commanded us: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and YE SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS" (II Cor 6:17-18). But the so-called gospel of popular religion is glamorized as Hollywood stars and popular night club entertainers intone with their unsanctified voices the sacred hymns given by the Holy Spirit to saints who walked and talked with God in the secret places of His presence. They give glowing testimonies of what Christ has done in their lives, yet they go right on with their Hollywood acting, entertaining the ungodly in the midst of the filth of the devil's strongholds in America's Sodoms and Gomorrah's. Then, if you would engage them to give their testimony at your gathering for the glory of God, you must sign a contract with their agent guaranteeing them many thousands of dollars for their brief appearance! Cursed fruit! Fruit borne too close to earth to lift men heavenward! They popularize such sacred truths as the new birth, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the Kingdom of God and thus by carnal usage corrupt their true message and reality. As the shallow-minded worldlings applaud the smooth words with which they are entertained, the hallowed things of the heavenlies are dragged down into the deepest mire of the earth realm as fruit to be plucked by unsanctified hands, which contains no power to lift them out of their carnal minds into THE MIND OF CHRIST. Corrupted fruit! Truth mixed with error, the holy with the unholy, the heavenly with the earthly, light with darkness, until men are unable to distinguish one from the other, and they do not.

Long ago the Lord said to Israel, "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ass and an ox together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together" (Deut 22:9-11; Lev 19:19). Paul would have said, "Doth God take care for oxen, OR SAITH HE IT ALTOGETHER FOR OUR SAKES? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written" (I Cor 9:9). His argument would apply here just as it did in the case mentioned there. These things are all written for our admonition. The harlot religious movements of our day dare to defy God's explicit command, mixing the spirit of this world with the Spirit of God, mixing the clean with the unclean, the ox of sacrifice with the ass of lust, the wheat with the tares, the Christian with the unchristian, the methods, the techniques, and psychology of this world's systems with the supernatural things of the Spirit.

For such an hour as this God is preparing His Garden of the Field, with its stately PALM Trees, sons of God, who grow up tall and majestically into the heavenlies, to abide in the pure air of the presence of God, there to send out strong branches that bear much fruit – heavenward!

It is not that we have no desire to have men partake of the fruit of Christ in our lives, but it is often easier to bear the fruit of God on a low level in order to make it easily accessible to men, while the fruit loses its purity and perfectness and power to lift men up into the image of God. And while it is true, HIS LOVE flowing through us will give us compassion for others, and a ministering to them, nevertheless there is a priority established in the Garden of God that, "we should bring forth fruit UNTO GOD" (Rom 7:4). The fruit is, indeed, FOR MEN, but it is UNTO GOD; borne not earthward, but heavenward, not to bless men in the carnal realm where they dwell, but to quicken and lift them up into the divine life of the Son of God. In bearing our fruit heavenward, we must not become centered in the needs around us, our center must ever be IN HIM. Over the past years there has been an increasing emphasis by the Spirit, as a trumpet sounding out the message, declaring that God is first interested in our BECOMING – IN OUR STATE OF BEING IN HIM – before all our doing, before all our activities, ministries, outreaches etc. How often we have ministered so little to others because we possessed so little! And we possessed little because we had not developed in the fertile soil of the Garden of God, being busily engaged in running around from garden to garden, doing this and that, digging here and there, tending all the vineyards, but failing to tend our own! If we would be numbered among the FIRSTFRUITS unto God, then there must be a planting in His Garden, and a dwelling there, with the pruning and purging processes, the cultivating and fertilizing, the passing of the seasons, the blowing of the north wind, and the south, and then patience while we put down our roots and grow tall and reach the time of the bearing of fruit, that fruit may be borne heavenward, that men may be lifted up into HIS LIFE.

Yes, we have a vision for the WORLD, and because we do have such a vision the emphasis becomes, "Abide in Me, and I in you. He that abideth in Me, and I

in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit," for it is THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRUIT IN OUR LIVES that is essential, for this pure and perfect and heavenly fruit is that which shall give life to the world! When men partake of this fully developed "first-fruits" of God's harvest, they will be lifted out of their distressing condition into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Those who draw near these PALM Trees in the Garden of God cannot partake of their fruit while remaining bound to the earthlies, neither can they find support in their branches that have grown high, until they have left the earthly atmosphere and begun to climb up TOWARD HEAVEN.

There is a cry in the hearts of God's elect in this hour, deeper desires and yearnings than ever before find expression there, the cry being that the Lord shall go forth in the gardens of our lives and accomplish all that remains that there shall be a harvest. Though the buds and the blossoms are much to rejoice over, we must watch the promises of fruit and tenderly care for them. We must not let neglect and failure to water them with our prayers, no rough handling and picking them in order to make a display, blast the fruit. Without fruit the blossoms are vain, and their beauty of no profit either to God or to us or to the world.

There now burns perennial within our breasts this desire to see the harvest, while at the same time we are learning patience to wait for the fullness of time to come. Let us rejoice when there is bud and blossom; let us thank Him when we see the little green fruit; let us humbly give Him the glory when there is ripe fruit in our lives. Let us not be discouraged if we do not find fully ripened fruit on the branch that He has just pruned, or upon the plants that our Heavenly Father has just begun to deal with. The bud must come before the blossoms; the blossoms must come before the tiny, immature fruit appears; the little green fruit must come before it can ripen and be perfected, and the fruit must be ripe and perfect before the heart of the Husbandman is satisfied, and before the fruit can be gathered and distributed as refreshing and nourishment to the hungry and needy. Have you seen the lack of fruit in your life, dear child of God? Do not be dismayed! ABIDE IN HIM, for the process requires many "seasons" to be completed. Know that you are planted in the Garden of the Lord; abide there, yield to each and every dealing of God in the place where you are, and there shall be fruit in due time!

The bud and blossom, the garden and partly ripe fruit, are all perfect if they are growing and going forward in God's way, although none of these are fit to pick except the fully ripened fruit. It is encouraging to remember that every attribute and characteristic of our divine Father along every line, must begin with the bud and blossom. Their growth is slow and imperceptible, and there is no way to FORCE THEM TO MATURE before God has fully pruned and tended them. How our hearts long that we may nourish the buds until they flower, and guard the flower until the fruit appears; that we may protect the fruit until it is ripe, and carefully gather that which will redound to the glory of God alone! Let us not try to share our leaves, buds, and blossoms with the world, for then the fruit will be lost. Let us not be so busy DOING that we fail to BECOME! Let us BECOME

that men may come and eat of WHAT WE ARE. And what we shall be transcends all that this world's religious systems and outreaches have to offer; and men, seeing the heavenliness of the TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS growing by the eternal springs of HIS LIFE, shall turn aside to drink deeply from their inexhaustible supply of living water, and to scale their heights that they may be nourished by their incorruptible fruit that grows heavenward, blessed be His wonderful name!

End of Book One

(To be continued)